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COMMENTARY

COMMENTARY ON  
NUMBERS

*by Adam Clarke.*

*“Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without  
which no man shall see the Lord” Heb 12:14*

Spreading Scriptural Holiness to the World

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# A COMMENTARY AND CRITICAL NOTES

ON THE

# HOLY BIBLE

## OLD AND NEW TESTAMENTS

DESIGNED AS A HELP TO A BETTER UNDERSTANDING  
OF THE SACRED WRITINGS

**BY ADAM CLARKE, LL.D., F.S.A., &c.**

A NEW EDITION, WITH THE  
AUTHOR'S FINAL CORRECTIONS

**For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope.—Rom. 15:4.**

Adam Clarke's Commentary on the Old and New Testaments  
A derivative of Adam Clarke's Commentary for the Online Bible

produced by

Sulu D. Kelley  
1690 Old Harmony Dr.  
Concord, NC 28027-8031  
(704) 782-4377

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## PREFACE TO THE BOOK OF NUMBERS

THIS, which is the fourth book in order of the Pentateuch, has been called NUMBERS, from its containing an account of the *numbering* and *marshalling* the Israelites in their journey through the wilderness to the promised land. Its ENGLISH name is derived from the title it bears in the VULGATE Latin, *Numeri*, which is a literal translation of the Greek word Ἀριθμοί, its title in the SEPTUAGINT; and from both, our SAXON ancestors called it [Anglo-Saxon] *numeration*, “because in this the children of Israel were numbered,” [Anglo-Saxon]. This title, however, does not properly apply to more than the *three* first chapters, and the 26th. This book, like the preceding, takes its name among the HEBREWS from a distinguishing word in the commencement. It is frequently called רבד VAIDABBER, *and he spoke*, from its initial word; but in most Hebrew Bibles its running title is רבדמב BEMIDBAR, *in the wilderness*, which is the *fifth* word in the *first* verse.

The contents of the book of Numbers are briefly the following: On the *first day* of the *first month* of the *second year* after the departure from Egypt, the tabernacle being erected, and it and the priests consecrated, Moses is commanded to make a *census* or enumeration of the people, the Levites excepted, who were appointed to watch over, guard, pitch, and carry the tabernacle and its holy furniture; chap. 1.

To form the vast mass of the people into a regular camp, each tribe by itself under its own captain or chief, known by his proper standard, and occupying an assigned place in reference to the tabernacle; chap. 2.

Moses is commanded to separate the Levites to the service of the tabernacle, whom God chooses to take, instead of the first-born of every family, which he claimed as his own. When these were selected in their families, &c., the sum amounted to 22,273; chap. 3.

All this tribe is appointed to serve the tabernacle in a variety of offices, each person from the age of thirty till fifty, after which he was excused from farther service; chap. 4.

When these points were settled, God commands them to purify the camp by the expulsion of every unclean person, and establishes the trial of the suspected adulteress by the *waters of jealousy*; chap. 5.

He next institutes the laws relative to *Nazarites*; and lays down the *form* according to which the people shall be blessed; chap. 6.

Then follows a particular account of the offerings made to the tabernacle by the princes, or chiefs of the twelve tribes, and the amount of those offerings; chap. 7.

When this work was finished, the Levites were consecrated to their respective services, and the duration of the service of each ascertained; chap. 8.

The passover is commanded to be kept, and the first one is celebrated in the wilderness on the 14th of the first month of the second year after their departure from Egypt; chap. 9.

Moses is commanded to make two silver trumpets; he is informed of their use, in what order the different tribes shall march, with the ceremonies at fixing and removing the tabernacle and the departure of the people from the wilderness of Sinai on the twentieth day of the second month of the second year of their exodus from Egypt; chap. 10.

The people murmuring, the fire of the Lord consumes many of them; it ceases on the intercession of Moses: they murmur again, quails are sent, and they are smitten with a great plague; chap. 11.

Miriam and her brother Aaron rise up seditiously against Moses, having conceived some dislike against his *Cushite* wife, and supposing that he assumed too great an authority over the people: at this sedition the Lord is displeased, and smites Miriam with the leprosy; chap. 12.

Twelve spies are sent to examine the promised land; they pass through the whole, return at the end of forty days, and by bringing an evil report, dishearten the people; chap. 13.

In consequence of this the whole congregation meditate a return to Egypt: God is displeased, and pronounces that all of them, from twenty years old and upwards, shall die in the wilderness. They repent, attack the Amalekites contrary to the commandment of God, and are discomfited; chap. 14.

A number of ordinances and directions are given relative to the manner of conducting the worship of God in the promised land: different laws are repeated, and a Sabbath-breaker stoned to death; chap. 15.

Korah, Dathan, Abiram, and their associates, form an insurrection against Moses: they are swallowed up by an earthquake: the congregation murmur, and 14,700 of them are cut off; chap. 16.

As a proof that God had called Aaron and his family to the priesthood, his *rod*, or *staff*, *buds*, and miraculously brings forth *blossoms* and *fruit*, and is commanded to be laid up before the testimony; chap. 17.

The charges of the priests and Levites, and the portions they were to have of the Lord's offerings, for their support in the work; chap. 18.

The ordinances of the *red heifer*; the *water of purification*, and its uses; chap. 19.

The death of Miriam; the waters of Meribah. The Lord tells Moses that because he did not sanctify him in the eyes of the congregation, he shall not bring the people into the promised land. The king of *Edom* refuses the Israelites a passage through his territories. Aaron is stripped of his sacerdotal vestments on Mount Hor, and they are put on Eleazar, his son, who is to be a high priest in his stead. Aaron dies, and the people mourn for him thirty days; chap. 20.

*Arad*, one of the Canaanitish kings, attacks Israel, and he and his people are utterly destroyed. The people murmur for lack of bread and water; *fiery serpents* are sent among them, they repent; are healed by looking at a *brazen serpent*. They journey and come to *Beer*, where they find water; *Sihon*, king of the Amorites, attacks them, and is defeated; so is likewise *Og*, king of Bashan, and the people possess the lands of both; chap. 21.

*Balak*, king of Moab, sends for *Balaam* to curse Israel; he departs, is opposed by an angel, and reproved by his ass, whom God, for the purpose, miraculously endued with the gift of speech. He comes to Balak, king of Moab, and shows him that Jehovah had limited his power; chap. 22.

Balak offers sacrifices, and Balaam, under the influence of God, prophesies good concerning Israel; chap. 23.

Continuing to foretell the prosperity of Israel, and the destruction of their enemies, the king of Moab dismisses Balaam in great wrath; chap. 24.

The Israelites, seduced by the women of *Moab* and *Midian*, commit fornication and idolatry-the chiefs are hanged-bold act of Phinehas; chap. 25.

A second *census* or enumeration of the people takes place, and the amount is 601,730, among whom not one of those of the first *census* was now found except *Joshua* and *Caleb*; chap. 26.

From the case of the daughters of *Zelophehad* a law is made to enable *daughters* to inherit.

Moses ascends Mount Abarim, sees the promised land, and constitutes Joshua his successor; chap. 27.

A repetition of the laws relative to *burnt-offerings*, the *Sabbath*, the *passover*, *first-fruits*, &c.; chap. 28.

The three solemnities of the seventh month are commanded to be held on the *first*, *tenth*, and *fourteenth* days of the month; chap. 29.

Several laws and ordinances concerning *vows* of different kinds, made by various persons; when they should be confirmed, and in what cases annulled; chap. 30.

Twelve thousand Israelites go against the people of Midian and slay them, their five kings, and Balaam their prophet; and the Israelites take immense booty in *persons*, *cattle*, *gold*, *silver*, and *precious stones*, of which they make a great offering to the Lord, because in this contest they lost not one man; chap. 31.

The children of *Reuben* and *Gad*, and the *half tribe of Manasseh*, request to receive for their inheritance the territories of *Sihon* and *Og* on the east side of Jordan; their desire is granted on the condition of their going over armed with their brethren, to assist them in conquering the land; chap. 32.

A circumstantial account of the forty-two journeys of the Israelites from their departure from *Rameses* till their arrival at *Jordan*. They are commanded to expel all the ancient inhabitants; chap. 33.

The borders of the land are described, and the persons appointed by God, who should assist Joshua in dividing the land among the nine tribes and half; chap. 34.

Forty-eight cities are to be assigned to the *Levites*, out of the twelve tribes, for their goods and for their cattle: and out of these they were to appoint six cities of refuge for the person who had unawares slain his neighbour; to one of which cities the manslayer was to escape, and tarry there till the death of the high priest; chap. 35.

A law established that the daughters to whom the paternal inheritance descends, shall not marry out of their own tribes, lest their inheritances should become alienated and lost by being blended with those of other tribes; chap. 36. See the case of Zelophehad's daughters, chap. 37.

In this book, which comprehends the history of between thirty-eight and thirty-nine years, we have in one word a distinct account of the several stages of the Israelites' journey in the wilderness, the various occurrences on the way, their trials, rebellions, punishments, deliverances, conquests, &c., with several laws and ordinances not mentioned in the preceding books, together with a repetition and explanation of some others which had been previously delivered; the whole forming a most interesting history of the justice, mercy, and providence of God.

## THE FOURTH BOOK OF MOSES CALLED NUMBERS

- Year before the common Year of Christ, 1490.
- Julian Period, 3224.
- Cycle of the Sun, 27.
- Dominical Letter, D.
- Cycle of the Moon, 9.
- Indiction, 6.
- Creation from Tisri or September, 2514.

### CHAPTER 1

*On the first day of the second month of the second year after Israel came out of Egypt, God commands Moses to number all the males of the people from twenty years and upward, who were effective men and able to go to war, 1-3. A chief of each tribe is associated with Moses and Aaron in this business, 4; the names of whom are given, 5-16. Moses assembles the people, who declare their pedigrees according to their families, 17-19. The descendants of REUBEN are numbered, and amount to 46,500, ver. 20, 21. Those of SIMEON, 59,300, ver. 22, 23. Those of GAD, 45,650, ver. 24, 25. Those of JUDAH, 74,600, ver. 26, 27. Those of ISSACHAR, 54,400, ver. 28, 29. Those of ZEBULUN, 57,400, ver. 30, 31. Those of EPHRAIM, 40,500, ver. 32, 33. Those of MANASSEH, 32,200, ver. 34, 35. Those of BENJAMIN, 35,400, ver. 36, 37. Those of DAN, 62,700, ver. 38, 39. Those of ASHER, 41,500, ver. 40, 41. Those of NAPHTALI, 53,400, ver. 42, 43. The amount of all the effective men in Israel, from twenty years old and upward, was 603,550, ver. 44-46. The LEVITES are not numbered with the tribes, because they were dedicated to the service of God. Their particular work is specified, 47-54.*

### NOTES ON CHAP. 1

**Verse 1. The Lord spake unto Moses-on the first day of the second month]** As the tabernacle was erected upon the first day of the first month, in the second year after their coming out of Egypt, <sup><024017></sup>**Exodus 40:17**; and this muster of the people was made on the first day of the second month, in the same year; it is evident that the transactions related in the preceding book must all have taken place in the space of *one month*, and during the time the Israelites were encamped at Mount Sinai, before they had begun their Journey to the promised land.

**Verse 2. Take ye the sum, &c.]** God, having established the commonwealth of Israel by just and equitable laws, ordained every thing



relative to the due performance of his own worship, erected his tabernacle, which was his throne, and the place of his residence among the people, and consecrated his priests who were to minister before him; he now orders his subjects to be mustered, 1. That they might see he had not forgotten his promise to Abraham, but was multiplying his posterity. 2. That they might observe due order in their march toward the promised land. 3. That the tribes and families might be properly distinguished; that all litigations concerning property, inheritance, &c., might, in all future times, be prevented. 4. That the promise concerning the Messiah might be known to have its due accomplishment, when in the fulness of time God should send him from the seed of Abraham through the house of David. And, 5. That they might know their strength for war; for although they should ever consider God as their protector and defence, yet it was necessary that they should be assured of their own fitness, naturally speaking, to cope with any ordinary enemy, or to surmount any common difficulties.

**Verse 3. From twenty years old and upward]** In this census no *women* were reckoned, nor *children*, nor *strangers*, nor the *Levites*, nor *old men*, which, collectively, must have formed an immense multitude; the Levites alone amounted to 22,300. True-born Israelites only are reckoned; such as were able to carry arms, and were expert for war.

**Verse 14. Eliasaph, the son of Deuel.]** This person is called *Reuel*, <sup><04214></sup>**Numbers 2:14**. As the **d** *daleth* is very like the **r** *resh*, it was easy to mistake the one for the other. The *Septuagint* and the *Syriac* have *Reuel* in this chapter; and in <sup><04214></sup>**Numbers 2:14**, the *Vulgate*, the *Samaritan*, and the *Arabic* have *Deuel* instead of *Reuel*, with which reading a vast number of MSS. concur; and this reading is supported by <sup><04214></sup>**Numbers 10:20**; we may safely conclude therefore that **l** aw[**d** *Deuel*, not **l** aw[**r** *Reuel*, was the original reading. See *Kennicott*.

An ancient Jewish rabbin pretends to solve every difficulty by saying that “*Eliasaph* was a proselyte; that before he embraced the true faith he was called the son of *Reuel*, but that after his conversion he was called the son of *Deuel*.” As *Reuel* may be translated the *breach of God*, and *Deuel* the *knowledge of God*, I suppose the rabbin grounded his supposition on the different meanings of the two words.

**Verse 16. These were the renowned]** Literally, *the called, of the congregation*-those who were summoned by *name* to attend. The order of the tribes In the above enumeration may be viewed thus:—

1.	Reuben	Sons of Leah
2.	Simeon	“
3.	Judah	“
4.	Issachar	“
5.	Zebulun	“
6.	Ephraim	Sons of Rachael
7.	Manasseh	”
8.	Benjamin	“
9.	Dan	1st son of Bilhah, Rachel's maid.
10.	Asher	2d son of Zilpah, Leah's maid.
11.	Gad	1st son of Zilpah.
12.	Naphtali	2d son of Bilhah.

**Verse 25. Forty and five thousand six hundred and fifty.]** Mr. Ainsworth has remarked that Gad, the *handmaid's* son, is the only one of all the tribes whose number ends with *fifty*, all the others are by *thousands*, and end with *hundreds*; which shows God's admirable providence and blessing in multiplying them so, that no *odd* or *broken* number was among all the tribes. But See Clarke on “<sup><00146></sup>Numbers 1:46”.

**Verse 33. The tribe of Ephraim-forty thousand and five hundred.]** Ephraim, as he was blessed beyond his eldest brother Manasseh, <sup><014830></sup>Genesis 48:20, so here he is increased by thousands more than Manasseh, and more than the whole tribe of Benjamin, and his blessing continued above his brother, <sup><05317></sup>Deuteronomy 33:17. And thus the prophecy, <sup><014819></sup>Genesis 48:19, was fulfilled: *His younger brother* (Ephraim) *shall be greater than he*, (Manasseh.) No word of God can possibly fall to the ground: he alone sees the end from the beginning; his infinite wisdom embraces all occurrences, and it is his province alone to determine what is right, and to predict what himself has purposed to accomplish.

**Verse 46. All they that were numbered were six hundred thousand and three thousand and five hundred and fifty.]** What an astonishing increase from *seventy* souls that went down into Egypt, <sup><014627></sup>Genesis 46:27, about 215 years before, where latterly they had endured the greatest

hardships! But God's promise cannot fail (<sup><0167></sup>**Genesis 16:5**;) and who can resist his will, and bring to naught his counsel? That a comparative view may be easily taken of the state of the tribes, I shall produce them here from the first census mentioned in the first chapter of this book, in their *decreasing* proportion, beginning with the *greatest* and proceeding to the *least*; and in the second census, mentioned (<sup><0167></sup>**Numbers 26:1-65**, where the *increase* of some and the *decrease* of others may be seen in one point of view. It may be just remarked, that except in the case of *Gad* in this chapter, and *Reuben* in (<sup><0167></sup>**Numbers 26:7**, all the numbers are what may be called *whole* or *round* numbers, beginning with *thousands*, and ending with *hundreds*, *Gad* and *Reuben* alone ending with *tens*; but the Scripture generally uses *round* numbers, *units* and *fractions* being almost constantly disregarded.

	1st census, ch. 1.	2d census, ch. 26.
1. Judah	74,600	76,500
2. Dan	62,700	64,400
3. Simeon	59,300	22,200
4. Zebulun	57,400	60,500
5. Issachar	54,400	64,300
6. Naphtali	53,400	45,400
7. Reuben	46,500	43,730
8. Gad	45,650	40,500
9. Asher	41,500	53,400
10. Ephraim	40,500	32,500
11. Benjamin	35,400	45,600
12. Manasseh	32,200	52,700
	—————	—————
	Total 603,550	Total 601,730

Thus we find *Judah*, the *most populous* tribe, and *Manasseh* the *least* so; the difference between them being so great as 42,400, for which no very satisfactory reason can be assigned.

In the second census, mentioned (<sup><0167></sup>**Numbers 26:34**, *Judah* still has the pre-eminency; and *Simeon*, the third in number before, is become the least.

Now we see also that the little tribe of *Manasseh* occupies the *seventh* place for number. *Seven* of the tribes had an *increase*; *five* a *decrease*. *Manasseh* had an increase of 20,500; *Judah*, 1,900; *Issachar*, 9,900; *Zebulun*, 3,100; *Benjamin*, 10,200; *Dan*, 1,700; *Asher*, 11,900.

On the contrary there was a decrease in *Reuben* of 2,770; in *Simeon*, 37,100; *Gad*, 5,150; *Ephraim*, 8,000; *Naphtali*, 8,000. Decrease in the whole, 61,020 effective men. See Clarke on “<sup><0361></sup>**Numbers 26:51**”; but balanced with the *increase*, the decrease was upon the whole 1,820.

On the subject of these enumerations, and the manner in which this vast multitude sprang in about *four* generations from *seventy-five* persons, Scheuchzer has some valuable calculations, though liable to some objections, which I shall take the liberty to insert, as they tend to throw considerable light upon the subject.

“We find in the writings of Moses *three* enumerations of the Jewish people, that follow each other pretty closely:—

The first, which was made at their departure from Egypt, <sup><0127></sup>**Exodus 12:37**, amounted to — 600,000

One year after, to — 603,550

On entering the land of Canaan, to — 601,730

If we add to the number — 603,550

that of the Levites given us in <sup><0439></sup>**Numbers 3:39**, and which amounted to — 22,000

We shall have for the sum total           625,550

“We find the same number, on adding that of each tribe given us in detail, which is the best proof of the exactness of the calculation.

“I think I shall afford the reader some degree of pleasure by presenting him, in this place, the number of each tribe *separately*, beginning at their earliest ancestors. We shall see, by this means, how faithfully God fulfilled the promise he had made to Abraham, as well as the great utility of the mathematics for the right understanding of the Holy Scriptures. I shall begin with a Genealogical Table of that *family* which God so wonderfully

blessed; and to it I shall afterward add each separate tribe, following the calculation of *Reyher*, (Math. Mos., p. 222.) And we shall see that the *fourth* generation, taken with the *third*, produces the very number mentioned in the text.

REUBEN	Hanoch		
	Phallu		
	Hezron		
	Carmi		46,500. <del>&lt;040121&gt;</del> <b>Numbers 1:21.</b>
SIMEON	Jemuel		
	Jamin		
	Ohad		
	Jachin		
	Zohar		
	Shaul		59,300. <del>&lt;040123&gt;</del> <b>Numbers 1:23.</b>
LEVI	Gershon	Libni	
		Shemei	7,500. <del>&lt;040122&gt;</del> <b>Numbers 3:22.</b>
	Kohath	Amram	
		Izohar	
		Hebron	
		Uzziel	8,600. <del>&lt;040126&gt;</del> <b>Numbers 3:26.</b>
	Merari	Mahli	
		Mushi	6,200. <del>&lt;040134&gt;</del> <b>Numbers 3:34.</b>
JUDAH	Shelah		
	Pharez	Hezron	
	Zerah	Hamul	74,600. <del>&lt;040127&gt;</del> <b>Numbers 1:27.</b>
ISSACHAR	Tola		
	Phuvah		
	Job		
	Shimron		54,400. <del>&lt;040129&gt;</del> <b>Numbers 1:29.</b>
ZEBULUN	Sered		

	Elon		
	Jahleel		57,400. <del>&lt;0413&gt;</del> Numbers 1:31.
DINAH			

Children of JACOB by ZILPAH. ~~<04618>~~Genesis 46:18.

GAD	Zilphion		
	Haggai		
	Shuni		
	Ezbon		
	Eri		
	Arodi		
	Areil		45,650. <del>&lt;04125&gt;</del> Numbers 1:25.
ASHER	Jimnah		
	Isuah		
	Isui		
	Beriah	Heber	
		Malchiel	41,500. <del>&lt;04141&gt;</del> Numbers 1:41.

Children of JACOB by RACHEL. ~~<04622>~~Genesis 46:22.

JOSEPH	Manasseh		32,200
	Ephraim		40,500
BENJAMIN	Belah		
	Becher		
	Ashbel		
	Gerah		
	Naaman		
	Ehi		
	Rosh		
	Muppim		
	Huppim		
	Ard		35,400. <del>&lt;04137&gt;</del> Numbers 1:37.

Children of JACOB by BILHAH. ~~<0465>~~Genesis 46:25.

DAN	Hushim	62,700. <del>&lt;0463&gt;</del> Numbers 1:39.
NAPHTALI	Jahzeel	
	Guni	
	Jezer	
	Shillem	53,400. <del>&lt;0463&gt;</del> Numbers 1:43.

## I.-REUBEN 46,500

“Let us now descend to the particular enumeration of each tribe. REUBEN had *four* sons: now if we suppose that one of these *four* sons had *seven*, and that each of the other *three* had eight, we shall find the number 31 for the *first* Egyptian generation. If we afterward suppose that each of these 31 sons had *five* sons, the *second* generation will amount to 155, which, multiplied by 15, will produce 2,325 for the *third* generation; and these, multiplied by 19, will make 44,175 for the *fourth*; so that the *third*, together with the *fourth*, will make 46,500. We shall have the same product if the given sum, 46,500, be divided by the most probable number of children, for example, by the number 19; we shall then have 2,447 for the *third* generation; which sum being deducted from the sum total, there will remain 44,053 for the *fourth* generation, which is exactly the number that is produced in multiplying 2,440 of the *third* generation by 18, and the other 7 by 19. If we wish to make the same calculation with respect to the preceding generations, i.e., divide them by the most probable number of children, we shall have the following sums:—

	Sons of Reuben.....	4
I.	Generation	31
II.	Ditto	215
III.	Ditto	2,583
IV.	Ditto	43,917
		————
	Amount of Generations of III and IV	46,500

## II.-SIMEON 59,300

“SIMEON had *six* sons. Let us suppose that each of the three first had *six* children, and each of the three others *seven*, we shall have *thirty-nine* for the first generation. If we multiply 31 of this number by 9, and 8 by 10, we shall have for the second generation 359; of which number, if we multiply 355 by 11, and 4 by 12, the third generation will give us 3,953. Let us then multiply 3,948 of these by 14, and 5 of them by 15, and we shall have for the fourth 55,347. The *third* and *fourth*, added together, will make 59,300.

## III.-LEVI 22,300

“*Gershon*, Levi’s eldest son, had *two* children: let us give to one of these 16 children, and to the other 17, and we shall have 33 for the *second* generation; 28 of which, multiplied by 15, and 5 by 16, will produce 500 for the *third*. Multiply each by 14, and these will produce 7,000; and the *third* and *fourth* together, 7,500.

“*Kohath*, Levi’s second son, had *four* sons, which form the first line. Give to one of them 10 sons, and 11 to each of the other three, for the *second* generation there will be 43. Multiply them by 10, there will be 430 for the *third*; these, multiplied by 19 for the *fourth*, will produce the number of 8,170. The *third* and *fourth* added together make 8,600.

“*Merari*, the *third* son of Levi, had *two* sons. Give 10 children to each of them, there will then be 20 for the *second* generation. Now if we say that 10 of these 20 had each 15 sons, and each of the others 16, we shall have 310, which, multiplied by 19, will give us 5,890 for the *fourth*; and the *two* last together, 6,200. This may be seen by the following example:—

		Gershonites	Kohathites	Merarites
I.	Generation	2	4	2
II.	Ditto	33	43	20
III.	Ditto	500	430	310
IV.	Ditto	7,000	8,710	5,890

“Amount of generations III. and IV.: Gershonites, 7,500; Kohathites, 8,600; and Merarites, 6,200-total number of Levites, 22,300.



## IV.-JUDAH 74,600

“The sons of *Judah* were *Shelah*, *Pharez*, and *Zerah*. His grandsons by *Pharez* were *Hezron* and *Hamul*. *Hezron* had two sons. Suppose each of them had *six* children, which will make 12 for the first generation; to eight of whom allow *eight* children, and *nine* to each of the others, and there will be 100 for the *second* generation. To 92 of these then give 18 children, and 19 to the *eight* others; this will produce for the *third* generation 1,808. If we then suppose that 1,800 of these had each 18 children, and that each of the other *eight* had 19, the *fourth* generation will be 32,552, which, added to the product of the *third*, will make the descendants of *Hezron* amount to 34,360.

“*Hamul* had *two* sons, who, multiplied by 10, produce the number of 20 for the *second* generation: these, multiplied by 20, will make 400 for the *third*, and these again by 25 will produce 10,000 for the *fourth*. And thus the two last generations will amount together to the number of 10,400.

“If we allow *five* sons to *Shelah*, and *six* to *Zerah*, we shall have 11 for the first generation. To *three* of whom allow 10 children and 11 to the other *eight*, this will give us 118 for the second. To 113 of these give 14, and 15 to the other *five*, and 1,657 will be produced for the *third*. Give 17 to 1,643, and 18 to the 14 remaining, and for the *fourth* there will be 28,183. The *third* and *fourth* added together will produce the number of 29,840.

“According to this calculation, all these generations will amount to the following numbers:—

Hezronites	34,360
Hamulites	10,400
Shelanites and Zarhites	29,840
	—————
	74,600

## V.-ISSACHAR 54,400

“ISSACHAR had *five* sons. Suppose that *three* of them had each *five* children, and the other *two*, *six*, we shall have 27 for the first generation. If we then imagine that of these 19 had each *nine* sons, and each of the other *eight* 10, the second generation will be 251. Now 241 of these, multiplied by 12, will produce 2,892, and the 10 others, multiplied by 13, will make

130; consequently the *third* generation will amount to 3,022. If 3,018 of these had each 17 sons, and each of the other *four* had 18, the *fourth* generation will be 51,378; the *third* and *fourth* generations, then, will produce a number of 54,400.

#### VI.-ZEBULUN 57,400

“*Zebulun* had *three* sons. If we suppose that *two* of them had in all fourteen children, and the *third*, six, here will be 20 for the *first* generation. The *second* will produce 143, on multiplying 17 by 7, and 3 by 8. If we multiply 135 by 16, and 8 by 17, the *third* will amount to 2,296. By multiplying the *third* by 24, the *fourth* will give us 55,104. The two last will produce, together, 57,400.

#### VII.-GAD 45,650

I.	Generation: multiply 3 by 9, and 4 by 10, there will be	67
II.	Ditto multiply 61 by 7, and 6 by 8	475
III.	Ditto multiply 471 by 8, and 4 by 9	3,804
IV.	Ditto multiply 3,802 by 11, and 2 by 12	41,846
		_____
	Amount of generations III and IV	45,650

#### VIII.-ASHER 41,500

“The sons of Asher, *Jinnah*, *Ishua*, and *Isui*, multiplied by 8, produce for the

I.	Generation	24
II.	Ditto multiply 24 by 8	192
III.	Ditto multiply 182 by 11, and 10 by 12	2,122
IV.	Ditto multiply 2,118 by 12, and 4 by 13	25,468
		_____
	Amount of generations III and IV	27,590

“*Heber* and *Malchiel* were sons of *Beriah*. Now these *two* sons multiplied by 5, give us for

I.	Generation	10
II.	Ditto multiply 10 by 11.	110

III.	Ditto multiply by 9	990
IV.	Ditto multiply by 12	11,880
		—————
	Amount of generations III and IV	12,870

“Another son of *Beriah* had in the

I.	Generation	1
II.	Ditto multiply by 8	8
III.	Ditto multiply by 10	80
IV.	Ditto multiply by 12	960
		—————
	Amount of generations III and IV.	1,040

IX.-JOSEPH

MANASSEH 32,200

I.	Generation	10
II.	Ditto multiply 6 by 13, and 4 by 14	134
III.	Ditto multiply 132 by 12, and 2 by 13	1,610
IV.	Ditto multiply by 19	30,590
		—————
	Amount of generations III and IV	32,200

EPHRAIM 40,500

I.	I. Generation	16
II.	Ditto multiply by 10	160
III.	Ditto multiply 152 by 12, and 8 by 13	1,928
IV.	Ditto multiply 1,916 by 20, and 12 by 21	38,572
		—————
	Amount of generations III and IV	40,500

X.-BENJAMIN 35,400

“He had 10 sons; two of whom, multiplied by 9, and the other 8 by 10, will give for the

I.	Generation	98
II.	Ditto multiply 95 by 9, and 3 by 10	885
III.	Ditto multiply by 5	4,425
IV.	Ditto multiply by 7	30,975
		—————
	Amount of generations III and IV	35,400

## XI.-DAN 62,700

I.	Generation	11
II.	Ditto multiply by 12	132
III.	Ditto multiply by 19	2,508
IV.	Ditto multiply by 24	60,192
		—————
	Amount of generations III and IV	62,700

## XII.-NAPHTALI 53,400

“He had 4 sons, the half of whom, multiplied by 7, and the other half by 6, give us for the

I.	Generation	26
II.	Ditto multiply 16 by 11, and 10 by 12	296
III.	Ditto multiply 288 by 12, and 8 by 13	3,560
IV.	Ditto multiply by 14	49,840
		—————
	Amount of generations III and IV	53,400

## Total number of all the tribes

I.	Reuben	46,500
II.	Simeon	59,300
III.	Levi	22,300
IV.	Judah	74,600
V.	Issachar	54,400
VI.	Zebulun	57,400
VII.	Gad	45,650

VIII.	Asher	41,500
IX.	Manasseh	32,200
	Ephraim	40,500
X.	Benjamin	35,400
XI.	Dan	62,700
XII.	Naphtali	53,400
		—————
	Total	625,850

"And indeed, without counting the Levites, the number of the Israelites ( <del>0046</del> <b>Numbers 1:46</b> ) amounts to	603,550
The Levites ( <del>0039</del> <b>Numbers 3:39</b> ) amount to	22,300
	—————
The whole number together, as above	625,850

In the above calculations, *Scheuchzer* and *Reyher* take for granted, 1. That from the going down to Egypt to the exodus there were *four* generations. 2. That the first two generations had died in Egypt. 3. That the promise of God in multiplying them as the stars of heaven, had taken place particularly in the two last generations. 4. That these two last generations alone form the aggregate sums given in the sacred text. 5. That their method of accounting for this aggregate through the four generations, is not only perfectly natural and mathematical, but strictly accordant with the promises made by God to them, as the sum of each tribe sufficiently proves. 6. That the whole account shows the truth of the Divine promise, the great accuracy of the Jewish lawgiver, and a proof of the inspiration of the sacred writings. But even to these calculations and deductions there may be objections, e. g. “*Scheuchzer* gives to 2,508 families of Dan, 24 male children, each above the age of 20: we may fairly allow an equal number of females, and add 5 more under 20, **See the note at “~~0127~~Exodus 12:37”**, and we have 53 children on the average through all the families of a tribe; whilst to 4,425 families of Benjamin are allotted 7 males aged 20, and adding 7 females at 5 children, we have 19 children in each family; a tolerable number; but apparently more reasonable than the other.”-ANON.

## NUMBERS

### CHAPTER 2

*Moses commanded to teach the Israelites how they are to pitch their tents, and erect the ensigns of their fathers' houses, 1, 2. Judah, Issachar, and Zebulun, on the EAST, amounting to 186,400 men, 3-9. Reuben, Simeon, and Gad, on the SOUTH, with 151,450 men, 10-16. The Levites to be in the midst of the camp, 17. Ephraim, Manasseh, and Benjamin, on the WEST, with 108,100 men, 18-24. Dan, Asher, and Naphtali, on the NORTH, with 157,600 men, 25-31. The sum total of the whole, 603,550 men, 32. But the Levites are not included, 33. The people do as the Lord commands them, 34.*

#### NOTES ON CHAP. 2

**Verse 2. Every man-shall pitch by his own standard]** Commentators, critics, philosophers, and professional men, have taken a great deal of pains to illustrate this chapter by showing the best method of encampment for such a vast number of men, and the manner in which they conceive the Israelites formed their camp in the wilderness. As God gave them the plan, it was doubtless in every respect perfect; and fully answered the double purpose of convenience and security. *Scheuchzer* has entered into this subject with his usual ability, and in very considerable detail. Following the plan of *Reyher*, as in the preceding chapter, he endeavours to ascertain the precise order in which the several tribes were disposed; and as his work is both scarce and dear, the reader will not be displeased-to meet here with a translation of all that refers to the subject.

#### **SCHEUCHZER'S DESCRIPTION AND PLAN OF THE ENCAMPMENTS OF THE ISRAELITES IN THE WILDERNESS**

(See graphic at end of chapter.)

“If we form a proper idea of God, of his essence and his attributes, we shall easily perceive that this infinite and supreme Being wills and executes what his Divine *wisdom* appoints; in a word, we shall see that he is the God of *order*. This order displays itself in the perfection, arrangement, and assemblage of all created beings; in the construction of the earth which we inhabit, where every thing is formed in order, number, weight, and measure; and in all bodies, great and small. It is certain that *Noah's ark* is a perfect model of *naval architecture*. The *temple of Solomon*, and that of

*Ezekiel* were likewise masterpieces in their kind. But at present we are to consider the Divine arrangement of the Israelitish camp, and the manner in which it was formed.

“The Israelitish army was divided into three principal divisions. The *first*, which was the least in extent, but the strongest and the most powerful, occupied the centre of the army: this was the *throne of God*, i.e., the TABERNACLE. The *second*, which was composed of the *priests* and *Levites*, surrounded the first. The *third*, and the farthest from the centre, took in all the other tribes of Israel, who were at least about a mile from the tabernacle. For it appears from Josephus, iii. 4, that the nearest approach they dared make to the ark, except during the time of worship, was a distance of 2,000 cubits. The reverence due to the Divine Majesty, the numerous army of the Israelites, composed of 600,000 soldiers, with their families, which made about 3,000,000 souls, naturally demanded a considerable extent of ground. We are not to imagine that all these families pitched their tents pellmell, without order, like beasts, or as the troops of Tartary, and the eastern armies; on the contrary, their camp was divided according to the most exact rules. And we cannot even doubt that their camp was laid out, and the place of every division and tribe exactly assigned by some engineers, or geometricians, before the army stopped to encamp, in order that every person might at once find his own quarter, and the road he ought to take to reach the other tents.

“Four divisions, which faced the four quarters of the heavens, each with his own ensign, formed the centre of the army. JUDAH was placed on the east, and under him he had *Issachar* and *Zebulun*; on the south was REUBEN, and under him *Simeon* and *Gad*: on the west was *Ephraim*, and under him *Manasseh* and *Benjamin*; finally, DAN was on the north, and he had under him *Asher* and *Naphtali*. It has been pretended by some that these four principal divisions were not alone distinguished by their ensigns, but that each particular tribe had likewise its standard or ensign. On this subject we might refer to the Talmudists, who have gone so far as to define the *colours*, and the *figures* or *arms*, of the very ensigns. They pretend that on that of JUDAH a *lion* was painted, with this inscription: ‘*Rise, Lord, let thine enemies be dispersed, and let those that hate thee flee before thee;*’ and they found this description of Judah’s ensign in <sup><01490></sup>Genesis 49:9. They give to ISSACHAR an *ass*, <sup><014914></sup>Genesis 49:14; to ZEBULUN a *ship*, <sup><014913></sup>Genesis 49:13; to REUBEN a *river*, <sup><014904></sup>Genesis 49:4, (others give REUBEN the *figure of a man*;) to SIMEON a *sword*, <sup><014905></sup>Genesis 49:5; to

GAD a *lion*, <sup><6330></sup>**Deuteronomy 33:20**; to EPHRAIM a *unicorn*, <sup><6337></sup>**Deuteronomy 33:17**; an *ox* to MANASSEH, <sup><6337></sup>**Deuteronomy 33:17**; a *wolf* to BENJAMIN, <sup><014927></sup>**Genesis 49:27**; and a *serpent* to DAN, <sup><014917></sup>**Genesis 49:17**, though others give him an *eagle*. In short, they pretend that the ensign of ASHER was a *handful of corn*, <sup><014921></sup>**Genesis 49:20**, and that of NAPHTALI a *stag*, <sup><014921></sup>**Genesis 49:21**.

“To prove that the sums here are correctly added, we have but to join together the detached numbers, and see if they agree with the total. The text will furnish us with an example of this: there was in the quarter of:—

Judah	186,400	<sup>&lt;01019&gt;</sup> <b>Numbers 2:9</b>
Reuben	151,450	<sup>&lt;01026&gt;</sup> <b>Numbers 2:16</b>
Ephraim	108,100	<sup>&lt;01024&gt;</sup> <b>Numbers 2:24</b>
Dan	157,600	<sup>&lt;01023&gt;</sup> <b>Numbers 2:31</b>

“Among other things we must remark that rule of military tactics which requires that the *advanced* and *rear guards* should be stronger than the centre.

“In a well-regulated camp, cleanliness is considered indispensably necessary; this is particularly remarkable in the Israelitish army, where the most exact order was maintained. Hence every person who had any kind of disease, and those who were reputed *unclean*, were forbidden to enter it; <sup><0402></sup>**Numbers 5:2, 3**; <sup><6230></sup>**Deuteronomy 23:10**.

“Those who have the health of men, and of a whole army confided to them, are not ignorant that diseases may be easily produced by putrid exhalations from excrementitious matter; and that such matter will produce in camps pestilential fevers and dysenteries. For this reason, care should be always taken that offices, at a distance from the camp, be provided for the soldiers, and also that those who are sick should be separated from the others, and sent to hospitals to be properly treated.

“In military tactics we find two distinct wings spoken of; the right and the left. The Israelitish army not only had them on one side, as is customary, but on all their four sides. On the *eastern* side, the tribe of Issachar formed the *right*, that of Zebulun the *left*, and that of Judah the *centre*. On the *south*, Simeon formed the *right wing*, Gad the *left*, and Reuben the *centre*. Towards the *west*, Manasseh composed the *right*, Benjamin the *left*, and



Ephraim the *centre*. And on the *north*, Asher was on the *right wing*, Naphtali on the *left wing*, and Dan in the *centre*. Notwithstanding this, however, the army was not in danger of being easily broken; for every tribe being numerous, they were supported by several ranks, in such a manner that the first being broken, the second was capable of making resistance; and if the second gave way, or shared the same fate as the first, it found itself supported by the third, and so on with the rest. The square form in which the Jewish army was ordinarily placed, was the very best for security and defence. The use and importance of the *hollow square* in military tactics is well known.

“For so large a multitude of people, and for so numerous an army, it was needful that all the necessary articles of life should be prepared beforehand, or be found ready to purchase. In these respects nothing was wanting to the Israelites. Their bread came down to them from heaven, and they had besides an abundance of every thing that could contribute to magnificence. If we may credit Josephus, they had amongst them *public markets*, and a *variety of shops*. Ant., i. iii. c. 12, sec. 5. The tabernacle being erected, it was placed in the midst of the camp, each of the three tribes stretching themselves on the wings, and leaving between them a sufficient space to pass.

“It was, says Josephus, like a well appointed market where every thing was ready for sale in due order, and all sorts of artificers kept their shops; so that this camp might be considered a movable city.

“In <sup><12:27></sup>**Exodus 32:27** we likewise find that mention is made of the *gates* of the camp: ‘Put every man his sword by his side, and go in and out from gate to gate throughout the camp.’ From whence we may certainly conclude that if the camp had *gates*, the Israelites had also *sentinels* to guard them. If this be true, we may also believe that they were *surrounded with entrenchments*, or that at least their gates were defended by some fortifications. *Sagittarius* (de Jan. Vet., c. 18. § 10) pretends that the tabernacle was not only guarded by the Levites, but that there were likewise sentinels at the gates, and at the entrance of the Israelitish camps. See Clarke’s note on “<sup><12:27></sup>**Exodus 32:27**”.

“If we examine and compare the camp of Israel with that of our most numerous armies, which in these days are composed of 100,000 or of 150,000 men, we cannot but consider it of vast extent. The Jews say it was twelve miles in circumference; this is not at all improbable, and

consequently the front of each wing must be three miles in extent. But taking in the tents, the soldiers and their numerous families, the beasts of burden, the cattle, and the goods, it certainly must have formed a very considerable inclosure, much more than twelve miles. **See Clarke's notes on "<sup>401237</sup>Exodus 12:37", and "<sup>4021318</sup>Exodus 13:18".** *Reyher* (Math. Mos., p. 568) assigns to the

Tribe of JUDAH,		
A space of	298 $\frac{2}{5}$	cubits in breadth
And	250	in length
	—————	
Which makes	74,600	square cubits.

“We must observe that we are here merely speaking of the ground which the soldiers of this tribe occupied whilst remaining *close to each other* in their ranks, and that in this computation there is but one cubit square allowed for each man; wherefore, if we take in the arrangement of the soldiers, the tents, the necessary spaces, the families, the beasts of burden, and the movables, a much larger extent of ground is requisite. All those circumstances do not come into Reyher's calculation. He continues thus:—

For the tribe of ISSACHAR,		
	217 $\frac{3}{5}$	cubits in breadth
	250	in length
	—————	
Total	54,400	
For the tribe of GAD,		
	140 $\frac{5}{11}$	cubits in breadth
	325	in length
	—————	
Total	45,650	
For the tribe of ZEBULUN,		
	229 $\frac{3}{4}$	cubits in breadth
	250	in length
	—————	

Total	57,400	
For the tribe of EPHRAIM,		
	202 1/2	cubits in breadth
	200	in length
	—————	
Total	40,500	
For the tribe of REUBEN,		
	143 1/5	cubits in breadth
	325	in length
	—————	
Total	46,500	
For the tribe of MANASSEH,		
	161	cubits in breadth
	200	in length
	—————	
Total	32,200	
For the tribe of SIMEON,		
	182 6/13	cubits in breadth
	325	in length
	—————	
Total	59,300	
For the tribe of BENJAMIN,		
	177	cubits in breadth
	200	in length
	—————	
Total	35,400	

For the tribe of DAN,		
	156 3/4	cubits in breadth
	400	in length
	————	
Total	62,700	
For the tribe of ASHER,		
	103 3/4	cubits in breadth
	400	in length
	————	
Total	41,500	
For the tribe of NAPHTALI,		
	133 1/2	cubits in breadth
	400	in length
	————	
Total	53,400	

“If we make the ichnography, or even the scenography, of the camp on this plan, in following it we must first, in the *centre*, form a *parallelogram* of 100 cubits long and 50 broad for the *court* of the tabernacle with an empty space all round of 50 cubits broad. We must then place the camp of the Levites in the following order:—

To the west, the <i>Gershonites</i> , <del>&lt;OAR2&gt;</del> <b>Numbers</b> <b>3:22, 23.</b>			
Breadth	30	cubits	
Length	250	cubits	
	————		
Total	7,500		
To the south, the <i>Kohathites</i> , <del>&lt;OAR2&gt;</del> <b>Numbers</b> <b>3:28, 29.</b>			
Breadth	86	cubits	
Length	100	cubits	
	————		
Total	8,600		

To the north, the <i>Merarites</i> , <sup>&lt;0403&gt;</sup> <b>Numbers</b> <b>3:34, 35.</b>		
Breadth	62	cubits
Length	100	cubits
	—————	
Total	6,200	

“On the east we must place tents for Moses, Aaron, and his sons,  
<sup><0403></sup>**Numbers 3:38.**

“At the place where the camp of the Levites ends, a space must be left of 2,000 square cubits, after which we must take the dimensions of the camp of the twelve tribes.

“This plan is in the main well imagined, but it does not afford an ichnography of sufficient extent. To come more accurately to a proper understanding of this subject, I shall examine the rules that are now in use for encampments, and compare them afterward with what is laid down in the Holy Scriptures, in order that we may hereby form to ourselves an idea of the camp of God, the grandeur and perfection of which surpassed every thing of the kind ever seen. I shall now mention what I am about to propose as the foundation upon which I shall proceed.

“In <sup><0212></sup>**Exodus 18:21**, <sup><0015></sup>**Deuteronomy 1:15**, we find the advice given by Jethro to Moses respecting political government and military discipline: ‘Thou shalt provide out of all the people able men, such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness; and place such over them, to be rulers of thousands, and rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens.’ [See the note on “<sup><0212></sup>**Exodus 18:21**”.] We may very well compare these *tribunes*, or rather these *chiliarchs*, to our *colonels*, the *centurions* or *hecatontarchs* to *commanders* or *captains*, the *quinguagenaries* or *pentecontarchs* to *lieutenants*, and the *decurions* or *decarchs* to our *sergeants*. These chiefs, whether they were named *magistrates* or *officers*, were each drawn from his own particular tribe, so that it was not permitted to place over one tribe an officer taken from another. Whatever matter the *decarchs* could not decide upon or terminate, went to the *pentecontarchs*, and from thence by degrees to the *hecatontarchs*, to the *chiliarchs*, to *Moses*, and at length to GOD himself, the sovereign head of the army. If we

divide the whole army (such as it was at its departure from Egypt) by the numbers already laid down, we shall find 600 chiliarchs, 6,000 hecatontarchs, 12,000 pentecontarchs, 60,000 decarchs, which in all make 78,600 officers. Josephus regulates the number of them still more exactly by saying that there were chiefs set over 10,000, 1,000, 500, 50, 30, 20, and 10. We find this regulation in *Ant. Jud.*, b. iii., c. 4: ‘Take a review of the army, and appoint chosen rulers over tens of thousands, and then over thousands, then divide them into five hundreds, and again into hundreds, and into fifties, and set rulers over each of them who may distinguish them into thirties, and keep them in order; and at last number them by twenties and by tens, and let there be one commander over each number, to be denominated from the number of those over whom they are rulers.’

“We ought not to pass over in silence this division by *tens*, for twice 10 make 20, three times 10, 30, five times 10, 50, ten times 10, 100, ten times 50, 500, ten times 1,000, 10,000. It was in this manner, as is pretended, that *Cangu*, the first of the great Khams, (as he is called,) and after him *Tamerlane*, drew out an army, i.e., by 10, 100, 1,000, 10,000, mentioned in *Alhazen*, c. v. Probably these Tartars borrowed from the very Hebrews themselves this manner of laying out a camp. At all events it is certain that nothing more ancient of the kind can be found than that mentioned in the books of Moses. To distinguish it from that of the Greeks and Romans we may with justice call it the Hebrew castrametation, or, if we judge it more proper, the Divine castrametation, and consequently the most perfect of all. For although Moses places the *pentecontarchs* in the middle, between the *hecatontarchs* and the *decarchs*, i.e., 50 between 100 and 10; and although Josephus afterward places 1,000 between 500 and 10,000, and 30 and 20 between 10 and 50, this does not at all derange the progression by *tens*, which is the foundation of arithmetic. These subaltern officers were equally useful and necessary, as we now see that their number, far from creating confusion, helps maintain order, and that the more there are of them the better is order preserved. According to the modern method of carrying on war, the next in rank to the generals of the army (who have the supreme command) are *field marshals* and *brigadiers*, who command 5,000 men.

There are then between the *chiliarchs* or *colonels* and the *hecatontarchs* or *captains*, *lieutenant-colonels*; and between the *hecatontarchs* and the *decarchs*, *lieutenant-captains*; and these have under them *lieutenants* and *ensigns*.

“It is certain that this method of distributing an army by *tens*, and of encamping, which is very concise, has far greater advantages even with respect to expense than the very best plans of the *Greeks, Romans*, or any other ancient nation. On this subject we have the testimony of *Simon Steven*, Castrametat. c. 1, art. 1, and c. 4. art. 3, *Oper. Math.*, p. 574 and 596, &c. According to this arrangement each soldier, or if more proper, each *father of a family*, being thus placed by *ten* and *ten* in a straight line one after the other, might very easily name themselves *first, second, &c.* Each troop in like manner might be distinguished by its *ensigns*, that of 100 might have them small, that of 1,000 larger, and that of 10,000 still larger. Every officer, from the lowest subaltern to the general officers of the camp, and even to the generalissimos themselves, had only an easy inspection of ten men each; the *decarch* had the inspection of 10 soldiers, the *hecatontarch* of 10 *decarchs*, and the *chiliarch* of 10 *hecatontarchs*. After the *chiliarchs*, which in no troop can amount to ten, there is the chief or head of each tribe. Each then exactly fulfilling the duty assigned him, we may suppose every thing to be in good order, even were the camp larger and more numerous. The same may be said respecting the contentions that might arise among the soldiers, as well as every thing relative to the general duty of the officers, as to the labours they were to undertake, whether for striking their tents for works of fortification or for making entrenchments. This arrangement might be easily retained in the memory, or a general list be kept of the names of both officers and soldiers to distribute to them their pay, and to keep exact accounts.

“It was possible in one moment to know the number of those who were either wanting or were out of their ranks, and to avoid this disorder in future by obliging each man to attend to his duty and keep in his rank. If by chance it happened that any one man wished to desert or had escaped, it was easy to notice him and inflict on him the punishment he merited. The *ensigns* being distinguished by their *marks*, and the *company* being known, it was easy to find any soldier whatever.

“The armies themselves might have certain marks to distinguish them, and by that means they might at once ascertain the person in question; for example: 8. 2. 7. 3. might signify the *eighth* soldier or *father* of a family, of the *second rank*, of the *seventh* company, in the third *chiliad*; 7. 3. 5. the *halberdier* of the *decurion* or *sergeant* of the *seventh* line, in the *third* company, of the *fifth chiliad* or thousand; 5. 8. the *hecatontarchs* or captains of the *fifth* company, in the eighth *chiliad*; 7. the *chiliarchs* or

*colonels* of the *seventh* rank; 0. finally, the general of the whole army. Farther, by the same means the loss or misplacing of their arms might be prevented. Again, the soldiers might in a very short time be instructed and formed to the exercise of arms, each *decad* having its *sergeant* for its master; and the chariots or other carriages might easily be divided amongst several, 10 under the *decurion*, 100 under the *hecatontarch*; and by thus following the above method, every thing might be kept in good order.

## A PLAN OF THE WHOLE ISRAELITISH CAMP

(See graphic at end of chapter.)

“We shall finally, in one plate, represent the whole camp of the Israelites, in that order which appears the most proper. For this purpose we must extract the square roots of the preceding spaces, in order that we may be able to assign to each tribe square areas, or rectangular parallelograms. I therefore find for

Reuben	3049	square cubits.
Simeon	3443	
The Gershonites	1224	
The Kohathites	1311	
The Merarites	1113	
Judah	3862	
Issachar	3298	
Zebulun	3388	
Gad	3019	
Asher	2880	
Manasseh	2537	
Ephraim	2846	
Benjamin	2660	
Dan	3541	
Naphtali	3268	

“The tabernacle, which was 100 cubits long and 50 broad, I place in the centre of the camp, at the distance of 840 feet from the camp of the Levites, which is placed exactly in the same manner as described in the sacred writings. I find therefore that the whole space of the camp is 259,600,000 feet. Now, according to the manner we have just divided the



camp for each tribe, the sum total being 125,210,000, it follows that the space between the tents contained 134,390,000. If, with *Eisenschmid*, we estimate the Roman mile at 766 French fathoms and two feet, (consequently 21,141,604 square feet to a Roman square mile,) the Israelitish camp will contain a little more than 12 such square miles.”

The reader will have the goodness to observe that the preceding observations, as well as the following plate or diagram, which was made by Scheuchzer on the exactest *proportions*, could not be accurately copied here without an *engraved* plate; and after all, the common reader could have profited no more by the *plate* than he can by the diagram. It is not even hoped that disquisitions of this kind can give any thing more than a *general idea* how the thing probably was; for to pretend to minute exactness, in such cases, would be absurd. The sacred text informs us that such and such tribes occupied the *east*, such the *west*, &c., &c.; but how they were arranged individually we cannot pretend absolutely to say. Scheuchzer’s plan is such as we may suppose judgment and skill would lay down; but still it is very probable that the plan of the Israelites’ castrametation was more perfect than any thing we can well imagine; for as it was the plan which probably God himself laid down, it must be in every respect what it ought to be, for the comfort and safety of this numerous multitude.

As there are some differences between the mode of distributing the command of a large army among the British, and that used on the continent, which is followed by Scheuchzer, I shall lay down the *descending* scale of British commanders, which some may think applies better to the preceding arrangement of the Israelitish army than the other.

The command of a large army in the British service is thus divided:—

The command of a large army in the British service is thus divided:—

1. The Commander-in-chief.
2. Lieutenant-generals, who command divisions of the army: (these divisions consist of 2 or 3 brigades each, which, on an average, amount to 5,000 men.)
3. Major-generals, who command brigades: (these brigades consist of from 2 to 3,000 men [2,500 is perhaps the average] according to the strength of the respective regiments of which the brigade is composed.)

4. Colonels in the army, or lieutenant-colonels, who command single regiments; they are assisted in the command of these regiments by the *majors* of the regiments. [I mention the *major*, that there may be no break in the descending scale of gradation of ranks, as in the event of the absence of the above two officers, he is the next in command.]

5. Captains who command companies: these companies (on the war establishment) consist of 100 men each, and there are 10 companies in every regiment, consequently a colonel, or lieutenant-colonel, commands 1,000 men.

*(Subaltern officers having no command, but assisting the captain.)*

6. Lieutenants, of which there are 2 to every company.

7. Ensign; 1 to each company.

*(These are called general officers.)*

1. Commander-in-chief.

2. Lieutenant-generals commanding divisions 5,000 each.

3. Major-generals, brigades 2,500.

4. Colonels, lieutenant-colonels, and majors; 3 officers belonging to each regiment in the service, and are solely employed in the disciplining and commanding the men; these are mounted on horseback, and termed field-officers. *(to each company.)*

5. 1 Captain

6. 2 Lieutenants

7. 1 Ensign

*Ascending* scale of ranks which every officer must pass through. (to every regiment.)

Ensign

Lieutenant

Captain

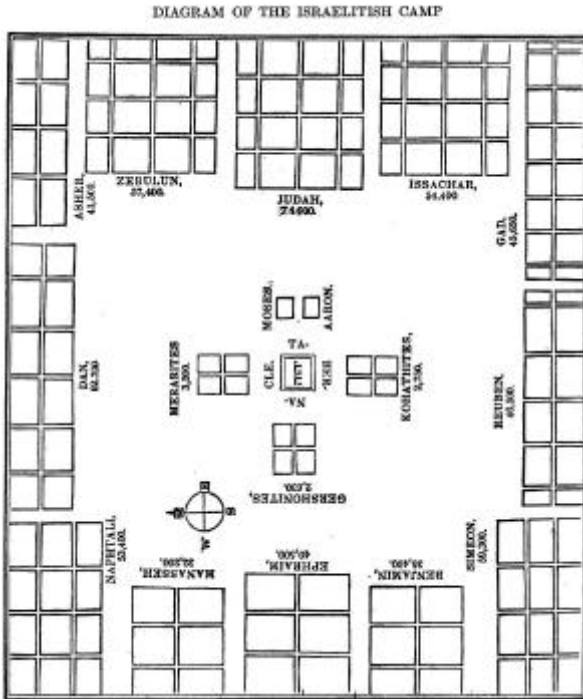
Major

Lieutenant-colonel

Colonel

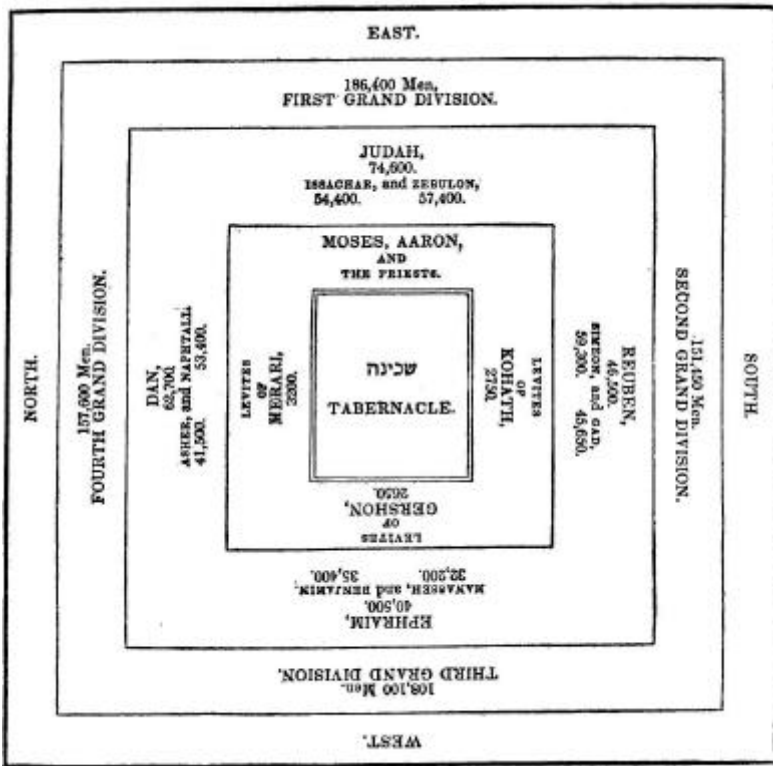
Major-general, brigade-commander.

Lieutenant-general, division-commander.  
 General-in-chief, who commands the whole army.



Though I particularly refer the reader to the above diagram of the Israelitish camp, taken from Scheuchzer's plate, which I have thought necessary to be subjoined to his description, yet I think it also proper to introduce that on the following page, as it gives a general and tolerably correct idea of this immense camp, in the description of which the inspired writer has been so very particular; but still I must say these things are to be considered as **PROBABLE**, not as *absolutely certain*; as comprising a *general view* of what may be supposed probable, likely, and practicable.

The whole may be said to consist of three camps, viz., 1. The camp of the *Lord*; 2. The camp of the *Levites*; and , 3. The *people*. These in the grand camp in the wilderness, corresponded with the *holy of holies*, the *holy place*, and the *outward court* of the Temple at Jerusalem. See *Ainsworth*.



## NUMBERS

## CHAPTER 3

*The generations of Aaron and Moses, 1-4. The tribe of Levi to minister to the Lord under Aaron and his sons, 5-10. They are taken in the place of the first-born, 11-13. Moses is commanded to number them, 14-16. Gershon, Kohath, and Merari, the names of the three heads of families of the Levites, 17. Of Gershon and his family, 18-21. Their number, 7,500, ver. 22. Their place behind the tabernacle, westward, 23. Their chief, Eliasaph, 24. Their charge, 25, 26. Of Kohath and his family, 27. Their number, 8,600, ver. 28. Their place, beside the tabernacle, southward, 29. Their chief, Elizaphan, 30. Their charge, 31. The chief of the Levites, Eleazar, son of Aaron, 32. Of Merari and his family, 33. Their number, 6,200, ver. 34. Their chief, Zuriel, they shall pitch beside the tabernacle, northward, 35. Their charge, 35-37. MOSES and AARON to encamp before the tabernacle, eastward, 38. The amount of all the males among the Levites from a month old and upwards, 22,000, ver. 39. Moses is commanded to number the first-born, 40; and to take the Levites and their cattle, instead of the first-born of man and beast among the Israelites, 41. Moses numbers the first-born, who amount to 22,273, ver. 43. As the first-born were 273 more than the Levites, Moses is commanded to take from the people five shekels apiece for them, 44-47, which is to be given to Aaron and his sons, 48. Moses does accordingly, and finds the amount of the money to be 1,365 shekels, 49, 50, which is given to Aaron and his sons, 51.*

## NOTES ON CHAP. 3

**Verse 1. The generations of Aaron and Moses]** Though Aaron and Moses are both mentioned here, yet the family of Aaron alone appears in the list: hence some have thought that the word *Moses* was not originally in the text. Others think that the words *twdl t hl aw veelleh toledoth, these are the generations*, should be rendered *these are the acts*, or *transactions*, or the *history of the lives*, as the same phrase may be understood in ~~Gen 2:4~~ **Genesis 2:4; 6:9**. However this may be, it is evident that in this genealogy the family of Aaron are alone mentioned, probably because these belonged to the priesthood. Moses passes by his own family, or immediate descendants; he gave no rank or privilege to them during his life, and left nothing to them at his death. They became incorporated with the Levites, from or amongst whom they are never distinguished. What a strong proof is this of the celestial origin of his religion! Had it been of *man*, it must have had the gratification of some impure passion for its object; lust,

ambition, or avarice: but none of these ever appear during the whole of his administration amongst the Israelites, though he had it constantly in his power to have gratified each. What an essential difference between the religion of the *Pentateuch* and that of the *Koran*! The former is God's workmanship; the latter is a motley mixture of all bad crafts, with here and there a portion of heavenly fire, stolen from the Divine altar in the Old and New Testaments, to give some vitality to the otherwise inert mass.

**Verse 4. Nadab and Abihu died]** See the notes on <sup><B100></sup>Leviticus 10:1-5.

**Verse 6. Bring the tribe of Levi near]** The original word *brqh hakreb* is properly a sacrificial word, and signifies the presenting of a sacrifice or offering to the Lord. As an offering, the tribe of *Levi* was given up entirely to the service of the sanctuary, to be no longer their own, but the Lord's property.

**Verse 7. The charge of the whole congregation]** They shall work *for* the whole congregation; and *instead* of the *first-born*.

**Verse 8. All the instruments]** The tabernacle itself and all its contents: see all described, <sup><B125></sup>Numbers 3:25, 26, 31, 36, 37. The *Levites* were to perform the most common and laborious offices. It was their business to take down, put up, and carry the tabernacle and its utensils; for it was the object of their peculiar care. In a word, *they* were the servants of the *priests*.

**Verse 10. Aaron and his sons-shall wait on their priest's office]** It was the business of the *priests* to offer the different sacrifices to God; to consecrate the shew-bread, pour out the libations, burn the incense, sprinkle the blood of the victims, and bless the people. In a word, *they* were the servants of God alone.

**Verse 12. I have taken the Levites-instead of all the first-born]** The Levites are taken for the service of the sanctuary in place of the first-born. The *first-born* were dedicated to God in commemoration of his slaying the *first-born* of the Egyptians, and preserving those of the Israelites. Even the *cattle* of the Levites were taken in place of the *first-born of the cattle* of the rest of the tribes. See <sup><B135></sup>Numbers 3:45.

Several reasons have been assigned why God should give this honour to the tribe of Levi in preference to all the others, but they do not seem to me to be conclusive. Their zeal in destroying those who had corrupted the

worship of God in the business of the golden calf, <sup><12328></sup>**Exodus 32:28**, has been thought a sufficient reason. A better reason is, that this was the *smallest* tribe, and they were quite enough for the service. To have had a more *numerous* tribe at this time would have been very inconvenient.

Aaron, says Mr. Ainsworth, being in his priesthood a type of Christ, all these rites are fulfilled in him. For unto Christ God gave *children*, <sup><80213></sup>**Hebrews 2:13**. And they are *a congregation of first-born, whose names are written in heaven*, <sup><81223></sup>**Hebrews 12:23**, being of God's own will *begotten by the word of truth*, that they should be *a kind of first-fruits of his creatures*, <sup><90118></sup>**James 1:18**, to whom he also gives the first-fruits of his Spirit, <sup><45823></sup>**Romans 8:23**. These *wait on and follow the Lamb*, being *first-fruits unto God and to the Lamb*, <sup><61404></sup>**Revelation 14:4**; and Christ *hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father*, that we may *serve him day and night in his temple*, <sup><60006></sup>**Revelation 1:6; 7:15**.

**Verse 15. A month old and upward]** The males of all the other tribes were numbered, from *twenty years and upward*; had the *Levites* been numbered in this way, they would not have been nearly equal in number to the firstborn of the twelve tribes. Add to this, that as there must have been *first-born of all ages* in the other tribes, it was necessary that the *Levites*, who were to be their *substitutes*, should be also of *all ages*; and it appears to have been on this ground, at least partly, that the *Levites* were numbered from *four weeks* old and upward.

**Verse 16. Moses numbered them]** Though Moses and Aaron conjointly numbered the *twelve tribes*, yet Moses alone numbered the *Levites*; “for as the money with which the first-born of Israel, who exceeded the number of *Levites*, were redeemed, was to be paid to Aaron and his sons, <sup><04038></sup>**Numbers 3:48**, it was decent that he, whose advantage it was that the number of the first-born of Israel should *exceed*, should not be authorized to take that number himself.”-*Dodd*, from Bishop *Kidder*.

**Verse 22. Seven thousand and five hundred]** Perhaps originally  $\text{r}$  *resh*, 200, instead of  $\text{E}$  *caph*, 500; see the following note.

**Verse 39. Which Moses and Aaron numbered]** The word  $\text{r}$  *hah* *veaharon*, “and Aaron.” has a point over each of its letters, probably designed as a mark of *spuriousness*. The word is wanting in the *Samaritan*, *Syriac*, and *Coptic*; it is wanting also in *eight* of Dr. *Kennicott's MSS.*, and

in *four* of Deuteronomy *Rossi's*. Moses alone, as *Houbigant* observes, is commanded to take the number of the *Levites*; see <sup><0435></sup>**Numbers 3:5, 11, 40, 44, 51.**

**All the males-were twenty and two thousand.]** This total does not agree with the particulars; for the Gershonites were 7,500, the Kohathites 8,600, the Merarites 6,200, total 22,300. Several methods of solving this difficulty have been proposed by learned men; Dr. *Kennicott's* is the most simple. Formerly the numbers in the Hebrew Bible were expressed by *letters*, and not by *words at full length*; and if two nearly similar letters were mistaken for each other, many errors in the numbers must be the consequence. Now it is probable that an error has crept into the number of the *Gershonites*, <sup><0432></sup>**Numbers 3:22**, where, instead of 7,500, we should read 7,200, as **Ĕ caph**, 500, might have been easily mistaken for **resh**, 200, especially if the down stroke of the *caph* had been a little shorter than ordinary, which is often the case in MSS. The extra 300 being taken off, the total is just 22,000, as mentioned in the 39th verse.

**Verse 43. All the first-born males-were twenty and two thousand two hundred and threescore and thirteen.]** Thus we find there were 273 *first-born* beyond the number of the *Levites*. These are ordered, <sup><0436></sup>**Numbers 3:46**, to be *redeemed*; and the redemption price is to be *five shekels* each, <sup><0437></sup>**Numbers 3:47**, about 15*s*. And this money, amounting to 1,365 shekels, equal to £204 15*s*. English, he took of the first-born of Israel, <sup><0450></sup>**Numbers 3:50**. But how was this collected among 22,273 persons? *Rabbi Solomon Jarchi* says, “to prevent contention, Moses took 22,000 slips of parchment, and wrote on each *a son of Levi*, and 273 others, on which he wrote *five shekels*; then he mixed them in a basket, and each man took out one; those who drew the slips on which *five shekels* were written, paid the money; the others went free.” This is a most stupid and silly tale, for such a mode of settlement never could have been resorted to by an intelligent people. It would have been much more simple to have paid it out of a general fund; and it is very likely that in this way the expense was defrayed.

This species of redeeming of men is referred to by St. Peter, <sup><0018></sup>**1 Peter 1:18,19**: “Ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver *and* gold, from your vain conversation, received by tradition from your fathers; but with the precious (τιμιω αιματι, *valuable*) blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot,” &c. And it is not



the *first-born* only which are thus redeemed, for he, by the grace of God, tasted death for EVERY man; ~~<812>~~ **Hebrews 2:9**. Reader, give glory to God that such a ransom has been paid for thy soul, and see that, redeemed from thy vain conversation, thy empty, fruitless, and graceless observances, on which thou hast built thy hopes of salvation, thou walk in newness of life, giving thy whole soul with thankfulness unto the Father who hath translated thee from darkness, and placed thee in the kingdom of his beloved Son. To Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever! Amen.

## NUMBERS

## CHAPTER 4

*Moses is commanded to take the sum of the sons of Kohath from thirty years old and upward, 1-4. The service which they had to perform, 5-15. The office of Eleazar, 16. The family of Kohath to be continued among the Levites, 17-19. They are not to go into the holy of holies, 20. The sum of the sons of Gershon, 21-23. The service they had to perform, 24-27. They are to be under Ithamar, 28. The sum of the sons of Merari, 29, 30. The service they had to perform, 31-33. The sum of all the families of Kohath, 2,750, ver. 34-37. The sum of the families of Gershon, 2,630, ver. 38-41. The sum of the families of Merari, 3,200, ver. 42-45. The sum total of the families of Gershon, Kohath, and Merari, 8,580, ver. 46-49.*

## NOTES ON CHAP. 4

**Verse 3. From thirty years old]** In ~~40824~~ **Numbers 8:24**, the Levites are ordered to enter on the service of the tabernacle at the age of *twenty-five* years; and in ~~43234~~ **1 Chronicles 23:24**, they were ordered to commence that work at *twenty* years of age. How can these different times be reconciled?

1. At the time of which Moses speaks here, the Levitical service was exceedingly *severe*, and consequently required men *full grown, strong, and stout*, to perform it; the age therefore of *thirty* years was appointed as the period for commencing this service, the *weightier* part of which is probably here intended. 2. In ~~40824~~ **Numbers 8:24**, Moses seems to speak of the service in a *general* way; the *severe*, which was to be performed by the full-grown Levites, and the less laborious work which younger men might assist in: hence the age of *twenty-five* is fixed. 3. In David's time and afterwards, in the *fixed* tabernacle and temple, the *laboriousness* of the service no longer existed, and hence *twenty* years was the age fixed on for all Levites to enter into the work of the sanctuary. The rabbins say that the Levites began to learn to do the service at *twenty-five*, and that having been instructed *five* years, they began the public service at *thirty*, and thus they reconcile the two periods referred to above. We may well suppose that the *sons of the prophets* continued a considerable time under instructions before they were called fully to exercise themselves in the prophetic office.

**Until fifty years old]** This was allowing *twenty* years for public severe service; a very considerate and merciful ordinance. A preacher who

devotes his whole time and strength to the service of the Church of God from twenty to fifty or sixty years of age, should be then excused from his *severer labour*, and maintained at the charge of the sanctuary. This would not only be a great comfort to a worn-out servant of God, but also of great use to the work of the ministry, which, to be faithfully and effectually performed, requires all the powers of the body and mind of man. *Old faithful ministers* are to be highly respected for their work's sake, and to be supplied with all the necessaries and comforts of life; but how little can they do in the public ministry of the word, however willing to work, when their eye waxes dim and their bodily strength fails! See <sup>“4025”</sup> **Numbers 8:25**. Both for their own sakes, and for the good of the Church, they should be excused from a labour to which they must be almost every way inadequate. But notwithstanding this comparative inactivity, their counsels, advice, and experience will always be considered as a treasure to the Church of Christ.

**Verse 20. When the holy things are covered]** Literally, [I bk *keballa*, when they are *swallowed down*; which shows the promptitude with which every thing belonging to the holy of holies was put out of sight, for these mysteries must ever be treated with the deepest reverence; and indeed without this they could not have been to them the representatives of heavenly realities. See the concluding note.

**Verse 36. Those that were numbered]** In <sup>“4027”</sup> **Numbers 3:27**, &c., we have an account of the whole number of the Levites, and here of those only who were *able to serve the Lord in the sanctuary*. By comparing the two places we find the numbers to stand thus:—

KOHATHITES	Able men	2,750
	Unable	5,850
	Total	8,600
GERSHONITES	Able men	2,630
	Unable	4,870
	Total	7,500
MERARITES	Able men	3,200
	Unable	3,000
	Total	6,200

Thus we find that the whole number of the Levites amounted to 22,300, of whom 3,580 were fit for service, and 13,720 unfit, being either too old or too young. What an astonishing number of men, all properly ecclesiastics; all performing some service by which God was glorified, and the congregation at large benefited! See *Ainsworth*.

FROM this and the preceding chapter we see the very severe labour which the Levites were obliged to perform while the journeyings of the Israelites lasted. When we consider that there was not less than 10 *tons* 13 *cwt.* 24 *lb.* 14 *oz.*, i.e., almost *ten tons* and fourteen hundred pounds' weight of *metal* employed in the tabernacle, (see the notes on *Exod.* xxxviii.) besides the immense weight of the *skins, hangings, cords, boards, and posts*, we shall find it was no very easy matter to transport this movable temple from place to place.

The *Gershonites*, who were 7,500 men in the service, had to carry the *tent, coverings, veils, hangings of the court, &c., &c.*, <sup><04E25></sup>**Numbers 3:25, 26.**

The *Kohathites*, who were 8,600 men, had to carry the *ark, table, candlestick, altars, and instruments of the sanctuary*, <sup><04E31></sup>**Numbers 3:31.**

The *Merarites*, who were 6,200 men, had to carry the *boards, bars, pillars, sockets*, and all *matters* connected with these belonging to the *tabernacle*, with the *pillars of the court, their sockets, pins, and cords*, <sup><04E36></sup>**Numbers 3:36, 37.**

The tabernacle was an epitome of the temple: the *temple* and *tabernacle* were representatives of the Church of the living God, and of the *humanity* of our blessed Lord. As God dwelt in the tabernacle and temple, so his fulness dwelt in the *man* Christ Jesus. These again were types of the Christian Church, which is termed the body of Christ, <sup><04E23></sup>**Ephesians 1:23**, where he dwells in the plenitude of the graces of his Spirit.

Mr. Ainsworth has a very useful note on the 20th verse of this chapter, the most edifying part of which I shall here lay before the reader. He considers the *tabernacle* and *temple*, not only as pointing out the *old dispensation*, the *annulling* of which was typified by their *destruction*, but he considers also the former as emblematical of the *body* of man.

“The apostle,” says he, “treating of the death of the saints, uses this similitude: ‘If our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

For we that are in THIS TABERNACLE do groan, being burdened, not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life;’ <sup><4780></sup>**2 Corinthians 5:1-4**. So Peter calls his death the *putting off* of his TABERNACLE, <sup><61014></sup>**2 Peter 1:14**. And this similitude is very fit; for, as here, in the tabernacle of Moses, the holy things were first covered and taken away, (see <sup><0402></sup>**Numbers 4:20**.) so the soul and its powers are first withdrawn from the body by death. 2. As the curtains and coverings were taken off and folded up, so the skin and flesh of our bodies are pulled off and consumed. 3. As the boards of the tabernacle were disjointed and pulled asunder, so shall our bones and sinews: compare Job’s description of the formation of man, <sup><0408></sup>**Numbers 10:8-12**; and Solomon’s account of his dissolution, <sup><2133></sup>**Ecclesiastes 12:3,4**. 4. As the disjointed and dissolved tabernacle was afterwards set up again, <sup><0402></sup>**Numbers 10:21**, so shall our *bodies* in the day of the resurrection; see <sup><6155></sup>**1 Corinthians 15:51-54**.”

## NUMBERS

## CHAPTER 5

*The Israelites are commanded to purify the camp by excluding all lepers, and all diseased and unclean persons, 1-3. They do so, 4. Law concerning him who has defrauded another-he shall confess his sin, restore the principal and add besides one fifth of its value, 5-7. If he have no kinsman to whom the recompense can be made, it shall be given unto the Lord, 8. All the holy things offered to the Lord shall be the priest's portion, 9,10. The law concerning jealousy, 11-14. The suspected woman's offering, 15. She is to be brought before the Lord, 16. The priest shall take holy water, and put it in dust from the floor of the tabernacle, 17. Shall put the offering in her hand, and adjure her, 18-20. The form of the oath, 21, 22; which is to be written on a book, blotted out in the bitter waters, and these the suspected person shall be obliged to drink, 23, 24. The jealousy-offering shall be waved before the Lord, 25, 26. The effect which shall be produced if the suspected person be guilty, 27. The effect if not guilty, 28. Recapitulation, with the purpose and design of the law, 29, 30.*

## NOTES ON CHAP. 5

**Verse 2. Put out of the camp every leper]** According to the preceding plan, it is sufficiently evident that each camp had a space behind it, and on one side, whither the infected might be removed, and where probably convenient places were erected for the accommodation of the infected; for we cannot suppose that they were driven out into the naked wilderness. But the expulsion mentioned here was founded, 1. On a purely *physical* reason, *viz.*, the diseases were *contagious*, and therefore there was a necessity of putting those afflicted by them apart, that the infection might not be communicated. 2. There was also a *spiritual* reason; the camp was the habitation of God, and nothing impure should be permitted to remain where he dwelt. 3. The camp was an emblem of the Church, where nothing that is defiled should enter, and in which nothing that is unholy should be tolerated. All *lepers*-all persevering impenitent sinners, should be driven from the sacred pale, nor should any such ever be permitted to enter.

**Verse 4. And the children of Israel-put them out]** This is the earliest account we have of such separations; and probably this ordinance gave the first idea of a *hospital*, where all those who are afflicted with contagious disorders are put into particular wards, under medical treatment. Though

no mention be made of the situation, circumstances, &c., of those expelled persons, we may certainly infer that they were treated with that humanity which their distressed state required. Though sinners must be separated from the Church of God, yet they should be treated with affectionate regard, because *they may be reclaimed*. It is too often the case when a man backslides from the way of truth, he is abandoned by all; finding his case desperate, he plunges yet deeper into the mire of sin, and the man who, with tender treatment, might have been reclaimed, becomes incurably hardened. One class says, he cannot finally fall, and shall in due time be restored; another class says, he may finally fall and *utterly perish*. If the unfortunate person be restored, his recovery is taken as a proof of the first doctrine; if he be not, his wretched end is considered a proof of the second. In the first case the person himself may presume on his restoration as a point infallibly determined in the Divine counsel; or in the second, he may consider his case *hopeless*, and so abandon himself to profligacy and desperation. Thus both parties leave him, and both opinions (misunderstood certainly) render him *secure* or *desperate*; and in either case totally *inactive* in behalf of his own soul. Who is he that properly estimates the worth of one immortal spirit? He who does will at once feel that, in a state of *probation*, any man *may fall* through sin, and any sinner may be renewed again unto repentance, through the infinitely meritorious sacrifice, and all powerfully efficacious grace, of Christ. This truth properly felt equally precludes both presumption and despair, and will induce the followers of God to be active in *preserving* those who have escaped from the corruption that is in the world, and make them diligent to *recover* those who have turned back to earth and sin.

**Verse 7. Shall confess their sin]** Without *confession* or *acknowledgment* of sin, there was no hope of mercy held out.

**He shall recompense]** For without *restitution*, in every possible case, God will not forgive the iniquity of a man's sin. How can any person in a case of defraud, with his neighbour's property in his possession, expect to receive mercy from the hand of a just and holy God?

**See this subject considered in Clarke's notes on "<sup>01428</sup>Genesis 42:38".**

**Verse 8. If the man have no kinsman]** The Jews think that this law respects the *stranger* and the *sojourner* only, because every Israelite is in a state of affinity to all the rest; but there might be a *stranger* in the camp who has no relative in any of the tribes of Israel.

**Verse 14. The spirit of jealousy]** *hanq j wr ruach kinah*, either a supernatural diabolic influence, exciting him to jealousy, or the *passion* or *affection* of jealousy, for so the words may be understood.

**Verse 17. Holy water]** Water out of the laver, called *holy* because consecrated to sacred uses. This is the most ancient case of the trial by *ordeal*. See Clarke at “<sup><4063></sup>Numbers 5:31”.

**In an earthen vessel]** Supposed by the Jews to be such as had never been previously used.

**Dust that is in the floor]** Probably intended to point out the baseness of the crime of which she was accused.

**Verse 18. Uncover the woman’s head]** To take off a woman’s veil, and expose her to the sight of men, would be considered a very great degradation in the East. To this St. Paul appears to allude, <sup><46105></sup>1 **Corinthians 11:5, 6, 10.**

**Verse 21. The Lord make thee a curse and an oath]** Let thy name and punishment be remembered and mentioned as an example and terror to all others. Like that mentioned <sup><24292></sup>**Jeremiah 29:22, 23:** “The Lord make thee like Zedekiah, and like Ahab, whom the king of Babylon roasted in the fire, because they have committed villany in Israel, and have committed adultery with their neighbours’ wives.”-*Ainsworth*.

**Verse 22. Thy belly to swell, and thy thigh to rot]** What is meant by these expressions cannot be easily ascertained. *Ëry l pnl lanpel yarech* signifies literally thy *thigh to fall*. As the *thigh, feet, &c.*, were used among the Hebrews delicately to express the parts which nature conceals, (see <sup><01436></sup>**Genesis 46:26.**) the expression here is probably to be understood in this sense; and the *falling down of the thigh* here must mean something similar to the *prolapsus uteri*, or falling down of the womb, which might be a natural effect of the preternatural distension of the abdomen. In <sup><46129></sup>1 **Corinthians 11:29**, St. Paul seems to allude to the case of the guilty woman drinking the bitter cursed waters that caused her destruction: *He who eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation* (*κριμα*, *condemnation* or *judgment*) *to himself*; and there is probably a reference to the same thing in <sup><194918></sup>**Psalm 109:18**, and in <sup><27011></sup>**Daniel 9:11.**



**And the woman shall say, Amen, amen.]** This is the first place where this word occurs in the common form of a concluding wish in prayer. The root  $\hat{m}a$  *aman* signifies to be *steady, true, permanent*. And in prayer it signifies *let it be so-make it steady-let it be ratified*. Some have supposed that it is composed of the initial letters of  $\hat{m}an \hat{E}l m ynda$  *Adonai Melech Neeman, My Lord the faithful King*, but this derivation is both far-fetched and unnecessary.

**Verse 23. The priest shall write these curses-and he shall blot them out]** It appears that the curses which were written down with a kind of ink prepared for the purpose, as some of the rabbins think, without any calx of iron or other material that could make a permanent dye, were washed off the parchment into the water which the woman was obliged to drink, so that she drank the very *words* of the execration. The ink used in the East is almost all of this kind—a wet sponge will completely efface the finest of their writings. The rabbins say that the trial by the waters of jealousy was omitted after the Babylonish captivity, because adulteries were so frequent amongst them, that they were afraid of having the name of the Lord profaned by being so frequently appealed to! This is a most humiliating confession. “Though,” says pious Bishop Wilson, “this judgment is not executed now on adulteresses, yet they have reason from this to conclude that a more terrible vengeance will await them hereafter without a bitter repentance; these being only a shadow of heavenly things, i.e., of what the Gospel requires of its professors, *viz.*, a strict purity, or a severe repentance.” The pious bishop would not preclude the necessity of pardon through the blood of the cross, for without this the *severest repentance* would be of no avail.

**Verse 24. The bitter water that causeth the curse]** Though the rabbins think that the priest put some bitter substance in the water, yet as nothing of the kind is intimated by Moses, we may consider the word as used here metaphorically for *affliction, death, &c.* These waters were afflicting and deadly to her who drank them, being guilty. In this sense afflictions are said to be *bitter*, <sup><23817></sup>**Isaiah 38:17**; so also is *death*, <sup><01532></sup>**1 Samuel 15:32**: <sup><10726></sup>**Ecclesiastes 7:26**.

**Verse 29. This is the law of jealousies]** And this is the most singular law in the whole Pentateuch: a law that seems to have been copied by almost all the nations of the earth, whether civilized or barbarian, as we find that similar modes of trial for suspected offences were used when complete

evidence was wanting to convict; and where it was expected that the object of their worship would interfere for the sake of justice, in order that the *guilty* should be brought to punishment, and the *innocent* be cleared. For general information on this head see at the end of this chapter. **See Clarke on “<sup><0463></sup>Numbers 5:31”**.

**Verse 31. This woman shall bear her iniquity]** That is, her belly shall swell, and her thigh shall rot; **See Clarke “<sup><0462></sup>Numbers 5:22”**. But if not guilty after such a trial, she had great honour, and, according to the rabbins, became *strong, healthy, and fruitful*; for if she was before *barren*, she now began to *bear children*; if before she had only *daughters*, she now began to have *sons*; if before she had *hard travail*, she now had *easy*; in a word, she was blessed in her body, her soul, and her substance: so shall it be done unto the *holy and faithful* woman, for such the Lord delighteth to honour; see <sup><0415></sup>**1 Timothy 2:15**.

ON the principal subject of this chapter. I shall here introduce a short account of the trial by *ordeal*, as practised in different parts of the world, and which is supposed to have taken its origin from the *waters of jealousy*.

The trial by what was afterwards called ORDEAL is certainly of very remote antiquity, and was evidently of Divine appointment. In this place we have an institution relative to a mode of *trial* precisely of that kind which among our ancestors was called *ordeal*; and from this all similar trials in *Asia, Africa, and Europe*, have very probably derived their origin.

Ordeal, Latin, *ordalium*, is, according to *Verstegan*, from the Saxon [Anglo-Saxon], *ordal* and *ordel*, and is derived by some from [Anglo-Saxon], great, and DÆL, judgment, signifying the *greatest, most solemn, and decisive* mode of judgment.-*Hickes*. Others derive it from the *Francic or Teutonic Urdela*, which signifies simply to *judge*. But *Lye*, in his Anglo-Saxon Dictionary, derives the term from [Anglo-Saxon], which is often in Anglo-Saxon, a *privative* particle, and [Anglo-Saxon], *distinction or difference*; and hence applied to that kind of judgment in which there was *no respect of persons*, but every one had absolute justice done him, as the decision of the business was supposed to belong to GOD alone. It always signified an appeal to the *immediate interposition* of GOD, and was therefore called *Judicium Dei, God’s Judgment*; and we may naturally suppose was never resorted to but in very important cases, where persons accused of great crimes protested their innocence, and there was no sufficient *evidence* by which they could be cleared from the accusation,

or proved to be guilty of the crime laid to their charge. Such were the cases of jealousy referred to in this chapter.

The rabbins who have commented on this text give us the following information: When any man, prompted by the spirit of jealousy, suspected his wife to have committed adultery, he brought her first before the judges, and accused her of the crime; but as she asserted her innocency, and refused to acknowledge herself guilty, and as he had no witnesses to produce, he required that she should be sentenced to *drink the waters of bitterness* which the law had appointed; that God, by this means, might discover what she wished to conceal. After the judges had heard the *accusation* and the *denial*, the man and his wife were both sent to Jerusalem, to appear before the Sanhedrin, who were the sole judges in such matters. The rabbins say that the judges of the Sanhedrin, at first endeavoured with threatenings to confound the woman, and cause her to confess her crime; when she still persisted in her innocence, she was led to the eastern gate of the court of Israel, where she was stripped of the clothes she wore, and dressed in black before a number of persons of her own sex. The priest then told her that if she knew herself to be innocent she had no evil to apprehend; but if she were guilty, she might expect to suffer all that the law threatened: to which she answered, *Amen, amen*.

The priest then wrote the words of the law upon a piece of vellum, with ink that had no vitriol in it, that it might be the more easily blotted out. The words written on the vellum were, according to the rabbins, the following:—

“If a strange man have not come near thee, and thou art not polluted by forsaking the bed of thy husband, these bitter waters which I have cursed will not hurt thee: but if thou have gone astray from thy husband, and have polluted thyself by coming near to another man, may thou be accursed of the Lord, and become an example for all his people; may thy thigh rot, and thy belly swell till it burst! may these cursed waters enter into thy belly, and, being swelled therewith, may thy thigh putrefy!”

After this the priest took a new pitcher, filled it with water out of the brazen bason that was near the altar of burnt-offering, cast some dust into it taken from the pavement of the temple, mingled something bitter, as *wormwood*, with it, and having read the curses above mentioned to the woman, and received her answer of *Amen*, he scraped off the curses from

the vellum into the pitcher of water. During this time another priest tore her clothes as low as her bosom, made her head bare, untied the tresses of her hair, fastened her torn clothes with a girdle below her breasts, and presented her with the tenth part of an ephah, or about three pints of *barley-meal*, which was in a frying pan, without oil or incense.

The other priest, who had prepared the waters of jealousy, then gave them to be drank by the accused person, and as soon as she had swallowed them, he put the pan with the meal in it into her hand. This was waved before the Lord, and a part of it thrown into the fire of the altar. If the woman was innocent, she returned with her husband; and the waters, instead of incommoding her, made her more healthy and fruitful than ever: if on the contrary she were guilty, she was seen immediately to grow pale, her eyes started out of her head, and, lest the temple should be defiled with her death, she was carried out, and died instantly with all the ignominious circumstances related in the curses, which the rabbins say had the same effect on him with whom she had been criminal, though he were absent and at a distance. They add, however, that if the husband himself had been guilty with another woman, then the waters had no bad effect even on his criminal wife; as in that case the transgression on the one part was, in a certain sense, balanced by the transgression on the other.

There is no instance in the Scriptures of this kind of *ordeal* having ever been resorted to; and probably it never was during the purer times of the Hebrew republic. God had rendered himself so terrible by his judgments, that no person would dare to appeal to this mode of trial who was conscious of her guilt; and in case of simple adultery, where the matter was either detected or confessed, the parties were ordered by the law to be put to death.

But other ancient nations have also had their trials by *ordeal*.

We learn from *Ferdusi*, a Persian poet, whose authority we have no reason to suspect, that the *fire ordeal* was in use at a very early period among the ancient Persians. In the famous epic poem called the *Shah Nameh* of this author, who is not improperly styled the *Homer of Persia*, under the title *Dastan Seeavesh ve Soodabeh*, *The account of Seeavesh and Soodabeh*, he gives a very remarkable and circumstantial account of a trial of this kind.

It is very probable that the *fire ordeal* originated among the ancient Persians, for by them *fire* was not only held sacred, but considered as a

*god*, or rather as the *visible emblem* of the supreme Deity; and indeed this kind of trial continues in extensive use among the Hindoos to the present day. In the code of Gentoo laws it is several times referred to under the title of *Purrah Reh*, but in the *Shah Nameh*, the word [Hindu] *Soogend* is used, which signifies literally an *oath*, as the persons were obliged to declare their innocence by an *oath*, and then put their veracity to test by passing through the [Hindu] *kohi atesh*, or *fire pile*; see the *Shah Nameh* in the title *Dastan Seeavesh ve Soodabeh*, and Halhed's code of Gentoo laws; Preliminary Discourse, p. lviii., and chap. v., sec. iii., pp. 117, &c.

A circumstantial account of the different kinds of ordeal practised among the Hindoos, communicated by Warren Hastings, Esq., who received it from Ali Ibrahim Khan, chief magistrate at Benares, may be found in the *Asiatic Researches*, vol. i., p. 389.

This trial was conducted among this people *nine* different ways: first, by the *balance*; secondly, by *fire*; thirdly, by *water*; fourthly, by *poison*; fifthly, by the *cosha*, or water in which an idol has been washed; sixthly, by *rice*; seventhly, by *boiling oil*; eighthly, by *red hot iron*; ninthly, by *images*.

There is, perhaps, no mode of judiciary decision that has been in more common use in ancient times, than that of ordeal, in some form or other. We find that it was also used by the ancient *Greeks* 500 years before the Christian era; for in the *Antigone* of Sophocles, a person suspected by Creon of a misdemeanor, declares himself ready "to handle hot iron, and to walk over fire," in proof of his innocence, which the scholiast tells us was then a very usual purgation.

Ἡμεν δ' ετοιμοὶ καὶ μῦδρους αἰρεῖν χεροῖν,  
καὶ πυρ διερπεῖν, καὶ θεοῦς ορκώμοτεν.

Ver. 270.

The *scholiast* on this line informs us that the custom in binding themselves by the most solemn oath, was this: they took *red hot iron* in their hands, and throwing it into the sea, swore that the oath should be inviolate till that iron made its appearance again.

Virgil informs us that the priests of Apollo at *Soracte* were *accustomed to walk over burning coals unhurt*.

—————**Et medium, freti pietate, per ignem**  
**Cultores multa premimus vestigia pruna.**  
*Æn. xi. 787.*

*Grotius* gives many instances of water ordeal in Bithynia, Sardinia, and other places. Different species of fire and water ordeal are said to have prevailed among the *Indians* on the coast of Malabar; the *negroes* of Loango, Mosambique, &c., &c., and the Calmuc *Tartars*.

The first formal mention I find of this trial in Europe is in the laws of King *Ina*, composed about A. D. 700. See L. 77. entitled, [Anglo-Saxon], *Decision by hot iron and water*. I find it also mentioned in the council of *Mentz*, A. D. 847; but *Agobard*, archbishop of Lyons, wrote against it sixty years before this time. It is afterwards mentioned in the council of *Trevers*, A. D. 895. It did not exist in Normandy till after the *Conquest*, and was probably first introduced into England in the time of *Ina*, in whose laws and those of *Athelstan* and *Ethelred*, it was afterwards inserted. The ordeal by *fire* was for noblemen and women, and such as were *free* born: the *water* ordeal was for *husbandmen*, and the *meaner classes* of the people, and was of two sorts; by *cold* water and by *hot*. See the proceedings in these trials declared particularly in the law of King *Ina*; WILKINS, *Leges Anglo-Saxonæ*, p. 27.

Several popes published edicts against this species of trial. Henry III. abolished trials by ordeal in the third year of his reign, 1219. See the act in *Rymer*, vol. i., p. 228; and see *Dugdale's* *Origines Juridicales*, fol. 87; *Spelman's* *Glossary*, *Wilkins*, *Hickes*, *Lombard*, *Somner*, and *Du Cange*, art. *Ferrum*.

The ordeal or trial by *battle* or *combat* is supposed to have come to us from the *Lombards*, who, leaving Scandinavia, overran Europe: it is thought that this mode of trial was instituted by Frotha III., king of Denmark, about the time of the birth of Christ; for he ordained that every controversy should be determined by the *sword*. It continued in *Holsatia* till the time of Christian III., king of Denmark, who began his reign in 1535. From these northern nations the practice of duels was introduced into Great Britain.

I need scarcely add, that this detestable form of trial was the foundation of the no less detestable crime of duelling, which so much disgraces our age and nation, a practice that is defended only by ignorance, false honour, and

injustice: it is a relic of barbarous superstition, and was absolutely unknown to those brave and generous nations, the Greeks and Romans, whom it is so much the fashion to admire; and who, in this particular, so well merit our admiration!

The *general* practice of duelling is supposed to have taken its rise in 1527, at the breaking up of a treaty between the Emperor Charles V. and Francis I. The former having sent a herald with an insulting message to Francis, the king of France sent back the herald with a cartel of defiance, in which he gave the emperor the lie, and challenged him to single combat: Charles accepted it; but after several messages concerning the arrangement of all the circumstances relative to the combat, the thoughts of it were entirely laid aside. The example of two personages so illustrious drew such general attention, and carried with it so much authority, that it had considerable influence in introducing an important change in manners all over Europe.

It was so much the custom in the middle ages of Christianity to respect the *cross*, even to superstition, that it would have been indeed wonderful if the same ignorant bigotry had not converted *it* into an *ordeal*: accordingly we find it used for this purpose in so many different ways as almost to preclude description.

Another trial of this kind was the *Corsned*, or the consecrated *bread and cheese*: this was the ordeal to which the clergy commonly appealed when they were accused of any crime. A few concluding observations from Dr. Henry may not be unacceptable to the reader:—

“If we suppose that few or none escaped conviction who exposed themselves to these fiery trials, we shall be very much mistaken. For the histories of those times contain innumerable examples of persons plunging their naked arms into boiling water, handling red hot balls of iron, and walking upon burning ploughshares, without receiving the least injury. Many learned men have been much puzzled to account for this, and disposed to think that Providence graciously interposed in a miraculous manner for the preservation of injured innocence.

“But if we examine every circumstance of these fiery ordeals with due attention, we shall see sufficient reason to suspect that the whole was a gross imposition on the credulity of mankind. The accused person was committed wholly to the priest who was to perform the ceremony three days before the trial, in which he had time enough to bargain with him for

his deliverance, and give him instructions how to act his part. On the day of trial no person was permitted to enter the church but the priest and the accused till after the iron was heated, when twelve friends of the accuser, and twelve of the accused, and no more, were admitted and ranged along the wall on each side of the church, at a respectful distance. After the iron was taken out of the fire several prayers were said: the accused drank a cup of holy water, and sprinkled his hand with it, which might take a considerable time if the priest were indulgent. The space of nine feet was measured by the accused himself, with his own feet, and he would probably give but scanty measure. He was obliged only to touch one of the marks with the toe of his right foot, and allowed to stretch the other foot as far towards the other mark as he could, so that the conveyance was almost instantaneous. His hand was not immediately examined, but wrapped in a cloth prepared for that purpose three days. May we not then, from all these precautions, suspect that these priests were in possession of some secret that secured the hand from the impression of such a momentary touch of hot iron, or removed all appearances of these impressions in three days; and that they made use of this secret when they saw reason? Such readers as are curious in matters of this kind may find two different directions for making ointments that will have this effect, in the work here quoted. What greatly strengthens these suspicions is, that we meet with no example of any champion of the *Church* who suffered the least injury from the touch of hot iron in this ordeal: but where any one was so fool-hardy as to appeal to *it*, or to that of *hot water*, with a view to deprive the Church of any of her possessions, he never failed to burn his fingers, and lose his cause." I have made the scanty extract above from a very extensive history of the trial by *ordeal*, which I wrote several years ago, but never published.

All the forms of adjuration for the various ordeals of hot water, cold water, red hot iron, bread and cheese, &c., may be seen in the *Codex Legum Antiquarum*, Lindenbrogii, fol. Franc. 1613, p. 1299, &c.



## NUMBERS

## CHAPTER 6

*The vow of the Nazarite, 1, 2. In what it consisted, 3-8. When accidentally defiled, how he is to be purified, 9-12. The sacrifices he is to bring, and the rites he is to perform, when the vow of his separation is fulfilled, 13-21. The manner in which the priests are to bless the people, 22-26. The name of the LORD is to be put on the children of Israel, whom He promises to bless, 27.*

## NOTES ON CHAP. 6

**Verse 2. When either man or woman shall separate, &c.]** The word **ryzn nazir**, from **rzn nazar**, to *separate*, signifies merely a *separated* person, i.e., one peculiarly devoted to the service of God by being separated from all servile employments. From the *Nazarites* sprang the *Rechabites*, from the *Rechabites* the *Essenes*, from the *Essenes* the *Anchorites* or *Hermits*, and in imitation of those, the different *monastic* orders. Some contend strongly that the Nazarite was a type of our Lord; but neither analogy nor proof can be produced. Our blessed Lord both drank wine and touched the dead, which no Nazarite would do: as to his either shaving his hair or letting it grow, we know nothing. His being called a Nazarene, <sup><4023></sup>**Matthew 2:23**, is nothing to the purpose, as it can mean no more than either that he was an inhabitant of *Nazareth*, which was a place of no credit, and therefore used as a term of *reproach*; or that he was in a general sense *consecrated to the service of God*-so were *Samson*, *Samuel*, *Jeremiah*, and *John Baptist*; or rather, that he was the **rxn netser** or **BRANCH**, <sup><3101></sup>**Isaiah 11:1**, and **j mx tsemach**, <sup><3103></sup>**Zechariah 3:8; 6:12**, which is quite a different word; but this title is expressly applied to our blessed Lord by the above prophets; but in no place do they or any other prophets call him a *Nazarite*, in the sense in which **ryzn nazir** is used. Indeed it could not in truth be applied to him, as the distinguishing marks of a *Nazarite* never belonged to him. He was, it is true, the **rxn netser** or *branch* out of the root of Jesse, the genuine heir to the throne of David, whose dominion should extend over the universe, who should be King of kings, and Lord of Lords; but the word **Ναζωραίος**, <sup><4023></sup>**Matthew 2:23**, signifies merely a *Nazorean*, or inhabitant of Nazareth.

**Verse 3. No vinegar of wine, &c.] xmj** *chomets* signifies *fermented* wine, and is probably used here to signify wine of a strong body, or any highly intoxicating liquor. Dr. Lightfoot supposes that the LEPER being the most defiled and loathsome of creatures, was an emblem of the wretched, miserable state of man *by the fall*; and that the NAZARITE was the emblem of man in his *state of innocence*. Wine and grapes are here particularly forbidden to the Nazarite because, as the doctor thinks, being an emblem of man in his *paradisaical* state, he was forbidden that *tree* and its fruits by eating of which Adam fell; for the doctor, as well as the Jewish rabbins, believed the tree of knowledge to have been none other than the *vine*.

**Vinegar of strong drink]** See Clarke's note on "<sup><8100></sup>Leviticus 10:9".

**Verse 5. There shall no razor come upon his head]** The vow of the Nazarite consisted in the following particulars:- 1. He consecrated himself in a very especial and extraordinary manner to God. 2. This was to continue for a certain season, probably never less than a whole year, that he might have a full growth of hair to *burn in the fire which is under the sacrifice of the peace-offering*, <sup><00618></sup>Numbers 6:18. 3. During the time of his separation, or *nazarate*, he drank no *wine* nor *strong drink*; nor used any *vinegar* formed from any inebriating liquor, nor ate the flesh or dried *grapes*, nor tasted even the *kernels* or *husks* of any thing that had grown upon the vine. 4. He never *shaved his head*, but let his *hair grow*, as the proof of his being in this separated state, and under vows of peculiar austerity. 5. He never touched any dead body, nor did any of the last offices, even to his nearest kin; but was considered as the *priests*, who were wholly taken up with the service of God, and regarded nothing else. 6. *All the days of his separation he was holy*, <sup><00618></sup>Numbers 6:8. During the whole time he was to be incessantly employed in religious acts.

**Verse 7. The consecration of his God is upon his head.]** Literally, *The separation of his God is upon his head*; meaning his *hair*, which was the proof and emblem of his separation. Now as the *hair* of the Nazarite was a token of his *subjection* to God through all the peculiarities of his *nazarate*, a woman, *who is married*, is considered as a Nazarite for life, i.e., *separated* from all others, and joined to one husband who is her lord; hence St. Paul, probably alluding to this circumstance, says, <sup><6110></sup>1 Corinthians 11:10: *The woman ought to have power upon her head*, i.e., wear her hair and veil; for this hair is a proof of her *nazarate*, and of her being in

subjection to her *husband*, as the Nazarite was under subjection to the LORD by the rule of his *order*.

**Verse 10. Two turtles, or two young pigeons]** The same kind of offering made by him who had an issue, <sup><B154></sup>**Leviticus 15:14**, &c.

**Verse 18. Shall take the hair-and put it in the fire]** The hair was permitted to grow for this purpose; and as the Nazarite was a kind of sacrifice, offered to God through the whole term of his *nazarate* or *separation*, and no human flesh or blood could be offered on the altar of the Lord, he offered his *hair* at the conclusion of his separation, as a sacrifice-that hair which was the token of his complete subjection to the Lord, and which was now considered as the Lord's *property*.

The Hindoos, after a vow, do not cut their hair during the term of their vow; but at the expiration of it they shave it off at the place where the vow was made.

That the *hair of the head* was superstitiously used among different nations, we have already had occasion to remark; (**See Clarke's notes on** <sup><B197></sup>**Leviticus 19:27**"); and that the Gentiles might have learned this from the Jews is possible, though some learned men think that this consecration of the hair to a deity was in use among the heathens before the time of Moses, and in nations who had no intercourse or connection with the Jews.

**Verse 21. This is the law of the Nazarite]** We learn from Maimonides, in his Treatise of the Nazarite, that a man might become a Nazarite in *behalf of another*; that is, might assist him in bearing the expenses of the sacrifices, &c. "A son may fulfil the vow his deceased father hath made, but did not live to accomplish:-He that saith, upon me be the shaving of a Nazarite, he is bound to bring the offerings of shaving for cleanness, and may offer them by the hand of what Nazarite he will. If he say, Upon me be half the oblations of a Nazarite, then he bringeth half the offerings by what Nazarite he will, and that Nazarite payeth his offerings out of that which is his."

"By this," says Mr. Ainsworth, "we may see the reason of that which *James* said to *Paul*, though he had no Nazarite's vow upon him: 'We have four men who have a vow on them; them take and sanctify thyself with them, and BE AT CHARGES WITH THEM, that they may shave their heads, &c. Then Paul took the men, and the next day, sanctifying himself with them,

entered into the temple to signify the accomplishment of the days of sanctification, (or Nazariteship,) until that an offering should be offered for every one of them;’ see <sup><4023></sup>**Acts 21:23-26**. For though Paul had not vowed or fulfilled a Nazariteship himself, yet might he *contribute* with them, and partake of their *charges* about the sacrifices.”

**Verse 23. On this wise ye shall bless the children of Israel]** The prayer which God makes for his followers, and puts into their mouth, we are sure must be right; and to it, when sincerely, faithfully, and fervently offered, we may confidently expect an answer. If he condescended to give us a *form of blessings* or a *form of prayer*, we may rest assured that he will accept what he himself has made. This consideration may produce great confidence in them who come with either prayer or praise to the throne of grace, both of which should be, as far as circumstances will admit, *in the very words of Scripture*; for we can readily attach a consequence to the *words of God*, which we shall find difficult to attach to the best ordered words of men. *Take with you words, and turn unto the Lord*. What words? Why those which God immediately puts into their mouths. *Take away all iniquity, and receive us graciously; so will we render the calves of our lips*; we shall then give the *sacrifices* of which our lips have spoken, when we made our *vows* unto thee. See <sup><3840></sup>**Hosea 14:2**.

**Verse 24. The Lord bless thee]** There are *three* forms of blessing here, *any* or *all* of which the priests might use on any occasion. The following is a verbal translation:—

1. May Jehovah bless thee and preserve thee!
2. May Jehovah cause his faces to shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee!
3. May Jehovah lift up his faces upon thee, and may be put prosperity unto thee!

This is a very comprehensive and excellent prayer, and may be paraphrased thus:—

1. May God *speak good unto thee*, by giving thee his excellent *promises*! (See Clarke’s note on <sup><0603></sup>**Genesis 2:3**.) May he *preserve* thee in the possession of all the *good* thou hast, and *from* all the *evil* with which thou art threatened!

2. May the Holy Trinity *illuminate thy heart*, giving thee the true knowledge of thyself and of thy Maker; and may he show thee his *graciousness* in pardoning thy sins, and supporting thy soul!

3. May God give thee communion with the Father, Son, and Spirit, with a constant sense of his *approbation*; and grant thee *prosperity* in thy *soul*, and in all thy *secular affairs*!

This I suppose to be the spirit and design of this form of benediction. Others will doubtless interpret it after their manner. Several wise and learned men believe that the mystery of the Holy Trinity is not obscurely hinted at in it. God the FATHER blesses and keeps his followers. God the SON is gracious unto sinners in remitting their offences, which he died to blot out. God the HOLY SPIRIT takes of the things which are Christ's, and shows them unto genuine Christians, and diffuses the *peace of God* in their hearts. In a word, Christ, the gift of the Father by the energy of the Holy Spirit, came to *bless* every one of us by turning us away from our iniquities.

1. EVERY genuine Christian is a true *Nazarite*. He is *separated* from the world, and dedicated solely to the service of God. 2. His life is a life of self-denial; he mortifies and keeps the flesh in obedience to the Spirit. 3. All this enters into the spirit of his baptismal *vow*; for in that he promises to renounce the devil and all his works, the pomps and vanities of this wicked world, and all the sinful lusts of the flesh-to keep God's holy word and commandments, and to walk in the same all the days of his life. 4. The person who is faithful has the *blessing of God* entailed upon him. *Thus shall ye bless the children of Israel, &c., &c.* See Clarke's notes on "~~6:0415~~Numbers 6:5" and "~~6:0407~~Numbers 6:7".

## NUMBERS

## CHAPTER 7

*When the tabernacle was fully set up, it appeared that the princes of the twelve tribes had prepared six covered wagons, drawn by two oxen each, one wagon for two tribes, for the service of the tabernacle, 1-3. Moses is commanded to receive this offering, and distribute the whole to the Levites according to their service, 4, 5. Moses does so, and gives two wagons and four oxen to the sons of Gershon, 6, 7; and four wagons and eight oxen to the sons of Merari, 8. The sons of Kohath have none, because they were to bear the ark, &c., on their shoulders, 9. Each prince is to take a day for presenting his offerings, 10, 11. On the first day Nahshon, of the tribe of JUDAH, offers a silver charger, a silver bowl, a golden spoon, a young bullock, a ram, a lamb, and a kid, for a SIN-OFFERING; two oxen, five rams, five he-goats, and five lambs, for a PEACE-OFFERING, 12-17. On the second day Nethaneel, of the tribe of ISSACHAR, offers the like, 18-23. On the third day Eliab, of the tribe of ZEBULUN, offers the like, 24-29. On the fourth day Elizur, of the tribe of REUBEN, offers the like, 30-35. On the fifth day Shelumiel, of the tribe of SIMEON, made a similar offering, 36-41. On the sixth day Eliasaph, of the tribe of GAD, made his offering, 42-47. On the seventh day Elishama, of the tribe of EPHRAIM, made his offering, 48-53. On the eighth day Gamaliel, of the tribe of MANASSEH, made his offering, 54-59. On the ninth day Abidan, of the tribe of BENJAMIN, made his offering, 60-65. On the tenth day Ahiezer, of the tribe of DAN, made his offering, 66-71. On the eleventh day Pagiel, of the tribe of ASHER, made his offering, 72-77. On the twelfth day Ahira, of the tribe of NAPHTALI, made the same kind of offering, 78-83. The sum total of all vessels and cattle which were offered was twelve silver chargers, and twelve silver bowls; twelve golden spoons; twelve bullocks, twelve rams, and twelve kids; twenty-four bullocks, sixty rams, sixty he-goats, and sixty lambs, 84-88. The offerings being ended, Moses goes into the tabernacle, and hears the voice of the Lord from the mercy-seat, 89.*

## NOTES ON CHAP. 7

**Verse 1.** On the day that Moses had fully set up the tabernacle] The transactions mentioned in this chapter took place on the *second day* of the *second month* of the *second year* after their departure from Egypt; and the proper place of this account is immediately after the *tenth* chapter of *Leviticus* .

**Verse 3.** Six covered wagons]  $\text{bx t l g[ vv shesh egloth tsab}$ , six tilted wagons, the Septuagint translate  $\epsilon\zeta \alpha\mu\alpha\zeta\alpha\varsigma \lambda\alpha\mu\pi\eta\eta\iota\kappa\alpha\varsigma$ , with which the

*Coptic* agrees; but what *lampenic chariots* were, no person pretends to know. *Covered* or *tilted* is probably the meaning of the original. The wagons were given for the more convenient exporting of the heavier parts of the tabernacle, which could not be conveniently carried on men's shoulders.

**Verse 5. According to his service.]** That is, distribute them among the Levites *as they may need them*, giving most to those who have the *heaviest burdens* to bear.

**Verse 7. Two wagons-unto the sons of Gershon]** The Gershonites carried only the *curtains, coverings, and hangings*, <sup><04025></sup>**Numbers 4:25**. And although this was a *cumbersome* carriage, and they needed the wagons, yet it was not a heavy one.

**Verse 8. Four wagons-unto the sons of Merari]** Because they had the *boards, bars, pillars, and sockets* of the tabernacle to carry, <sup><04031></sup>**Numbers 4:31, 32**, therefore they had as many more wagons as the *Gershonites*.

**Verse 9. Unto the sons of Kohath he gave none]** Because they had the charge of the *ark, table, candlestick, altars, &c.*, <sup><04015></sup>**Numbers 4:5-15**, which were to be carried *upon their shoulders*; for those sacred things must not be drawn by beasts.

**Verse 10. And the princes offered]** Every *prince* or *chief* offered in the *behalf*, and doubtless at the *expense*, of his whole tribe.

**Verse 13. One silver charger]** **tr**[**q** *kaarath*, a *dish*, or *deep bowl*, in which they kneaded the paste. See <sup><02529></sup>**Exodus 25:29**.

**One silver bowl]** **qrzm** *mizrak*, a *bason*, to receive the blood of the sacrifice in. See Clarke on <sup><02713></sup>**Exodus 27:3**".

**Verse 14. One spoon]** **xk** *caph*, a *censer*, on which they put the incense. See <sup><02529></sup>**Exodus 25:29**.

It is worthy of remark that the different tribes are represented here as bringing their offerings precisely in the same order in which they encamped about the tabernacle. See <sup><04001></sup>**Numbers 2:1-31** and <sup><04013></sup>**Numbers 10:13-27**.

1.	JUDAH the chief	<i>Nahshon,</i>	<del>&lt;040712&gt;</del> <b>Numbers 7:12</b>	East
2.	ISSACHAR	<i>Nethaneel,</i>	<del>&lt;040718&gt;</del> <b>Numbers 7:18</b>	“
3.	ZEBULUN	<i>Eliab,</i>	<del>&lt;040724&gt;</del> <b>Numbers 7:24</b>	“
4.	REUBEN	<i>Elizur,</i>	<del>&lt;040730&gt;</del> <b>Numbers 7:30</b>	South
5.	SIMEON	<i>Shelumiel,</i>	<del>&lt;040736&gt;</del> <b>Numbers 7:36</b>	“
6.	GAD	<i>Eliasaph,</i>	<del>&lt;040742&gt;</del> <b>Numbers 7:42</b>	“
7.	EPHRAIM	<i>Elishama,</i>	<del>&lt;040748&gt;</del> <b>Numbers 7:48</b>	West
8.	MANASSEH	<i>Gamaliel,</i>	<del>&lt;040754&gt;</del> <b>Numbers 7:54</b>	“
9.	BENJAMIN	<i>Abidan,</i>	<del>&lt;040760&gt;</del> <b>Numbers 7:60</b>	“
10.	DAN	<i>Ahiezer,</i>	<del>&lt;040766&gt;</del> <b>Numbers 7:66</b>	North
11.	ASHER	<i>Pagiel,</i>	<del>&lt;040772&gt;</del> <b>Numbers 7:72</b>	“
12.	NAPHTALI	<i>Ahira,</i>	<del>&lt;040778&gt;</del> <b>Numbers 7:78</b>	“

It is worthy of remark also, that every tribe offers the *same kind of offering*, and in the *same quantity*, to show, that as every tribe was equally indebted to God for its support, so each should testify an equal sense of obligation. Besides, the vessels were all sacrificial vessels, and the animals were all clean animals, such as were proper for sacrifices; and therefore every thing was intended to point out that the people were to be a holy people, fully dedicated to God, and that God was to dwell among them; hence there were *fine flour* and *oil*, for a *meat-offering*, ~~<040713>~~ **Numbers 7:13**. A *bullock*, a *ram*, and a *lamb*, for a *burnt-offering*, ~~<040715>~~ **Numbers 7:15, 16**. *Five oxen*, *five rams*, *five he-goats*, and *five lambs*, for a *peace-offering*, ~~<040717>~~ **Numbers 7:17**. Thus, as the priests, altars, &c., were anointed, and the tabernacle dedicated, so the people, by this offering, became consecrated to God. Therefore every act here was a religious act.

“Thus,” says Mr. Ainsworth, “by sacrifices of all sorts, figuring the death of Christ, and the benefits that were to be received thereby, they reconciled and made themselves and theirs acceptable to God, and were made partakers of his grace, to remission of sins, and sanctification through faith, and in the work of the Holy Ghost, in the communion and feeling whereof they rejoiced before God.”

**Verse 48. On the seventh day]** Both Jewish and Christian writers have been surprised that this work of offering went forward on the *seventh day*, which they suppose to have been a *Sabbath*, as well as on the other days. But 1. There is no absolute proof that this *seventh* day of offering was a



*Sabbath*. 2. Were it even so, could the people be better employed than in thus consecrating themselves and their services to the Lord? We have already seen that every act was a religious act; and we may rest assured that no day was too holy for the performance of such acts as are recorded here.

**Verse 72. On the eleventh day]** The Hebrew form of expression, here and in the 78th verse, has something curious in it.  $\mu\omega\gamma \text{rc} [ \text{y}t\upsilon [ \mu\omega\gamma\text{b}$  *beyom ashtey asar yom, In the day, the first and tenth day;*  $\mu\omega\gamma \text{rc} [ \mu\gamma\eta\nu \mu\omega\gamma\text{b}$  *beyom sheneym asar yom, In the day, two and tenth day.* But this is the idiom of the language, and to an original Hebrew our almost anomalous words *eleventh* and *twelfth*, by which we translate the original, would appear as strange as his, literally translated, would appear to us. In reckoning after *twelve*, it is easy to find out the composition of the words *thirteen*, as *three* and *ten*, *fourteen*, *four* and *ten*, and so on; but *eleven* and *twelve* bear scarcely any analogy to *ten* and *one*, and *ten* and *two*, which nevertheless they intend. But this is a subject of philology rather than of Biblical criticism.

**Verse 84. This was the dedication of the altar, in the day, &c.]** Meaning here the *time* in which it was dedicated; for as each tribe had a whole day for its representative or prince to present the offerings it had provided, consequently the dedication, in which each had his day, must have lasted *twelve* days: the words therefore, in this text, refer to the last day or *twelfth*, in which this dedication was completed.

**Verse 88. After that it was anointed.]** By the anointing the altar was consecrated to God; by this dedication it was solemnly appointed to that service for which it had been erected.

**Verse 89. To speak with him]** To confer with God, and to receive farther discoveries of his will.

**He heard the voice of one speaking unto him]** Though Moses saw no similitude, but *only heard a voice*, yet he had the fullest proof of the *presence* as well as of the *being* of the Almighty. In this way God chose to manifest himself during that dispensation, till the fulness of the time came, in which the WORD *was made flesh, and DWELT AMONG US*. No man hath seen God at any time; the only-begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.

**The mercy-seat]** See Clarke's note on "<sup><12517></sup>Exodus 25:17". As God gave oracular answers from this place, and *spoke* to Moses as it were *face to face*, hence the place was called the ORACLE, **rybd debir**, or *speaking place*, from **rbd dabar**, he *spoke*, <sup><11023></sup>**1 Kings 6:23**. And as this *mercy-seat* represented our blessed Redeemer, so the apostle says that God, *who had at sundry times, and in divers manners, SPOKEN in time past to the fathers by the prophets, hath, in these last days, SPOKEN unto us by his Son.* <sup><8010></sup>**Hebrews 1:1, 2**. Hence the *incarnated* Christ is the true **rybd debir** or *oracle*, in and by whom God *speaks* unto man.

On this occasion we find there were offered

On this occasion we find there were offered						
12 silver <i>chargers</i> each weighing			130	shekels.		
12 silver <i>bowls</i> , each			70	shekels.		
Total amount of silver vessels			2,400	shekels.		
12 golden <i>spoons</i> , each weighing			10	shekels.		
Total amount of golden vessels			120	shekels.		
		oz.	dwt.	gr.		
A silver charger at 130 shekels,						
reduced to troy weight, makes		75	9	16 8/31		
A silver bowl, at 70 shekels, amounts to		40	12	21 21/31		
Total weight of the 12 chargers		905	16	3 3/31		
Total weight of the 12 bowls		487	14	20 4/31		
		—	—	—		
Total		1,393	10	23 7/31		
Which, at 5 <i>s.</i> per oz., is equal to		£348	7 <i>s.</i>	9 <i>d.</i>		
The 12 golden spoons, allowing each to be		5	16	3 3/31		
amount to		69	13	13 5/31		
Which, at £4 per ounce, is equal to		£278	14 <i>s.</i>	2 1/2 <i>d.</i>		
And added to the amount of the silver		£348	7 <i>s.</i>	9 <i>d.</i>		
make a total of		£627	1 <i>s.</i>	11 <i>d.</i>		

By which we may at once see that though the place in which they now sojourned was a wilderness, as to cities, villages, and regular inhabitants, yet there was plenty of pasturage, else the Israelites could not have furnished these cattle, with all the sacrifices necessary for different occasions, and especially for the passover, which was celebrated during their sojourning in the desert, and which itself must have required an immense number of lambs, (see ~~0000~~ Numbers 9:4, 5,) when each family of the 600,000 males was obliged to provide one for itself.

## NUMBERS

## CHAPTER 8

*Directions how the lamps are to be lighted, 1-3. How the candlestick was formed, 4. The Levites to be consecrated to their service by being cleansed, sprinkled, shaved, purified, and their clothes washed, 5-7. To offer a meat-offering and a sin-offering, 8. The people to put their hands upon them, 9, 10. Aaron is to offer them before the Lord, 11. The Levites to lay their hands on the heads of the bullocks, &c., 12. The Levites are taken to assist Aaron and his sons in the place of all the first-born of Israel, 13-19. Moses and Aaron do as they were commanded, the Levites are presented, purified, and commence their service, 20-22. They are to begin their service at twenty-five years of age, and leave off at fifty, 23-25. After this they shall have the general inspection of the service, 26.*

## NOTES ON CHAP. 8

**Verse 2. The seven lamps shall give light]** The whole seven shall be lighted at one time, that seven may be ever burning.

**Verse 4. This work of the candlestick, &c.]** See many curious particulars relative to this candlestick, See Clarke's note on "<sup><1253></sup>Exodus 25:31" and "<sup><1253></sup>Exodus 25:39". The *candlestick* itself was an emblem of the *Church* of Christ; the *oil*, of the graces and gifts of the Spirit of God; and the *light*, of those gifts and graces in *action among men*. See <sup><6112></sup>**Revelation 1:12-20**. God builds his Church and sends forth his Spirit to dwell in it, to sanctify and cleanse it, that it may be shown unto the world as his *own* workmanship. The *seven* lights in the candlesticks point out the *seven Spirits of God*, the Holy Ghost being thus termed, <sup><6101></sup>**Revelation 3:1**, from the *variety* and *abundance* of his gifts and influences; *seven* being used among the Hebrews to denote any thing *full, complete, and perfect*. A *candlestick* or *lamp* without *oil* is of no use; *oil* not burning is of no use. So a *Church* or *society of religious people* without the *influence* of the *Holy Ghost* are dead while they have a name to live; and if they have a measure of this light, and do not let it *shine* by purity of living and holy zeal before men, their religion is neither useful to *themselves* nor to *others*. Reader, it is possible to be *in* the Church of God and not be *of* that Church; it is possible to have a measure of the Spirit and neither profit nor be

profited. Feel this dreadful possibility, and pray to God that thou be not a proof of it.

**Verse 7. Sprinkle water of purifying]** *tacj ym mey chattath, water of sin, or water of the sin-offering.* As this purifying water was made by the *ashes of the red heifer, cedar-wood, hyssop, and scarlet;* and the heifer herself was sacrificed, and her blood sprinkled seven times before the tabernacle, <sup><0490B></sup>**Numbers 19:3-6;** she may be considered as a proper *sacrifice for sin,* and consequently the water thus prepared be termed the *water of the sin-offering.* As the *ashes* were kept ready at hand for purifying from all legal pollutions, the preparation might be considered as a *concentration* of the essential properties of the sin-offering, and might be resorted to at all times with comparatively little expense or trouble, and no loss of time. As there were so many things by which legal pollution might be contracted, it was necessary to have always at hand, in all their dwellings, a mode of purifying at once convenient and unexpensive. As the *water* by which the Levites were here purified must have been the water prepared from the ashes of the red heifer, this ordinance was undoubtedly instituted *before* this time, though not described till <sup><0490E></sup>**Numbers 19:1-10** of this book; but that chapter might be in connection with any of the preceding ordinances, as well as where it is now found. We see from <sup><8091B></sup>**Hebrews 9:13, 14,** that these ashes mingled with water, and sprinkled on the unclean, and which sanctified to the purification of the flesh, were intended to typify the *blood of Christ,* which purges the conscience from dead works to serve the living God, <sup><8091E></sup>**Hebrews 9:15;** for as without this sprinkling with the *water of the sin-offering* the Levites were not fit to *serve God* in the wilderness, so without this sprinkling of the blood of Christ no *conscience can be purged from dead works to serve the living God.* See the notes on <sup><0490E></sup>**Numbers 19:1-10.**

**Verse 10. Shall put their hands upon the Levites]** It has been argued from this that the congregation had a part in the appointment of their own ministers, and that this was done by the *imposition of hands.* However that may be, it appears that what was done on *this occasion* meant no more than that the people gave up this whole tribe to God in place of their *firstborn;* and that by this act they bound themselves to *provide for them* who, because of their sacred service, could follow no *secular* work. And surely it was right, that they who served the altar should live by the altar. The ministers of God perform offices for the people which the people cannot perform for themselves; and nothing can be more reasonable than

that the people should give them the necessaries and comforts of life while they are thus employed in their behalf.

**Verse 17. For all the first-born-are mine]** See the manner of redeeming the first-born, <sup><04806></sup>**Numbers 18:6**.

**Verse 21. And Aaron made an atonement for them]** Though the Levites had been most solemnly consecrated to the Lord's service, and though all legal washings and purifications were duly performed on the occasion, yet they could not approach God till an *atonement* had been made for them. How strange is it, after all these significations, of the will and purpose of God relative to man, that any priest or any people will attempt to draw nigh to God without an atonement! As sure as God hath spoken it, there is no entrance into the holiest but through the blood of Jesus, <sup><8109></sup>**Hebrews 10:19, 20**.

**Verse 24. From twenty and five years old]** See Clarke's note on <sup><0008></sup>**Numbers 4:3**", where the two terms of twenty-five and thirty years are reconciled.

**Verse 26. To keep the charge, and shall do no service.]** They shall no longer be obliged to perform any laborious service, but act as general directors and counsellors; therefore they were to be near the camp, sing praises to God, and see that no stranger or unclean person was permitted to enter. So the Jews and many other persons have understood this place.

1. If it required so much legal purity to fit the Levites for their work in the tabernacle, can we suppose that it requires less spiritual purity to fit ministers of the Gospel to proclaim the righteousness of the Most High, and administer the sacred ordinances of Christianity to the flock of Christ? If these must be without *spot*, as the priests before without *blemish*, and these were only typical men, we may rest assured that a Christian minister requires no ordinary measures of holiness to prepare him for an acceptable and profitable discharge of his office.

2. If the Christian ministry be established to prepare men for the kingdom of God, of the holiness of which the purity of the camp was but a faint emblem, how can any man expect to enter that place of blessedness, who has not his heart sprinkled from an evil conscience, and his body washed with pure water; his life and conversation agreeable to the sacred precepts laid down in the Gospel of Christ? If the law of Moses were more read in

reference to the Gospel, the Gospel itself and its requisitions would be much better understood. Reader, however it may be with thee, *Antinomianism* is more general among religious people than is usually imagined. What multitudes of all denominations are expecting to enter into the kingdom of God without any proper preparation for the place! Without holiness none shall see the Lord; and from this decision of the Divine justice there shall never be any appeal.

## NUMBERS

## CHAPTER 9

*The Israelites are reminded of the law that required them to keep the passover at its proper time, and with all its rites, 1-3. They kept the passover on the fourteenth day of the first month, 4, 5. The case of the men who, being unclean through touching a dead body, could not keep the passover, 6, 7. Moses inquires at the Lord concerning them, 8; and the Lord appoints the fourteenth day of the second month for all those who through any accidental uncleanness, or by being absent on a journey, could not keep it at the usual time, 9-12. Those who neglect to keep this solemn feast to be cut off from among his people, 13. The stranger who wishes to keep the passover is at liberty to do it, 14. The cloud covers the tabernacle both by day and night, from the time of its dedication, 15, 16. This cloud regulates all the encampments and marchings of the Israelites through the wilderness, 17-22. Their journeyings and restings were all directed by the commandment of the Lord, 23.*

## NOTES ON CHAP. 9

Verse 1. **The Lord spake unto Moses]** The fourteen first verses of this chapter certainly refer to transactions that took place at the time of those mentioned in the commencement of this book, before the numbering of the people, and several learned men are of opinion that these fourteen verses should be referred back to that place. We have already met with instances where *transpositions* have very probably taken place, and it is not difficult to account for them. As in very early times writing was generally on leaves of the Egyptian flag *papyrus*, or on thin *laminæ* of different substances, facts and transactions thus entered were very liable to be deranged; so that when afterwards a series was made up into a book, many transactions might be inserted in wrong places, and thus the exact *chronology* of the facts be greatly disturbed. MSS. written on leaves of trees, having a *hole* in each, through which a cord is passed to keep them all in their places, are frequently to be met with in the cabinets of the curious, and many such are now before me, especially in *Singalese*, *Pali*, and *Burman*. Should the cord break, or be accidentally unloosed, it would be exceedingly difficult to string them all in their proper places; accidents of this kind I have often met with to my very great perplexity, and in some cases found it almost impossible to restore each individual leaf to its own place; for it should be observed that these separate pieces of oriental writing are not always



*paged* like the leaves of our printed books; nor are there frequently any catch-words or signatures at the bottom to connect the series. This one consideration will account for several *transpositions*, especially in the Pentateuch, where they occur more frequently than in any other part of the sacred writings. *Houbigant*, who grants the existence of such transpositions, thinks that this is no sufficient reason why the present order of narration should be changed: "It is enough," says he, *non ignorare libros eos Mosis esse acta rerum suo tempore gestarum, non historiam filo perpetuo elaboratam,*" "to know that these books contain an account of things transacted in the days of Moses, though not in their regular or chronological order."

**Verse 3. According to all the rites of it]** See all those rites and ceremonies largely explained in Clarke's notes on <sup><0220></sup>**Exodus 12:1-51**.

**Verse 7. We are defiled by the dead body of a man]** It is probable that the defilement mentioned here was occasioned by assisting at the burial of some person—a work both of necessity and mercy. This circumstance however gave rise to the ordinance delivered in <sup><0090></sup>**Numbers 9:10-14**, so that on particular occasions the passover might be *twice* celebrated: 1. At its regular time, the 14th of the *first* month; 2. An extra time, the 14th of the *second* month. But the man who had no legal hinderance, and did not celebrate it on one or other of these times, was to be cut off from the people of God; and the reason given for this cutting off is, that *he brought not the offering of God in his appointed season—therefore that man shall bear his sin,* <sup><0093></sup>**Numbers 9:13**. We have already seen, from the authority of St. Paul, that Christ, our Passover, is sacrificed for us; and that it was his sacrifice that was pointed out by the paschal lamb: on this, therefore, we may observe, that those who do not sooner or later eat the true Passover, and get the salvation procured by the sprinkling of his blood, shall be cut off from among those that shall enter into the rest prepared for the people of God; and for the same reason too; *they bring not the offering of God in its appointed season, and therefore they shall bear their sin.*

**Verse 15. The cloud covered the tabernacle]** See the whole account of this supernatural cloud largely explained, <sup><0221></sup>**Exodus 23:21**; and <sup><0404></sup>**Exodus 40:34-38**.

Calmet observes that the 15th verse, beginning a new subject, should begin a new chapter, as it has no connection with what goes before; and he thinks

this chapter, begun with the 15th verse, should end with the 28th verse of the following.

**Verse 21. Whether-by day or by night]** As the heat of the day is very severe in that same desert, the *night season* is sometimes chosen for the performance of a journey; though it is very likely that in the case of the Israelites this was seldom resorted to.

**Verse 22. Two days-a month-a year]** It was by the Divine counsel alone that they were directed in all their peregrinations: and from the above words we see that their *times of tarrying* at different stations were very unequal.

**Verse 23. Kept the charge of the Lord]** When we consider the strong disposition which this people ever testified to follow their own will in all things, we may be well surprised to find them, in these journeyings, so implicitly following the directions of God. There could be no trick or imposture here. Moses, had he been the most cunning of men, never could have imitated the *appearances* referred to in this chapter. The cloud, and every thing in its motion, was so evidently *supernatural*, that the people had no doubt of its being the symbol of the Divine presence.

GOD chose to keep this people so dependent upon himself, and so submissive to the decisions of his own will, that he would not even give them regular times of marching or resting; they were to do both when and where God saw best. Thus they were ever kept ready for their march, though perfectly ignorant of the time when they should commence it. But this was all well; they had the presence of God with them; the cloud by day and the fire by night demonstrated that God was amongst them. Reader, thou art here a tenant at will to God Almighty. How soon, in what place, or in what circumstances, he may call thee to march into the eternal world, thou knowest not. But this uncertainty cannot perplex *thee*, if thou be properly subject to the *will* of God, ever willing to lose thy own in it. But thou canst not be thus subject, unless thou have the testimony of the presence and approbation of God. How awful to be obliged to walk into the valley of the shadow of death without this! Reader, prepare to meet thy God.

## NUMBERS

## CHAPTER 10

*Moses is commanded to make two silver trumpets for calling the assembly, 1, 2. On what occasions these trumpets should be sounded. First, for calling the assembly to the door of the tabernacle, 3. Secondly, to summon the princes and captains of the thousands of Israel, 4. Thirdly, to make the eastern camps strike their tents, 5. Fourthly, to make those on the south do the like, 6. No alarm to be sounded when the congregation only is to be assembled, 7. The sons of Aaron alone shall sound these trumpets, it shall be a perpetual ordinance, 8. Fifthly, the trumpets are to be sounded in the time of war, 9. Sixthly, on festival occasions, 10. On the twentieth day of the second month, in the second year, the Israelites began their journey from the wilderness of Sinai, and came to the wilderness of Paran, 11, 12. By the commandment of God to Moses the first division, at the head of which was the standard of JUDAH, marched, first, 13, 14. Under him followed the tribe of ISSACHAR, 15; and after them the tribe of ZEBULUN, 16. Then the Gershonites and Merarites followed with the tabernacle, 17. At the head of the second division was the standard and camp of REUBEN, 18; and under him were that of SIMEON, 19; and that of GAD, 20. Next followed the Kohathites bearing the sanctuary, 21. Then followed the third division, at the head of which was the standard of the camp of EPHRAIM, 22; and under him MANASSEH, 23; and BENJAMIN, 24. At the head of the fourth division was the standard of the camp of DAN, 25; and under him ASHER, 26; and NAPHTALI, 27. This was their ordinary method of marching in the wilderness, 28. Moses entreats Hobab the Midianite to accompany them through the wilderness, 29. He refuses, 30. Moses continues and strengthens his entreaties with reasonings and promises, 31, 32. They depart from Sinai three days' journey, 33. The cloud accompanies them by day and night, 34. The words used by Moses when the ark set forward, 35, and when it rested, 36.*

## NOTES ON CHAP. 10

**Verse 2. Make thee two trumpets of silver]** The necessity of such instruments will at once appear, when the amazing extent of this numerous army is considered; and how even the sound of two trumpets could reach them all is difficult to conceive; but we may suppose that, when they were sounded, the motion of those that were within reach of that sound taught the others in *succession* what they should do.

As the trumpets were to be blown by the *priests* only, the sons of Aaron, there were only *two*, because there were only two such persons to use them

at this time, *Eleazar* and *Ithamar*. In the time of Joshua there were *seven* trumpets used by the priests, but these were made, according to our text, of *rams' horns*, <sup><0100></sup>**Joshua 6:4**. In the time of Solomon, when the priests had greatly increased, there were 120 priests sounding with trumpets, <sup><14512></sup>**2 Chronicles 5:12**.

Josephus intimates that one of these trumpets was always used to call the *nobles* together, the other to assemble the *people*; see <sup><04004></sup>**Numbers 9:4**. It is possible that these trumpets were made of different *lengths* and *wideness*, and consequently they would emit different tones. Thus the *sound* itself would at once show which was the summons for the *congregation*, and which for the *princes* only. These trumpets were allowed to be emblematical of the sound of the Gospel, and in this reference they appear to be frequently used. Of the *fate* of the trumpets of the sanctuary, **See Clarke's note on** <sup><10251></sup>**“Exodus 25:31”**.

**Verse 5. When ye blow an alarm]** *h*[*wrt* *teruah*, probably meaning *short, broken, sharp* tones, terminating with *long* ones, blown with both the trumpets at once. From the similarity in the words some suppose that the Hebrew *teruah* was similar to the Roman *taratantara*, or sound of their *clarion*.

**Verse 6. When ye blow an alarm the second time]** A *single* alarm, as above stated, was a signal for the *eastward* division to march; *two* such alarms, the signal for the *south* division; and probably *three* for the *west* division, and *four* for the *north*. It is more likely that this was the case, than that a single alarm served for each, with a small interval between them.

The camps, or grand divisions of this great army, always lay, as we have already seen, to the east, south, west, and north: and here the east and south camps alone are mentioned; the *first* containing *Judah, Issachar, and Zebulun*; the second, *Reuben, Simeon, and Gad*. The *west* and *north* divisions are not named, and yet we are sure they marched in consequence of express orders or signals, as well as the other two. There appears therefore a deficiency here in the Hebrew text, which is thus supplied by the Septuagint: **Και σαλπιετε σημασιαν τριτην, και εξαρουσιν αι παρεμβολαι αι παρεμβαλλουσαι παρα θαλασσαν' και σαλπιετε σημασιαν τεταρτην, και εξαρουσιν αι παρεμβολαι αι παρεμβαλλουσαι προς βορραν**. “And when ye blow a *third* alarm or signal, the camps on the *west* shall march: and when ye blow a *fourth* alarm

or signal, the camps on the *north* shall march.” This addition, however, is not acknowledged by the *Samaritan*, nor by any of the other versions but the *Coptic*. Nor are there any various readings in the collections of *Kennicott* and *Deuteronomy Rossi*, which countenance the *addition* in the above versions. Houbigant thinks this addition so evidently necessary, that he has inserted the Latin in his text, and in a note supplied the Hebrew words, and thinks that these words were originally in the Hebrew text, but happened to be omitted in consequence of so many *similar words* occurring so often in the same verse, which might dazzle and deceive the eye of a transcriber.

**Verse 9. If ye go to war]** These trumpets shall be sounded for the purpose of collecting the people together, to deliberate about the war, and to implore the protection of God against their enemies.

**Ye shall be remembered before the Lord]** When ye *decamp, encamp, make war*, and hold *religious festivals*, according to his appointment, which appointment shall be signified to you by the priests, who at the command of God, for such purposes, shall blow the trumpets, then ye may expect both the presence and blessing of Jehovah in all that ye undertake.

**Verse 10. In the day of your gladness]** On every festival the people shall be collected by the same means.

**Verse 11. The twentieth day of the second month]** The Israelites had lain encamped in the wilderness of Sinai about *eleven months* and *twenty days*; compare <sup><02190></sup>**Exodus 19:1** with this verse. They now received the order of God to decamp, and proceed towards the promised land; and therefore the Samaritan introduces at this place the words which we find in <sup><06106></sup>**Deuteronomy 1:6-8**: “The Lord our God spake unto us *in Horeb*, saying: Ye have dwelt long enough in this mount, turn and take your journey,” &c.

**Verse 12. The cloud rested in the wilderness of Paran.]** This was three days’ journey from the wilderness of Sinai, (see <sup><04103></sup>**Numbers 10:33**), and the people had three stations; the first at *Kibroth-hattaavah*, the second at *Hazereth*, <sup><04135></sup>**Numbers 11:35**, and the third in the wilderness of *Paran*, see <sup><04126></sup>**Numbers 12:16**. But it is extremely difficult to determine these journeyings with any degree of exactness; and we are often at a loss to know whether the place in question was in a *direct* or *retrograde* position from the place previously mentioned.

**Verse 14. The standard-of Judah]** See this order of marching explained at large on <sup><04101></sup>**Numbers 2:1-31**. The following is the order in which this vast company proceeded in their march:—

JUDAH  
 Issachar  
 Zebulun  
 Gershonites, and  
 Merarites carrying the tabernacle.  
 REUBEN  
 Simeon  
 Gad  
 The Kohathites with the sanctuary.  
 EPHRAIM  
 Manasseh  
 Benjamin  
 DAN  
 Asher  
 Naphtali.

**Verse 29. Moses said unto Hobab]** For a circumstantial account of this person see the notes on <sup><00215></sup>**Exodus 2:15, 16, 18; 3:1; 4:20, 24**; and for the transaction recorded here, and which is probably out of its place, see <sup><02185></sup>**Exodus 18:5**, where the subject is discussed at large.

**We are journeying]** God has brought us out of thralldom, and we are thus far on our way through the wilderness, travelling towards the place of rest which he has appointed us, trusting in his promise, guided by his presence, and supported by his power. *Come thou with us, and we will do thee good.* Those who wish to enjoy the heavenly inheritance must walk in the way towards it, and associate with the people who are going in that way. True religion is ever benevolent. They who know most of the goodness of God are the most forward to invite others to partake of that goodness. That religion which excludes all others from salvation, unless they believe a particular creed, and worship in a particular way, is not of God. Even *Hobab*, the Arab, according to the opinion of Moses, might receive the same blessings which God had promised to Israel, provided he accompanied them in the same way.

**The Lord hath spoken good concerning Israel.]** The name *Israel* is taken in a general sense to signify the *followers of God*, and to them all the

promises in the Bible are made. God has spoken good *of* them, and he has spoken good *to* them; and not one word that he hath spoken shall fail. Reader, hast thou left thy unhallowed connections in life? Hast thou got into the camp of the Most High? Then continue to follow God with Israel, and thou shalt be incorporated in the heavenly family, and share in Israel's benedictions.

**Verse 30. I will not go; but I will depart to mine own land, and to my kindred.]** From the strong expostulations in verses 31 and 32, and from <sup><07116></sup>Judges 1:16; 4:11, and <sup><09156></sup>1 Samuel 15:6, it is likely that Hobab changed his mind; or that, if he did go back to Midian, he returned again to Israel, as the above scriptures show that his *posterity* dwelt among the Israelites in Canaan. Reader, after having been almost persuaded to become a Christian, to take Christ, his cross, his reproach, and his crown, for thy portion, art thou again purposing to go back to thy own land, and to thy kindred? Knowest thou not that this land is the place of destruction—that the children of this world, who are not taking God for their portion, are going to perdition? Up, get thee hence, for the Lord will destroy this place by fire; and all who are not of the kindred and family of Christ shall perish at the brightness of his appearing!

**Verse 31. Thou mayest be to us instead of eyes.]** But what need had they of Hobab, when they had the pillar and fire continually to point out their way? Answer: The cloud directed their *general journeys*, but not their *particular* excursions. Parties took several journeys while the grand army lay still. (See chap. 13., 20., 31., 32., &c.) They therefore needed such a person as Hobab, who was well acquainted with the desert, to direct these particular excursions; to point them out watering places, and places where they might meet with fuel, &c., &c. What man cannot, under the direction of God's providence, do for himself, God will do in the way of especial mercy. He could have directed them to the fountains and to the places of fuel, but *Hobab* can do this, therefore let Hobab be employed; and let Hobab know for his encouragement that, while he is serving others in the way of God's providence, he is securing his own best interests. On these grounds Hobab should be invited, and for this reason Hobab should go. Man cannot do God's work; and God will not do the work which he has qualified and commanded man to perform. Thus then the Lord is ever seen, even while he is helping man by man. See some valuable observations on this subject in *Harmer*, vol. ii., 286. Instead of, *And thou mayest be to us instead of eyes*, the Septuagint translate the passage thus: **καὶ εἶη ἐν**

πρεσβυτης, *And thou shalt be an elder among us.* But Moses probably refers to Hobab's accurate knowledge of the wilderness, and to the assistance he could give them as a *guide*.

**Verse 33. The ark-went before them]** We find from <sup><H0102></sup>Numbers 10:21 that the ark was carried by the *Kohathites* in the center of the army; but as the army never moved till the cloud was taken up, it is said to *go before them*, i.e., to be the first to move, as without this motion the Israelites continued in their encampments.

**Verse 35. Rise up, Lord, and let thine enemies be scattered]** If God did not arise in this way and scatter his enemies, there could be no hope that Israel could get safely through the wilderness. God must go first, if Israel would wish to follow in safety.

**Verse 36. Return, O Lord, unto the many thousands of Israel.]** These were the words spoken by Moses, at the moment the divisions halted in order to pitch their tents. In reference to this subject, and the history with which it is connected, the 68th Psalm seems to have been composed, though applied by David to the bringing the ark from Kirjath-jearim to Jerusalem. See the notes on Psa. 68. *Many thousands*, literally *the ten thousand thousands*. Unless the ark *went* with *them*, and the cloud of the Divine glory with it, they could have neither *direction* nor *safety*; unless the ark *rested* with them, and the cloud of glory with *it*, they could have neither *rest* nor *comfort*. How necessary are the *word of God* and the *Spirit of God* for the direction, comfort, and defence of every genuine follower of Christ! Reader, pray to God that thou mayest have both with thee through all the wilderness, through all the changes and chances of this mortal life: if thou be guided by *his* counsel, thou shalt be at last received into his glory.



## NUMBERS

## CHAPTER 11

*The people complain, the Lord is displeased, and many of them are consumed by fire, 1. Moses intercedes for them, and the fire is quenched, 2. The place is called Taberah, 3. The mixed multitude long for flesh, and murmur, 4-6. The manna described, 7-9. The people weep in their tents, and the Lord is displeased, 10. Moses deploras his lot in being obliged to hear and bear with all their murmurings, 11-15. He is commanded to bring seventy of the elders to God that he may endue them with the same spirit, and cause them to divide the burden with him, 16, 17. He is also commanded to inform the people that they shall have flesh for a whole month, 18-20. Moses expresses his doubt of the possibility of this, 21, 22. The Lord confirms his promise, 23. The seventy men are brought to the tabernacle, 24; and the spirit of prophecy rests upon them, 25. Eldad and Medad stay in the camp and prophesy, 26, 27. Joshua beseeches Moses to forbid them, 28. Moses refuses, 29, 30. A wind from the Lord brings quails to the camp, 31, 32. While feeding on the flesh, a plague from the Lord falls upon them, and many of them die, 33. The place is called Kibroth-hattaavah, or the graves of lust, 34. They journey to Hazeroth, 35.*

## NOTES ON CHAP. 11

**Verse 1. And when the people complained]** What the cause of this complaining was, we know not. The conjecture of St. Jerome is probable; they complained because of the *length of the way*. But surely no people had ever less cause for murmuring; they had God among them, and miracles of goodness were continually wrought in their behalf.

**It displeased the Lord]** For his extraordinary kindness was lost on such an ungrateful and rebellious people. *And his anger was kindled*-Divine justice was necessarily incensed against such inexcusable conduct.

**And the fire of the Lord burnt among them]** Either a supernatural fire was sent for this occasion, or the lightning was commissioned against them, or God smote them with one of those hot suffocating winds which are very common in those countries.

**And consumed-in the uttermost parts of the camp.]** It pervaded the whole camp, from the centre to the circumference, carrying death with it to all the murmurers; for we are not to suppose that it was confined to the uttermost parts of the camp, unless we could imagine that there were none

culpable any where else. If this were the same with the case mentioned <sup><0410></sup>**Numbers 11:4**, then, as it is possible that the mixed multitude occupied the outermost parts of the camp, consequently the burning might have been confined to them.

**Verse 2. The fire was quenched]** Was *sunk*, or swallowed up, as in the margin. The plague, of whatever sort, ceased to act, and the people had respite.

**Verse 4. The mixed multitude]** *āsp̄sah* *hasaphsoph*, the *collected* or *gathered people*. Such as came out of Egypt with the Israelites; and are mentioned <sup><0128></sup>**Exodus 12:38**. This *mongrel* people, who had comparatively little of the knowledge of God, feeling the difficulties and fatigues of the journey, were the first to complain; and then we find the children of Israel joined them in their complainings, and made a common cause with these demi-infidels.

**Verse 5. We remember, &c.]** The choice aliments which those murmurers complained of having lost by their leaving Egypt, were the following: *fish, cucumbers, melons, leeks, onions, and garlic*. A European may smile at such *delicacies*; but *delicacies* they were in that country. Their *fish* is excellent; their *cucumbers* and *water melons* highly salubrious and refreshing; and their *onions, garlic, &c.*, exquisitely flavoured, differing as much from vegetables of the same species in these northern climes as a *bad turnip* does from a *good apple*. In short, this enumeration takes in almost all the commonly attainable delicacies in those countries.

**Verse 7. The manna was as coriander seed]** Probably this short description is added to show the iniquity of the people in murmuring, while they had so adequate a provision. But the baseness of their minds appears in every part of their conduct.

About the *bdellium* of the ancients the learned are not agreed; and I shall not trouble the reader with conjectures. **See Clarke's note on** <sup><0021></sup>**Genesis 2:12**". Concerning the manna, see the notes on <sup><0160></sup>**Exodus 16:1-36**.

**Verses 11. - 15.** The complaint and remonstrance of Moses in these verses serve at once to show the deeply distressed state of his mind, and the degradation of the minds of the people. We have already seen that the slavery they had so long endured had served to debase their minds, and to

render them incapable of every high and dignified sentiment, and of every generous act.

**Verse 17. I will take of the spirit which is upon thee]** From this place Origen and Theodoret take occasion to compare Moses to a lamp, at which seventy others were lighted, without losing any of its brightness. To convince Moses that God had sufficiently qualified him for the work which he had given him to do, he tells him that of the gifts and graces which he has given him he will qualify seventy persons to bear the charge with him. This was probably intended as a gracious reproof. Query. Did not Moses lose a measure of his gifts in this business? And is it not right that he whom God has called to and qualified for some particular office, should lose those gifts which he either undervalues or refuses to employ for God in the way appointed? Is there not much reason to believe that many cases have occurred where the spiritual endowments of particular persons have been taken away and given to others who made a better use of them? Hence the propriety of that exhortation, <sup><6611></sup>**Revelation 3:11:** *Hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown.*

The gracious God never called a man to perform a work without furnishing him with adequate strength; and to refuse to do it on the pretence of inability is little short of rebellion against God.

This institution of the seventy persons to help Moses the rabbins consider as the origin of their grand council called the *Sanhedrin*. But we find that a council of seventy men, elders of Israel, had existed among the people a year before this time. See <sup><1240></sup>**Exodus 24:9**; see the advice given to Jethro to Moses, <sup><12187></sup>**Exodus 18:17**, &c., and the notes there.

**Verse 22. Shall the flocks and the herds be slain]** There is certainly a considerable measure of *weakness* and *unbelief* manifested in the complaints and questions of Moses on this occasion; but his conduct appears at the same time so very *simple*, *honest*, and *affectionate*, that we cannot but admire it, while we wonder that he had not stronger confidence in that God whose miracles he had so often witnessed in Egypt.

**Verse 23. Is the Lord's hand waxed short?]** Hast thou forgotten the miracles which I have already performed? or thinkest thou that my power is decreased? The power that is *unlimited* can never be *diminished*.

**Verse 25. When the spirit rested upon them, they prophesied]** By *prophesying* here we are to understand their performing those civil and sacred functions for which they were qualified; exhorting the people to quiet and peaceable submission, to trust and confidence in the goodness and providence of God, would make no small part of the duties of their new office. The ideal meaning of the word *abn naba* is to *pray, entreat, &c.* The prophet is called *aybn nabi*, because he prays, supplicates, in reference to *God*; exhorts, entreats, in reference to *man*. See Clarke on “~~Gen 20:7~~Genesis 20:7”.

**Verse 27. Eldad and Medad do prophesy, &c.]**

*ELDAD, they said, and MEDAD there,  
Irregularly bold,  
By Moses uncommission'd, dare  
A separate meeting hold!*

*And still whom none but heaven will own.  
Men whom the world decry,  
Men authorized by GOD alone,  
Presume to prophesy!*

**Verse 28. My lord Moses, forbid them. .]**

*How often have I blindly done  
What zealous Joshua did,  
Impatient to the rulers run,  
And cried, “My lords, forbid!*

*Silence the schismatics, constrain  
Their thoughts with ours t' agree,  
And sacrifice the souls of men  
To idol UNITY!”*

**Verse 29. Enviest thou for my sake?]**

*Moses, the minister of God,  
Rebukes our partial love,  
Who envy at the gifts bestow'd  
On those we disapprove.*

*We do not our own spirit know,  
Who wish to see suppress'd  
The men that Jesu's spirit show,  
The men whom God hath bless'd.*

**Would God that all the Lord's people were prophets]**

*SHALL we the Spirit's course restrain,  
Or quench the heavenly fire?  
Let God his messengers ordain,  
And whom he will inspire.*

*Blow as he list, the Spirit's choice  
Of instruments we bless;  
We will, if Christ be preached, rejoice,  
And wish the word success.*

*Can all be prophets then? are all  
Commission'd from above?  
No; but whome'er the Lord shall call  
We joyfully approve.*

*O that the Church might all receive  
The spirit of prophecy,  
And all in Christ accepted live,  
And all in Jesus die!*

*Short Hymns on Select Passages of the Holy Scriptures, by Charles Wesley, M. A., and Presbyterian of the Church of England. Bristol, 1762. 2 vols. 12mo.*

These sentiments are the more particularly remarkable as they come from one who was sufficiently bigoted to what was called ecclesiastical *orders and regularity*.

**Verse 31. A wind from the Lord]** An extraordinary one, not the effect of a natural cause. *And brought quails*, a bird which in great companies visits Egypt about the time of the year, March or April, at which the circumstance marked here took place. Mr. *Hasselquist*, the friend and pupil of the famous Linnæus, saw many of them about this time of the year, when he was in Egypt. See his *Travels*, p. 209.

**Two cubits high upon the face of the earth.]** We may consider the quails as *flying within two cubits of the ground*; so that the Israelites could easily

take as many of them as they wished, while flying within the reach of their hands or their clubs. The common notion is, that the quails were brought round about the camp, and fell there in such multitudes as to lie two feet thick upon the ground; but the Hebrew will not bear this version. The Vulgate has expressed the sense, *Volabantque in ære duobus cubitis altitudine super terram*. “And they flew in the air, two cubits high above the ground.”

**Verse 32. The people stood up, &c.]** While these immense flocks were flying at this short distance from the ground, fatigued with the strong wind and the distance they had come, they were easily taken by the people; and as various flocks continued to succeed each other for two days and a night, enough for a month’s provision might be collected in that time. If the quails had fallen about the tents, there was no need to have stood up two days and a night in gathering them; but if they were on the wing, as the text seems to suppose, it was necessary for them to use despatch, and avail themselves of the passing of these birds whilst it continued. See Harmer, and see **Clarke’s note on “<sup><21613></sup>Exodus 16:13”**.

**And they spread them all abroad]** Maillet observes that birds of all kinds come to Egypt for refuge from the cold of a northern winter; and that the people catch them, pluck, and bury them in the burning sand for a few minutes, and thus prepare them for use. This is probably what is meant by *spreading them all abroad round the camp*.

Some authors think that the word **μυμι** *c salvim*, rendered *quails* in our translation, should be rendered *locusts*. There is no need of this conjecture; all difficulties are easily resolved without it. The reader is particularly referred to the note on **See Clarke “<sup><21613></sup>Exodus 16:13”**.

**Verse 33. The wrath of the Lord was kindled]** In what way, and with what effects, we cannot precisely determine. Some heavy judgment fell upon those murmurers and complainers, but of what kind the sacred writer says nothing.

**Verse 34. Kibroth-hattaavah]** *The graves of lust*; and thus their scandalous crime was perpetuated by the name of the place.

1. ST. JUDE speaks of persons who were murmurers and complainers, walking after their own lusts, <sup><2116></sup>**Jude 1:16**, and seems to have this people particularly in view, whom the sacred text calls **μεμψιμοιροι**,

*complainers of their lot.* They could never be satisfied; even God himself could not please them, because they were ever preferring their own wisdom to his. God will save us in his own way, or not at all; because that way, being the plan of infinite wisdom, it is impossible that we can be saved in any other. How often have we professed to pray, “Thy will be done!” And how seldom, very seldom, have our hearts and lips corresponded! How careful should we be in all our prayers to ask nothing but what is perfectly consistent with the will of God! Many times our prayers and desires are such that, were they answered, our ruin would be inevitable. “THY will be done!” is the greatest of all prayers; and he who would pray *safely* and successfully, must at least have the spirit of these words in all his petitions. The Israelites asked flesh when they should not have asked for it; God yields to their murmuring, and the death of multitudes of these murmurers was the consequence! We hear of such punishments, and yet walk in the same way, presuming on God’s mercy, while we continue to provoke his *justice*. Let us settle it in our minds as an indisputable truth, that God is better acquainted with our wants than we are ourselves; that he knows infinitely better what we need; and that he is ever more ready to hear than we are to pray, and is wont to give more than we can desire or deserve.

2. In no case has God at any time withheld from his meanest followers any of the spiritual or temporal mercies they needed. Were he to call *us* to travel through a *wilderness*, he would send us *bread from heaven*, or cause the wilderness to smile and blossom as the rose. How strange is it that we will neither believe that God has worked, or will work, unless we see him working!

## NUMBERS

## CHAPTER 12

*Miriam and Aaron raise a sedition against Moses, because of the Ethiopian woman he had married, 1, and through jealousy of his increasing power and authority, 2. The character of Moses, 3. Moses, Aaron, and Miriam are suddenly called to the tabernacle, 4. The Lord appears in the pillar of the cloud, and converses with them, 5. Declares his purpose to communicate his will to Moses only, 6-8. His anger is kindled against Miriam, and she is smitten with the leprosy, 9, 10. Aaron deplores his transgression, and entreats for Miriam, 11,12. Moses intercedes for her, 13. The Lord requires that she be shut out of the camp for seven days, 14. The people rest till she is restored, 15, and afterwards leave Hazeroth, and pitch in the wilderness of Paran, 16.*

## NOTES ON CHAP. 12

**Verse 1. Miriam and Aaron spake against Moses]** It appears that jealousy of the power and influence of Moses was the real cause of their complaint though his having married an Ethiopian woman- **tyvkh hvah haishshah haccushith**-THAT WOMAN, *the Cushite*, probably meaning *Zipporah*, who was an Arab born in the land of Midian-was the *ostensible* cause.

**Verse 2. Hath the Lord indeed spoken only by Moses?]** It is certain that both Aaron and Miriam had received a portion of the prophetic spirit, (see **Exodus 4:15**, and **Exodus 15:20**), and therefore they thought they might have a share in the *government*; for though there was no kind of *gain* attached to this government, and no honour but such as came from God, yet the love of power is natural to the human mind; and in many instances men will sacrifice even *honour, pleasure, and profit* to the *lust* of power.

**Verse 3. Now the man Moses was very meek]** How could Moses, who certainly was as *humble* and *modest* as he was meek, write this encomium upon himself? I think the word is not rightly understood; **wn** [ *anav*, which we translate *meek*, comes from **hn** [ *anah*, to *act upon*, to *humble, depress, afflict*, and is translated so in many places in the Old Testament; and in this sense it should be understood here: “Now this man Moses was *depressed* or *afflicted* more than any man **hmdah haadamah**, of that land.” And



why was he so? Because of the great burden he had to bear in the care and government of this people, and because of their ingratitude and rebellion both against God and himself: of this depression and affliction, see the fullest proof in the preceding chapter. The very power they envied was oppressive to its possessor, and was more than either of *their* shoulders could sustain.

**Verse 4. And the Lord spake suddenly]** The *sudden* interference of God in this business shows at once the importance of the case and his displeasure.

**Verse 6. If there be a prophet]** We see here the different ways in which God usually made himself known to the prophets, viz., by *visions*-emblematic appearances, and by *dreams*, in which the future was announced by *dark speeches*, **t dj b bechidoth**, by enigmas or figurative representations, <sup><04128></sup>**Numbers 12:8**. But to Moses God had communicated himself in a different way-he spoke to him *face to face*, *apparently*, showing him his glory: not in dark or enigmatical speeches; this could not be admitted in the case in which Moses was engaged, for he was to receive *laws* by Divine inspiration, the *precepts* and *expressions* of which must all be *ad captum vulgi*, within the reach of the meanest capacity. As Moses, therefore, was chosen of God to be the *lawgiver*, so was he chosen to see these laws duly enforced for the benefit of the people among whom he presided.

**Verse 7. Moses-is faithful]** **man neeman**, a *prefect* or *superintendent*. So Samuel is termed, <sup><00235></sup>**1 Samuel 2:35; 3:20**; David is so called, <sup><091827></sup>**1 Samuel 18:27**, *Neeman*, and son-in-law of the king. <sup><18123></sup>**Job 12:20**, speaks of the *Neemanim* as a name of dignity. It seems also to have been a title of *respect* given to ambassadors, <sup><0317></sup>**Proverbs 13:17; 25:13**. Calmet well observes that the word *fidelity* is often used for an employ, office, or dignity, and refers to <sup><13022></sup>**1 Chronicles 9:22, 26, 31**; <sup><143112></sup>**2 Chronicles 31:12, 15; 34:12**, &c. Moses was a faithful, well-trying servant in the house of God, and therefore he uses him as a familiar, and puts confidence in him.

**Verse 10. Miriam became leprous]** It is likely Miriam was *chief* in this mutiny; and it is probable that it was on this ground she is mentioned *first*, (see <sup><04121></sup>**Numbers 12:1**.) and punished here, while Aaron is spared. Had he been smitten with the leprosy, his sacred character must have greatly suffered, and perhaps the *priesthood* itself have fallen into contempt. How

many priests and preachers who deserved to be exposed to reproach and infamy, have been spared for the sake of the holy character they bore, that the ministry might not be blamed! But the just God will visit their transgressions in some other way, if they do not deeply deplore them and find mercy through Christ. Nothing tends to discredit the work of God so much as the transgressions and miscarriages of those who minister in holy things.

**Verse 14. If her father had but spit in her face]** This appears to have been done only in cases of great provocation on the part of the child, and strong irritation on the side of the parent. *Spitting in the face* was a sign of the deepest contempt. See <sup><183010></sup>**Job 30:10**; <sup><283016></sup>**Isaiah 50:6**; <sup><41146></sup>**Mark 14:65**. In a case where a parent was obliged by the disobedient conduct of his child to treat him in this way, it appears he was banished from the father's presence for *seven days*. If then this was an allowed and judged case in matters of high provocation on the part of a child, should not the punishment be equally severe where the creature has rebelled against the Creator? Therefore Miriam was shut out of the camp for seven days, and thus debarred from coming into the presence of God her father, who is represented as dwelling among the people. To a soul who knows the value and inexpressible blessedness of communion with God, how intolerable must seven days of spiritual darkness be! But how indescribably wretched must their case be who are cast out into *outer darkness*, where the light of God no more shines, and where his approbation can no more be felt for ever! Reader, God save thee from so great a curse!

Several of the fathers suppose there is a great mystery hidden in the quarrel of Miriam and Aaron with Moses and Zipporah. Origen (and after him several others) speaks of it in the following manner:-“1. Zipporah, a *Cushite* espoused by *Moses*, evidently points out the choice which Jesus Christ has made of the *Gentiles* for his spouse and Church. 2. The jealousy of Aaron and Miriam against Moses and Zipporah signifies the hatred and envy of the Jews against Christ and the apostles, when they saw that the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven had been opened to the Gentiles, of which they had rendered themselves unworthy. 3. The *leprosy* with which Miriam was smitten shows the gross ignorance of the Jews, and the ruinous, disordered state of their religion, in which there is neither a head, a temple, nor a sacrifice. 4. Of none but Jesus Christ can it be said that he was the *most meek* and patient of men; that *he saw God face to face*; that he had every thing clearly revealed without enigmatical representations;

and that he *was faithful in all the house of God.*” This, and much more, Origen states in the sixth and seventh homilies on the book of Numbers, and yet all this he considers as little in comparison of the vast mysteries that lie hidden in these accounts; for the shortness of the time, and the magnitude of the mysteries, only permit him “to pluck a few flowers from those vast fields—not as many as the exuberance of those fields afford, but only such as by their odour he was led to select from the rest.” *Licebat tamen ex ingentibus campis paucos flosculos legere, et non quantum ager exuberet, sed quantum ordoratum supiciat, carpere.*

**Verse 16. The wilderness of Paran.]** This could not be the same Paran with that mentioned <sup><ref>10:10</ref></sup> **Deuteronomy 1:1**, for that was on the borders of the promised land, see the note on <sup><ref>10:10</ref></sup> **Deuteronomy 1:1, 2**; they were long near the borders of Canaan, and might have speedily entered into it, had it not been for their provocations and iniquities. They spent thirty-eight years in a journey which might have been accomplished in a few weeks! How many through their unfaithfulness have been *many years* in gaining that for which, in the ordinary procedure of Divine grace, *a few days* had been sufficient! How much ground may a man lose in the Divine life by one act of unfaithfulness or transgression! Israel wandered in the wilderness because Israel despised the pleasant land, and did not give credence to the word of the Lord. They would have a golden calf, and they had nothing but tribulation and wo in return.

## NUMBERS

## CHAPTER 13

Twelve men, *one out of every tribe, are sent to examine the nature and state of the land of Canaan, 1-3. Their names, 4-16. Moses gives them particular directions, 17-20. They proceed on their journey, 21, 22. Come to Eshcol, and cut down a branch with a cluster of grapes, which they bear between two of them upon a staff, 23, 24. After forty days they return to Paran, from searching the land, and show to Moses and the people the fruit they had brought with them, 25, 26. Their report-they acknowledge that the land is good, but that the inhabitants are such as the Israelites cannot hope to conquer, 27-29. Caleb endeavours to do away the bad impression made, by the report of his fellows, upon the minds of the people, 30. But the others persist in their former statement, 31: and greatly amplify the difficulties of conquest, 32, 33.*

## NOTES ON CHAP. 13

**Verse 2. Send thou men, that they may search]** It appears from <sup><6019></sup>**Deuteronomy 1:19-24** that this was done in consequence of the request of the people, after the following address of Moses: “And when we departed from Horeb, we went through all that great and terrible wilderness-and we came unto Kadesh-Barnea; and I said unto you, Ye are come unto the mountain of the Amorites, which the Lord our God doth give unto us. Behold the Lord thy God hath set the land before thee: go up *and possess it*, as the Lord God of thy fathers hath said unto thee; fear not, neither be discouraged. And ye came near unto me every one of you, and said: WE WILL SEND MEN BEFORE US, AND THEY SHALL SEARCH US OUT THE LAND and bring us word again, by what way we must go up, and into what cities we shall come. And the saying pleased me well, and I took twelve men of you, one of a tribe,” &c., &c. Nearly the whole of these verses is added *here* by the *Samaritan*.

**Every one a ruler]** Not any of the *princes* of the people, (see <sup><6104></sup>**Numbers 1:4-16**.) for these names are different from those; but these now sent were men of consideration and importance in their respective tribes.

**Verse 13. Sethur, the son of Michael.]** It would have been strange had the numerous searches after the explanation of the mystical number 666, <sup><61318></sup>**Revelation 13:18; 17:5**, met with nothing to their purpose in the name

of this son of Michael. **rwts** *Sethur*, from **rts** *sathar*, to *hide* or *conceal*, signifies *hidden* or *mysterious*, and includes in it the numerical letters of the No. 666: **s** 60, + **t** 400, + **w** 6, + **r** 200, = 666. But of what utility can such expositions be to any subject of history or theology?

**Verse 16. And Moses called Oshea Jehoshua.**] Oshea, Heb. [**vwh** should be written *Hoshea*: the word signifies *saved*, or a *saviour*, or *salvation*; but [**vwhy**, *he shall save*, or *the salvation of God*; a *letter*, says Calmet, of the incommunicable name of God, being added to his former name. This was not the first time in which he had the name *Joshua*; see <sup><02170></sup>**Exodus 17:9**, and the note there. Some suppose he had this change of name in consequence of his victory over Amalek; see <sup><021713></sup>**Exodus 17:13**, **14**.

**Verse 18. See the land, what it is]** What sort of a COUNTRY it is; how situated; its natural advantages or disadvantages.

**And the people-whether they be strong or weak]** Healthy, robust, hardy men; or little, weak, and pusillanimous.

**Verse 20. The land-whether it be fat or lean]** Whether the SOIL be *rich* or *poor*; which might be known by its being well *wooded*, and by the *fruits* it produced; and therefore they were desired to examine it as to the *trees*, &c., and to bring some of the *fruits* with them.

**Verse 21. From the wilderness of Zin]** The place called; <sup>^</sup>**xmb**[**rc** *Tsin*, here, is different from that called <sup>^</sup>**ys** *Sin* or *Seen*. <sup><02161></sup>**Exodus 16:1**; the latter was nigh to *Egypt*, but the former was near *Kadesh Barnea*, not far from the borders of the promised land.

“The spies having left *Kadesh Barnea*, which was in the desert of *Paran*, see <sup><04133></sup>**Numbers 13:26**, they proceeded to the desert of *Tsin*, all along the land of *Canaan*, nearly following the course of the river *Jordan*, till they came to *Rehob*, a city situated near *Mount Libanus*, at the northern extremity of the Holy Land, towards the road that leads to *Hamath*. Thence they returned through the midst of the same land by the borders of the *Sidonians* and *Philistines*, and passing by *Mount Hebron*, rendered famous by the residence of *Abraham* formerly, and by the gigantic descendants of *Anak* at that time, they passed through the valley of the brook of *Eshcol*, where they cut down the bunch of grapes mentioned

<sup><04132></sup>**Numbers 13:23**, and returned to the Israelitish camp after an absence of forty days,” <sup><04132></sup>**Numbers 13:25**. See *Calmet* on this place.

**Verse 22. Hebron was built seven years before Zoan in Egypt.]** The *Zoan* of the Scriptures is allowed to be the *Tanis* of the heathen historians, which was the capital of Lower Egypt. Some think it was to humble the pride of the Egyptians, who boasted the highest antiquity, that this note concerning the higher antiquity of Hebron was introduced by Moses. Some have supposed that it is more likely to have been originally a *marginal note*, which in process of time crept into the text; but all the versions and all the MSS. that have as yet been collated, acknowledge it.

**Verse 23. They bare it between two upon a staff]** It would be very easy to produce a great number of witnesses to prove that grapes in the promised land, and indeed in various other hot countries, grow to a prodigious size. By *Calmet*, *Scheuchzer*, and *Harmer*, this subject has been exhausted, and to these I may refer the reader. Pliny mentions bunches of grapes in Africa each of which was larger than an *infant*. *Radzvil* saw at Rhodes bunches of grapes three quarters of an ell in length, each grape as large as a plum. *Dandini* saw grapes of this size at Mount Libanus; and *Paul Lucas* mentions some bunches which he saw at Damascus that weighed above forty-five pounds. From the most authentic accounts the Egyptian *grape* is very small, and this being the only one with which the Israelites were acquainted, the great size of the grapes of *Hebron* would appear still more extraordinary. I myself once cut down a bunch of grapes nearly twenty pounds in weight. Those who live in cold climates can scarcely have any conception to what perfection both grapes and other fruits grow in climates that are warm, and where the soil is suitable to them.

From what is mentioned <sup><04132></sup>**Numbers 13:20**, *Now the time was the time of the first-ripe grapes*, it is very probable that the spies received their orders about the beginning of August, and returned about the middle of September, as in those countries grapes, pomegranates, and figs, are ripe about this time; see *Harmer*, vol. i., p. 108-110. At Sheeraz, in Persia, I find from a MS. journal, that the small *white grape*, *askerie*, came into season August 6; and *pomegranates* September 6; and the large *red grape*, *sahibi*, September 10.

The spies' carrying the bunch of grapes on a staff between two men was probably not rendered necessary by the *size* of the bunch or cluster; but to

preserve it from being *bruised*, that the Israelites might have a fair specimen of the fruit As Joshua and Caleb were the only persons who gave a favourable account of the land, it is most likely that they were the persons who had gathered these fruits, and who brought them to the Israelitish camp. And it is likely they were gathered as short a time as possible before their return, that they might not be injured by the length of the time they had been separated from their respective trees.

**Verse 27. We came unto the land, &c.]** It is astonishing that men so dastardly as these should have had courage enough to risk their persons in searching the land. But probably though destitute of valour they had a sufficiency of cunning, and this carried them through. The report they brought was exceedingly discouraging, and naturally tended to produce the effect mentioned in the next chapter. The conduct of Joshua and Caleb was alone magnanimous, and worthy of the cause in which they were embarked.

**Verse 32. Men of a great stature]** *twdm yvna anshey middoth*, men of measures-two men's height; i.e., exceedingly tall men.

**Verse 33. There we saw the giants]** *pyl pn nephilim*. It is evident that they had seen a robust, sturdy, warlike race of men, and of great stature; for the asserted fact is not denied by Joshua or Caleb.

Tales of *gigantic men* are frequent in all countries, but they are generally of such as have lived in times very *remote* from those in which such tales are told. That there have been *giants* at different times, in various parts of the earth, there can be no doubt; but that there ever was a nation of men twelve and fourteen feet high, we cannot, should not believe. *Goliath* appears to have been at least nine feet high: this was very extraordinary. I knew three young men in my own neighbourhood, two of them brothers, each of whom was upwards of seven feet, the third was eight feet six inches, and these men were very well proportioned. Others I have seen of extraordinary stature, but they were generally disproportioned, especially in their limbs. These instances serve to prove the possibility of cases of this nature. The *Anakim* might appear to the Israelites as a very tall, robust nation; and in comparison of the latter it is very probable that they were so, as it is very likely that the growth of the Israelites had been greatly cramped with their long and severe servitude in Egypt. And this may in

some measure account for their alarm. On this subject the reader is desired to turn back to the note on **See Clarke** “~~6-01004~~ **Genesis 6:4**”.

CANAAN was a type of the kingdom of God; the wilderness through which the Israelites passed, of the difficulties and trials to be met with in the present world. The promise of the kingdom of God is given to every believer; but how many are discouraged by the difficulties in the way! A slothful heart sees dangers, lions, and giants, every where; and therefore refuses to proceed in the heavenly path. Many of the spies contribute to this by the bad reports they bring of the heavenly country. Certain preachers allow “that the land is good, that it flows with milk and honey,” and go so far as to show some of its fruits; but they discourage the people by stating the impossibility of overcoming their enemies. “Sin,” say they, “cannot be destroyed in this life-it will always dwell in you-the *Anakim* cannot be conquered-we are but as grasshoppers against the *Anakim*,” &c., &c. Here and there a Joshua and a Caleb, trusting alone in the power of God, armed with faith in the infinite efficacy of that blood which cleanses from all unrighteousness, boldly stand forth and say: “Their defence is departed from them, and the Lord is with us; let us go up at once and possess the land, for we are well able to overcome.” We can do all things through Christ strengthening us: he will purify us unto himself, and give us that rest from sin here which his death has procured and his word has promised. Reader, canst thou not take God at his word? He has never yet failed thee. Surely then thou hast no reason to doubt. Thou hast never yet tried him to the uttermost. Thou knowest not how far and how fully he can save. Do not be dispirited: the sons of Anak shall fall before thee, if thou meet them in the name of the LORD of HOSTS.



## NUMBERS

## CHAPTER 14

*The whole congregation weep at the account brought by the spies, 1. They murmur, 2, 3; and propose to make themselves a captain, and go back to Egypt, 4. Moses and Aaron are greatly affected, 5. Joshua and Caleb endeavour to appease and encourage the people, 6-9. The congregation are about to stone them, 10. The glory of the Lord appears, and he is about to smite the rebels with the pestilence, 11, 12. Moses makes a long and pathetic intercession in their behalf, 13-19. The Lord hears and forbears to punish, 20; but purposes that not one of that generation shall enter into the promised land save Joshua and Caleb, 21-24. Moses is commanded to turn and get into the wilderness by way of the Red Sea, 25. The Lord repeats his purpose that none of that generation shall enter into the promised land-that their carcasses shall fall in the wilderness, and that their children alone, with Joshua and Caleb, shall possess the land of the Canaanites, &c., 26-32. As many days as they have searched the land shall they wander years in the desert, until they shall be utterly consumed, 33-35. All the spies save Joshua and Caleb die by a plague, 36-38. Moses declares God's purpose to the people, at which they are greatly affected, 39. They acknowledge their sin, and purpose to go up at once and possess the land, 40. Moses cautions them against resisting the purpose of God, 41-43. They, notwithstanding, presume to go, but Moses and the ark abide in the camp, 44. The Amalekites and Canaanites come down from the mountains, and defeat them, 45.*

## NOTES ON CHAP. 14

**Verse 1. Cried; and wept that night.]** In almost every case this people gave deplorable evidence of the degraded state of their minds. With scarcely any mental firmness, and with almost no religion, they could bear no reverses, and were ever at their wit's end. They were headstrong, presumptuous, pusillanimous, indecisive, and fickle. And because they were such, therefore the power and wisdom of God appeared the more conspicuously in the whole of their history.

**Verse 4. Let us make a captain]** Here was a formal renunciation of the authority of Moses, and flat rebellion against God. And it seems from <sup><60917></sup>**Nehemiah 9:17** that they had actually appointed *another leader*, under whose direction they were about to return to Egypt. How astonishing is this! Their lives were made bitter, because of the rigour with which they were made to serve in the land of Egypt; and yet they are willing, yea

*eager*, to get back into the same circumstances again! Great evils, when once some time *past*, affect the mind less than *present* ills, though much inferior. They had partly forgot their Egyptian bondage, and now smart under a little discouragement, having totally lost sight of their high calling, and of the power and goodness of God.

**Verse 6. And Joshua, &c.]** See on the preceding chapter, See Clarke “<sup><40133></sup>Numbers 13:33”.

**Verse 9. Their defence]** מִלְּךָ *tsillam*, *their shadow*, a metaphor highly expressive of *protection* and *support* in the sultry eastern countries. The *protection* of God is so called; see <sup><49101></sup>Psalm 91:1; 121:5; see also <sup><25116></sup>Isaiah 51:16; 49:2; 30:2.

The Arabs and Persians have the same word to express the same thing. [Persian] *nemayeed zulli doulet mamdood bad*. “May the *shadow* of thy prosperity be extended!” [Persian] *nemayced zulli doulet ber mufareki khayr khwahlen mamdood bad*. “May the *shadow* of thy prosperity be spread over the heads of thy well-wishers!” They have also the following elegant distich:—

[Persian]

[Persian]

*Sayahat kem mubad az seri ma  
Bast Allah zullikem abeda.*

*“May thy protection never be removed from my head!  
May God extend thy shadow eternally!”*

Here the Arabic [Arabic] *zull* answers exactly to the Hebrew לְךָ *tsel*, both signifying that which *overspreads* or *overshadows*. See Clarke’s note on “<sup><40144></sup>Numbers 14:14”.

**Verse 10. The glory of the Lord appeared]** This timely appearance of the Divine glory prevented these faithful servants of God from being stoned to death by this base and treacherous multitude. “Every man is immortal till his work is done,” while in simplicity of heart he is following his God.

**Verse 14. That thy cloud standeth over them]** This *cloud*, the symbol of the Divine glory, and proof of the Divine presence, appears to have assumed *three* different forms for three important purposes.

1. It appeared by day in the form of a *pillar* of a sufficient height to be seen by all the camp, and thus went before them to point out their way in the desert. <sup><12438></sup>**Exodus 40:38.**

2. It appeared by night as a pillar of fire to give them light while travelling by night, which they probably *sometimes* did; (see <sup><4021></sup>**Numbers 9:21**;) or to illuminate their tents in their encampment; <sup><12121></sup>**Exodus 13:21, 22.**

3. It stood at certain times *above* the whole congregation, overshadowing them from the scorching rays of the sun; and probably at other times condensed the vapours, and precipitated rain or dew for the refreshment of the people. *He spread a cloud for their covering; and fire to give light in the night*; <sup><19A53></sup>**Psalm 105:39.** It was probably from this circumstance that *the shadow of the Lord* was used to signify the Divine *protection*, not only by the Jews, but also by other Asiatic nations. **See Clarke's note on <sup><4140></sup>Numbers 14:9**, and see particularly **Clarke's note on <sup><12132></sup>Exodus 13:21**".

**Verse 18. The Lord is longsuffering]** See Clarke's note on <sup><12346></sup>**Exodus 34:6**".

**Verse 19. Pardon, I beseech thee, the iniquity of this people]** From <sup><41413></sup>**Numbers 14:13-19** inclusive we have the words of Moses's intercession; they need no explanation, they are full of simplicity and energy; his arguments with God (for he did reason and argue with his Maker) are pointed, cogent, and respectful; and while they show a heart full of humanity, they evidence the deepest concern for the glory of God. The *argumentum ad hominem* is here used in the most unexceptionable manner, and with the fullest effect.

**Verse 20. I have pardoned]** That is, They shall not be cut off *as* they deserve, because thou hast interceded for their lives.

**Verse 21. All the earth shall be filled, &c.]** *xrah l k kol haarets*, all THIS land, i.e., the land of Canaan which was only fulfilled to the letter when the preaching of Christ and his apostles was heard through all the cities and villages of Judea. It does not appear that the whole of the terraqueous globe is meant by this expression in any of the places where it occurs connected with this promise of the diffusion of the Divine light. See <sup><19729></sup>**Psalm 72:19**; <sup><23416></sup>**Isaiah 40:5**; <sup><32124></sup>**Habakkuk 2:14.**

**Verse 24. But my servant Caleb, &c.]** Caleb had *another spirit*-not only a bold, generous, courageous, noble, and heroic spirit; but the Spirit and influence of the God of heaven thus raised him above human inquietudes and earthly fears, therefore be *followed God fully*; *yrj a al myw vaimalle acharai*, literally, *he filled after me*: God showed him the way he was to take, and the *line* of conduct he was to pursue, and he *filled up* this line, and in all things *followed* the will of his Maker. *He* therefore shall see the promised land, and *his* seed shall possess it. A *dastardly* spirit in the things of God is a heavy curse. How many are retarded in their course, and fall short of the blessings of the Gospel, through magnifying the *number* and *strength* of their adversaries, their own weakness and the difficulties of the way, with which we may connect their distrust of the power, faithfulness, and goodness of God! And how many are prevented from receiving the higher degrees of salvation by foolishly attributing insurmountable power, either to their inward corruptions or outward enemies! Only such men as Joshua and Caleb, who take God at his word, and who know that against his wisdom no cunning can stand, and against his might no strength can prevail, are likely to *follow God fully*, and receive the heights, lengths, breadths, and depths of the salvation of God.

**Verse 34. After the number of the days]** The spies were *forty days* in searching the land, and the people who rebelled on their evil report are condemned to wander *forty years* in the wilderness! Now let them make them a captain and go back to Egypt *if they can*. God had so hedged them about with his power and providence that they could neither go back to Egypt nor get forward to the promised land! God has provided innumerable *spiritual* blessings for mankind, but in the pursuit of *earthly* good they lose them, and often lose the others also! *If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the fruit of the land*, but not *otherwise*; unless for your farther punishment God give you your portion *in THIS life*, and ye get none in the life to come. From so great a curse may God save *thee*, thou money-loving, honour-hunting, pleasure-taking, thoughtless, godless man!

**And ye shall know my breach of promise.]** This is certainly a most harsh expression; and most learned men agree that the words *ytawnt ta eth tenuathi* should be translated *my vengeance*, which is the rendering of the *Septuagint*, *Vulgate*, *Coptic*, and *Anglo-Saxon*, and which is followed by almost all our ancient *English* translations. The meaning however appears to be this: As God had promised to bring them into the good land,

provided they kept his statutes, ordinances, &c., and they had now broken their engagements, he was no longer held by his covenant; and therefore, by excluding them from the promised land, he showed them at once his *annulling of the covenant* which they had broken, and his *vengeance* because they had broken it.

**Verse 37. Those men that did bring up the evil report-died]** Thus ten of the twelve that searched out the land were struck dead, by the justice of God, on the spot! *Caleb*, of the tribe of Judah, and *Joshua*, of the tribe of Ephraim, alone escaped, because they had followed God fully. Let preachers of God's word take heed how they straiten the way of salvation, or render, by unjust description, that way perplexed and difficult which God has made plain and easy.

**Verse 40. We-will go up unto the place, &c.]** They found themselves on the very borders of the land, and they heard God say they should not enter it, but should be consumed by a forty years' wandering in the wilderness; notwithstanding, they are determined to render vain this purpose of God, probably supposing that the temporary sorrow they felt for their late rebellion would be accepted as a sufficient atonement for their crimes. They accordingly went up, and were cut down by their enemies; and why? God went not with them. How vain is the counsel of man against the wisdom of God! Nature, poor, fallen human nature, is ever running into extremes. This miserable people, a short time ago, thought that though they had Omnipotence with them they could not conquer and possess the land! Now they imagine that though God himself go not with them, yet they shall be sufficient to drive out the inhabitants, and take possession of their country! Man is ever supposing he can either do *all things* or do *nothing*; he is therefore sometimes *presumptuous*, and at other times in *despair*. Who but an apostle, or one under the influence of the *same* Spirit, can say, *I can do ALL THINGS THROUGH CHRIST who strengtheneth me?*

## NUMBERS

## CHAPTER 15

*Directions concerning the different offerings they should bring unto the Lord when they should come to the land of Canaan, 1-3. Directions relative to the meat-offering, 4; to the drink-offering, 5. Of the burnt-offering, vow-offering, peace-offering, drink-offering, &c., 6-12. All born in the country must perform these rites, 13, and the strangers also, 14-16. They shall offer unto the Lord a heave-offering of the first-fruits of the land, 17-21. Concerning omissions through ignorance, and the sacrifices to be offered on such occasions, 22-29. He who sins presumptuously shall be cut off, 30, 31. History of the person who gathered sticks on the Sabbath, 32. He is brought to Moses and Aaron, 33. They put him in confinement till the mind of the Lord should be known on the case, 34. The Lord commands him to be stoned, 35. He is stoned to death, 36. The Israelites are commanded to make fringes to the borders of their garments, 37, 38. The end for which these fringes were to be made, that they might remember the commandments of the Lord, that they might be holy, 39-41.*

## NOTES ON CHAP. 15

**Verse 2. When ye be come into the land]** Some learned men are of opinion that several offerings prescribed by the law were not intended to be made in the *wilderness*, but in the promised land; the former not affording those conveniences which were necessary to the complete observance of the Divine worship in this and several other respects.

**Verse 3. And will make an offering]** For the different kinds of offerings, sacrifices, &c., see <sup><B1012></sup> **Leviticus 1:2, 7.**

**Verse 5. The fourth part of a hin]** The quantity of meal and flour was augmented in proportion to the *size* of the sacrifice with which it was offered. With a LAMB or a KID were offered *one* tenth deal of flour, (the tenth part of an ephah, see Clarke on <sup><A294></sup> **Exodus 29:40**,) the *fourth* part of a hin of *oil*, and the *fourth* part of a hin of *wine*. With a RAM, *two* tenth deals of flour, a *third* part of a hin of *oil*, and a *third* part of a hin of *wine*. With a BULLOCK, *three* tenth deals of flour, *half* a hin of *oil*, and *half* a hin of *wine*. See <sup><A154></sup> **Numbers 15:4-11.**

**Verse 14. If a stranger sojourn]** See the notes on <sup><B193></sup> **Leviticus 19:33; 22:9.** When the case of the Jewish people is fairly considered, and their situation with respect to the surrounding idolatrous nations, we shall see

the absolute necessity of having but one *form* of *worship* in the land. That alone was genuine which was prescribed by the Almighty, and no others could be tolerated, because they were idolatrous. All *strangers*-all that came to *sojourn* in the land, were required to conform to it; and it was right that those who did conform to it should have equal rights and privileges with the Hebrews themselves, which we find was the case. But under the Christian dispensation, as no particular *form* of worship is prescribed, the types and ceremonies of the Mosaic institution being all fulfilled, unlimited toleration should be allowed; and while the sacred writings are made the basis of the worship offered to God, every man should be allowed to worship according to his own conscience, for in this respect every one is

*“Lord of himself, accountable to none  
But to his conscience and his God alone.”*

**Verse 20. Ye shall offer-the first of your dough]** Concerning the offerings of *first-fruits*, see Clarke’s notes on “<sup><1072></sup>Exodus 22:29”.

**Verse 24. If aught be committed by ignorance]** See Clarke’s notes on “<sup><1042></sup>Leviticus 4:2”, and “<sup><10517></sup>Leviticus 5:17”. The case here probably refers to the whole congregation; the cases above, to the sin of an individual.

**Verse 25. The priest shall make an atonement]** Even sins committed through ignorance required an atonement; and God in his mercy has provided one for them.

**Verse 30. But the soul that doeth aught presumptuously]** Bold daring acts of transgression against the fullest evidence, and in *despite* of the Divine authority, admitted of no atonement; the person was to be *cut off*-to be excluded from God’s people, and from all their privileges and blessings.

Probably the presumption mentioned here implied an utter contempt of the word and authority of God, springing from an *idolatrous* or *atheistical* mind. In such a case all repentance was precluded, because of the denial of the *word* and *being* of God. It is probably a case similar to that mentioned <sup><8004></sup>**Hebrews 6:4-8; 10:26-31**; on which passages see the notes.

**Verse 32. They found a man that gathered sticks upon the Sabbath]** This was in all likelihood a case of that kind supposed above: the man despised the word of the Lord, and therefore broke his commandment; see

<sup><0153></sup>**Numbers 15:31**. On this ground he was punished with the utmost rigour of the law.

**Verse 36. Stoned him]** See Clarke's note on "<sup><0153></sup>**Leviticus 24:23**".

**Verse 38. Bid them-make them fringes]** We learn from <sup><0153></sup>**Numbers 15:39** that these *fringes* were emblematical of the various *commands* of God. That there was any analogy between a *fringe* and a *precept*, it would be bold to assert; but when a thing is appointed to *represent* another, no matter how different, that first object becomes the regular representative or sign of the other. There is no analogy between the term *bread* and the *farinaceous* nutritive substance thereby signified; but because this term is used to express and represent that thing, every person thus understands it; and when the word *bread* is seen or heard, a perfect knowledge, not of the *letters* which compose that word, but of the *thing* signified by it, is conveyed to the mind. So the *fringes*, being appointed by God to represent and bring to mind the *commandments* of God, <sup><0153></sup>**Numbers 15:39**, the mention or sight of them conveyed the intelligence intended. All the Jews wore these, and so probably did our Lord; see <sup><0153></sup>**Matthew 9:20**, where the word **κρασπε ον** is rather to be understood of the *fringe* than of the *hem* of his garment.



## NUMBERS

## CHAPTER 16

*The rebellion of Korah and his company against Moses, 1-3. He directs them how to try, in the course of the next day, whom God had called to the priesthood, 4-11. Dathan and Abiram use the most seditious speeches, 12-14. Moses is wroth, 15; and orders Korah and his company to be ready on the morrow with their censers and incense, 16-18. Korah gathers his company together, 19. The glory of the Lord appears, and he threatens to consume them, 20, 21. Moses and Aaron intercede for them, 22. The people are commanded to leave the tents of the rebels, 23-26. They obey, and Korah and his company come out and stand before the door of their tents, 27. Moses in a solemn address puts the contention to issue, 28-30. As soon as he had done speaking, the earth clave and swallowed them, and all that appertained to them, 31-34; and the 250 men who offered incense are consumed by fire, 35. The Lord commands Eleazar to preserve the censers, because they were hallowed, 36-38. Eleazar makes of them a covering for the altar, 39, 40. The next day the people murmur anew, the glory of the Lord appears, and Moses and Aaron go to the tabernacle, 41-43. They are commanded to separate themselves from the congregation, 44, 45. Moses, perceiving that God had sent a plague among them, directs Aaron to hasten and make an atonement, 46. Aaron does so, and the plague is stayed, 47, 48. The number of those who died by the plague, 14,700 men, 49, 50.*

## NOTES ON CHAP. 16

**Verse 1.** Now Korah-took men] Had not these been the most brutish of men, could they have possibly so soon forgotten the signal displeasure of God manifested against them so lately for their rebellion. The word *men* is not in the original; and the verb **j qyw** *vaiyikkach*, and *he took*, is not in the plural but the singular, hence it cannot be applied to the act of all these chiefs. In every part of the Scripture where this rebellion is referred to it is attributed to Korah, (see **Numbers 26:3**, and **Jude 1:11**;) therefore the verb here belongs to him, and the whole verse should be translated thus:-*Now Korah, son of Yitsar son of Kohath, son of Levi, HE TOOK even Dathan and Abiram, the sons of Eliab, and On, son of Peleth, SON OF REUBEN; and they rose up, &c.* This makes a very regular and consistent sense, and spares all the learned labour of Father Houbigant, who translates **j qy** *yikkach*, by *rebellionem fecerunt, they rebelled*, which scarcely any rule of criticism can ever justify. Instead of **^bwar ynb** *beney Reuben*,

SONS of *Reuben*, some MSS. have **nb ben**, SON, in the singular; this reading, supported by the *Septuagint* and the *Samaritan* text, I have followed in the above translation. But as *Eliab* and *Peleth* were both *Reubenites*, the common reading, SONS, may be safely followed.

**Verse 3. Ye take too much upon you]** The original is simply **μκλ br rab lachem**, *too much for you*. The spirit of this saying appears to me to be the following:—"Holy offices are not equally distributed: you arrogate to yourselves the most important ones, as if *your* superior holiness entitled you *alone* to them; whereas all the congregation are *holy*, and have an equal right with you to be employed in the most holy services." Moses retorts this saying <sup><04167></sup>**Numbers 16:7**: Ye take too much upon you, **μκλ br rab lachem**; Ye have too much already, ye sons of Levi; i.e., by your present spirit and disposition you prove yourselves to be wholly unworthy of any **spiritual** employment.

**Verse 5. The Lord will show who are his]** It is supposed that St. Paul refers to this place, <sup><51219></sup>**2 Timothy 2:19**: *The foundation of God*-the whole sacrificial system, referring to Christ Jesus, the foundation of the salvation of men; *standeth sure*, notwithstanding the rebellions, intrusions, and false doctrines of men; *having this seal*-this stamp of its Divine authenticity, *The Lord knoweth them that are his*; **εγνώ Κυριος τους οντας αυτου**, a literal translation of **wl rva ta hwhy [dyw veyoda Yehovah eth asher lo**; and both signifying, The Lord approveth of his own; or, will own that which is of his own appointment. *And let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity*, alluding to the exhortation of Moses, <sup><04165></sup>**Numbers 16:26**: *Depart, I pray you, from the tents of these wicked men*.

**Verse 15. Respect not thou their offering]** There was no danger of this: they wished to set up a priesthood and a sacrificial system of their own; and God never has blessed, and never can bless, any scheme of salvation which is not of his own appointment. Man is ever supposing that he can mend his Maker's work, or that he can make one of his own that will do in its place.

**Verse 22. O God, the God of the spirits of all flesh]** **r cb l kl tj wrh yhl a l a** *El Elohey haruchoth lechol basar*. This address sufficiently proves that these holy men believed that man is a being compounded of flesh and spirit, and that these principles are perfectly distinct. Either the

*materiality* of the human soul is a human fable, or, if it be a true doctrine, these men did not pray under the influence of the Divine Spirit. In

<sup><42716></sup>**Numbers 27:16** there is a similar form of expression: *Let the Lord, the God of the spirits of all flesh.* And in <sup><181210></sup>**Job 12:10**: *In whose hand is the soul (v<sup>pn</sup> nephesh) of all living; and the spirit (j w<sup>r</sup> ruach) of all flesh of man.* Are not these decisive proofs that the Old Testament teaches that there is an immortal spirit in man? “But does not j w<sup>r</sup> ruach signify wind or breath?” Sometimes it does, but certainly not *here*; for how absurd would it be to say, O God, the God of the *breaths* of all flesh!

**Verse 30. If the Lord make a new thing]** h<sup>w</sup>hy arby hayrb <sup>μ</sup>aw veim beriah yibra Yehovah, and if Jehovah should create a creation, i.e., do such a thing as was never done before.

**And they go down quick into the pit]** hl av sheolah, a proof, among many others, that l av sheol, signifies here a *chasm* or *pit* of the earth, and not the place called *hell*; for it would be absurd to suppose that their *houses* had gone to hell; and it would be wicked to imagine that their little innocent children had gone thither, though God was pleased to destroy their lives with those of their iniquitous fathers.

**Verse 33. They, and all that appertained to them]** Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, and all that appertained to their respective families, went down into the pit caused by this supernatural earthquake; while the fire from the Lord consumed the 250 men that bare censers. Thus there were two distinct punishments, the *pit* and the *fire*, for the *two divisions* of these rebels.

**Verse 37. The censers-are hallowed.]** w<sup>v</sup>dq kadeshu, are consecrated, i.e., to the service of God though in this instance improperly employed.

**Verse 41. On the morrow all the congregation-murmured]** It is very likely that the people persuaded themselves that Moses and Aaron had used some *cunning* in this business, and that the *earthquake* and *fire* were artificial; else, had they discerned the hand of God in this punishment, could they have dared the anger of the Lord in the very face of justice?

**Verse 46. The plague is begun.]** God now punished them by a *secret blast*, so as to put the matter beyond all dispute; his hand, and his alone, was seen, not only in the *plague*, but in the *manner* in which the mortality

was arrested. It was necessary that this should be done in *this way*, that the whole congregation might see that those men who had perished were not the *people of the Lord*; and that GOD, not *Moses* and *Aaron*, had destroyed them.

**Verse 48. He stood between the dead and the living; and the plague, &c.]** What the plague was we know not, but it seems to have begun at one part of the camp, and to have proceeded regularly onward; and Aaron went to the quarter where it was then prevailing, and stood with his atonement where it was now making its ravages, *and the plague was stayed*; but not before 14,700 had fallen victims to it, ~~<4169>~~ **Numbers 16:49.**

IF Aaron the high priest, with his censer and incense, could disarm the wrath of an insulted, angry Deity, so that a guilty people, who deserved nothing but destruction, should be spared; how much more effectual may we expect the great atonement to be which was made by the Lord Jesus Christ, of whom Aaron was only the *type*! The *sacrifices* of living animals pointed out the *death* of Christ on the cross; the *incense*, his *intercession*. Through his *death* salvation is purchased for the world; by his *intercession* the offending children of men are spared. Hence St. Paul, ~~<4510>~~ **Romans 5:10**, says: *If, while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved THROUGH HIS LIFE*, i.e., by the prevalence of his continual intercession.

~~<4518>~~ **2 Corinthians 5:18,19**: “And all things *are* of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; to wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation.”

By the awful transactions recorded in this chapter, we may see how jealous God is of the sole right of appointing the *way* and *means* of salvation. Had any priesthood, and any kind of service, no matter how solemn and sincere, been equally available in the sight of Divine justice and mercy, God would not have resented in so awful a manner the attempts of Korah and his company in their new service. The way of God’s own appointment, the agony and death of Christ, is the only way in which souls can be saved. His is the *priesthood*, and *his* is the only available sacrifice. All other modes and schemes of salvation are the inventions of men or devils, and will in the end prove ruinous to all those who trust in them. Reader, forget not the Lord who bought thee.

## NUMBERS

## CHAPTER 17

*The twelve chiefs of the tribes are commanded to take their rods, and to write the name of each tribe upon the rod that belonged to its representative; but the name of Aaron is to be written on the rod of the tribe of Levi, 1-3. The rods are to be laid up before the Lord, who promises that the man's rod whom he shall choose for priest shall blossom, 4, 5. The rods are produced and laid up before the tabernacle, 6, 7. Aaron's rod alone buds, blossoms, and bears fruit, 8, 9. It is laid up before the testimony as a token of the manner in which God had disposed of the priesthood, 10, 11. The people are greatly terrified, and are apprehensive of being destroyed, 12, 13.*

## NOTES ON CHAP. 17

**Verse 2. And take of every one of them a rod]** *hcm matteh*, the *staff* or *sceptre*, which the *prince* or *chief* of each tribe bore, and which was the sign of *office* or *royalty* among almost all the people of the earth.

**Verse 5. The man's rod, whom I shall choose, shall blossom]** It was necessary that something *farther* should be done to quiet the minds of the people, and for ever to settle the dispute, in what tribe the priesthood should be fixed. God therefore took the method described in the text, and it had the desired effect; the Aaronical priesthood was never after disputed.

**Verse 8. The rod of Aaron-was budded, &c.]** That is, on the same rod or staff were found *buds*, *blossoms*, and *ripe fruit*. This fact was so unquestionably miraculous, as to decide the business for ever; and probably this was intended to show that in the *priesthood*, represented by that of Aaron, the *beginning*, *middle*, and *end* of every good work must be found. The buds of good desires, the blossoms of holy resolutions and promising professions, and the ripe fruit of faith, love, and obedience, all spring from the priesthood of the Lord Jesus. It has been thought by some that Aaron's *staff* (and perhaps the *staves* of all the tribes) was made out of the *amygdala communis*, or common *almond tree*. In a favourable soil and climate it grows to twenty feet in height; is one of the most noble, flourishing trees in nature: its flowers are of a delicate red, and it puts them forth early in March, having begun to bud in January. It has its name *dqv* *shaked* from *shakad*, to *awake*, because it buds and flowers *sooner* than

most other trees. And it is very likely that the staves of office, borne by the chiefs of all the tribes, were made of this tree, merely to signify that *watchfulness* and assiduous care which the chiefs should take of the persons committed, in the course of the Divine providence, to their keeping.

Every thing in this miracle is so far beyond the power of nature, that no doubt could remain on the minds of the people, or the envious chiefs, of the Divine appointment of Aaron, and of the especial interference of God in this case. To see a piece of *wood* long *cut off* from the parent stock, without *bark* or *moisture* remaining, laid up in a *dry place* for a *single night*, with others in the same circumstances—to see such a piece of wood resume and evince the perfection of vegetative life, *budding, blossoming, and bringing forth ripe fruit* at the same time, must be such a demonstration of the peculiar interference of God, as to silence every doubt and satisfy every scruple. It is worthy of remark that a *sceptre*, or *staff* of office, resuming its vegetative life, was considered an *absolute impossibility* among the ancients; and as they were accustomed to *swear by their sceptres*, this circumstance was added to establish and confirm the oath. A remarkable instance of this we have in HOMER, Iliad, lib. i., ver. 233, &c., where Achilles, in his rage against Agamemnon, thus speaks:—

Ἀλλ' ἐκ τοῖ ἐρεῶ, καὶ ἐπὶ μέγαν ὄρκον ὀμῶμαι  
 Ναὶ μὰ τοδὲ σκηπτρον, τὸ μὲν οὐποτὲ φύλλα καὶ ὄζους  
 Φύσει, ἐπειδὴ πρῶτα τομὴν ἐν ὄρεσσι λελόιπεν,  
 Οὐδ' ἀναθῆλησει ἔπειτα γὰρ ῥα ἐχάλκος ἔλεψε  
 Φύλλα τε καὶ φλοῖον' . . . . .  
 ὁ δὲ τοῖ μέγας ἐσσεταὶ ὄρκος.

*But hearken: I shall swear a solemn oath:  
 By this same sceptre which shall never bud,  
 Nor boughs bring forth, as once; which, having left  
 Its parent on the mountain top, what time  
 The woodman's axe lopp'd off its foliage green,  
 And stripp'd its bark, shall never grow again.*  
 COWPER.

VIRGIL represents King Latinus swearing in the same way, to confirm his covenant with Æneas:—

*Ut SCEPTRUM hoc (dextra sceptrum nam forte gerebat)  
 Nunquam fronde levi fundet virgulta neque umbras,  
 Cum semel in silvis imo de stirpe recisum.  
 Matre caret, posuitque comas et brachia ferro;  
 Olim arbos, nunc artificis manus ære decoro  
 Inclusit, patribusque dedit gestare Latinis,  
 Talibus inter se firmabant fœdera dictis.  
 Æn., lib. xii., ver. 206-12.*

*Even as this royal SCEPTRE (for he bore  
 A sceptre in his hand) shall never more  
 Shoot out in branches, or renew the birth;  
 An orphan now, cut from the mother earth  
 By the keen axe, dishonour'd of its hair,  
 And cased in brass, for Latian kings to bear.  
 And thus in public view the peace was tied  
 With solemn vows, and sworn on either side.  
 DRYDEN.*

When the circumstance of the *rod* or *sceptre* being used anciently in this way, and the absolute impossibility of its revivescence so strongly appealed to, is considered, it appears to have been a very proper instrument for the present occasion, for the change that passed on it must be acknowledged as an immediate and incontestable miracle.

**Verse 12. Behold, we die, we perish, we all perish.]** wn [wg *gavaenu* signifies not so much to *die* simply, as to *feel an extreme difficulty of breathing*, which, producing *suffocation*, ends at last in death. See the folly and extravagance of this sinful people. At *first, every person* might come near to God, for *all*, they thought, were sufficiently *holy*, and every way qualified to minister in holy things. *Now, no one*, in their apprehension, can come near to the tabernacle without being *consumed*, <sup><04173></sup> **Numbers 17:13**. In both cases they were wrong; *some* there were who might approach, *others* there were who might not. God had put the difference. His decision should have been final with them; but sinners are ever running into extremes.



## NUMBERS

## CHAPTER 18

*The priests are to bear the iniquity of the sanctuary, 1. The Levites to minister to the priests, and have charge of the tabernacle, 2-4. The priests alone to have the charge of the sanctuary, &c., no stranger to come nigh on pain of death, 5-7 The portion allowed for their maintenance, 8. They shall have every meat-offering; and they shall eat them in the holy place, 9, 10. The wave-offerings, 11. The first-fruits of the oil, wine, and wheat, and whatever is first ripe, and every devoted thing, 12-14; also, all the first-born of men and beasts, 15-18; and heave-offerings, 19. The priests shall have no inheritance, 20. The Levites shall have no inheritance, but shall have the tenth of the produce in Israel, 21-24, of which they are to give a tenth to the priests, taken from the best parts, 25-30.*

## NOTES ON CHAP. 18

**Verse 1. Thou and thy sons shall bear the iniquity of the sanctuary, &c.]** That is, They must be answerable for its legal pollutions, and must make the necessary *atonements* and *expiations*. By this they must feel that though they had got a high and important office confirmed to them by a miraculous interference, yet it was a place of the highest *responsibility*; and that they must not be high-minded, but fear.

**Verse 2. Thy brethren also of the tribe of Levi may be joined unto thee]** There is a fine paronomasia, or play upon words, in the original. *ywl Levi* comes from the root *hwl lavah*, to join to, couple, associate: hence Moses says, the Levites, *wwl y yillavu*, shall be joined, or associated with the priests; they shall conjointly perform the whole of the sacred office, but the priests shall be *principal*, the Levites only their *associates* or *assistants*. For an explanation of many parts of this chapter, see the notes on several of the passages referred to in the *margin*.

**Verse 15. The first-born of man and the firstling of unclean beasts]** Thus vain man is ranked with the beasts that perish; and with the *worst* kinds of them too, those deemed *unclean*.

**Verse 16. Shalt thou redeem for the money of five shekels]** Redemption of the first-born is one of the rites which is still practised among the Jews. According to Leo of Modena, it is performed in the following



manner:-When the child is thirty days old, the father sends for one of the descendants of Aaron: several persons being assembled on the occasion, the father brings a cup containing several pieces of gold and silver coin. The priest then takes the child into his arms, and addressing himself to the mother, says: *Is this thy son?*-MOTHER. Yes.-PRIEST. *Hast thou never had another child, male or female, a miscarriage or untimely birth?*-MOTHER. No.-PRIEST. *This being the case, this child, as first-born, belongs to me.* Then, turning to the father, he says: *If it be thy desire to have this child, thou must redeem it.*-FATHER. I present thee with this gold and silver for this purpose.-PRIEST. *Thou dost wish, therefore, to redeem the child?*-FATHER. I do wish so to do.-The priest then, turning himself to the assembly, says: *Very well; this child, as first-born, is mine, as it is written in Bemidbar, (<sup><041816></sup>Numbers 18:16,) Thou shalt redeem the first-born of a month old for five shekels, but I shall content myself with this in exchange.* He then takes two gold crowns, or thereabouts, and returns the child to his parents.

**Verse 19. It is a covenant of salt]** That is, an incorruptible, everlasting covenant. As *salt* was added to different kinds of viands, not only to give them a relish, but to preserve them from putrefaction and decay, it became the emblem of *incorruptibility* and *permanence*. Hence, a *covenant of salt* signified an *everlasting covenant*. We have already seen that, among the Asiatics, eating together was deemed a bond of perpetual friendship; and as *salt* was a common article in all their repasts, it may be in reference to this circumstance that a perpetual covenant is termed a *covenant of salt*; because the parties ate together of the sacrifice offered on the occasion, and the whole transaction was considered as a league of endless friendship. See Clarke's note on "<sup><040213></sup>Leviticus 2:13".

**Verse 20. I am thy part and thine inheritance]** The principal part of what was offered to God was the portion of the priests, therefore they had no inheritance of *land* in Israel; independently of that they had a very ample provision for their support. The rabbins say *twenty-four* gifts were given to the priests, and they are all expressed in the law. *Eight* of those gifts the priests ate nowhere but in the sanctuary: these *eight* are the following:—

1. The flesh of the SIN-OFFERING, whether of beasts or fowls, <sup><040625></sup>Leviticus 6:25,26.
2. The flesh of the TRESPASS-OFFERING, <sup><040701></sup>Leviticus 7:1,6.

3. The PEACE-OFFERINGS of the congregation, <sup><R2319></sup>**Leviticus 23:19,20.**
4. The *remainder* of the OMER or SHEAF, <sup><R2310></sup>**Leviticus 23:10**, &c.
5. The *remnants* of the MEAT-OFFERINGS of the Israelites, <sup><R3616></sup>**Leviticus 6:16.**
6. The two LOAVES, <sup><R2317></sup>**Leviticus 23:17.**
7. The SHEW-BREAD, <sup><R2409></sup>**Leviticus 24:9.**
8. The LOG of OIL offered by the *leper*, <sup><R3410></sup>**Leviticus 14:10**, &c.

*Five* of those gifts they ate only in Jerusalem:—

1. The *breast* and *shoulder* of the PEACE-OFFERINGS, <sup><R3731></sup>**Leviticus 7:31, 34.**
2. The HEAVE-OFFERING of the sacrifice of *confession*, <sup><R3712></sup>**Leviticus 7:12-14.**
3. The HEAVE-OFFERING of the Nazarite's *ram*, <sup><R3617></sup>**Leviticus 6:17-20.**
4. The FIRSTLING of the *clean beast*, <sup><R4815></sup>**Numbers 18:15;**  
<sup><R5159></sup>**Deuteronomy 15:19, 20.**
5. The FIRST-FRUITS, <sup><R4813></sup>**Numbers 18:13.**

FIVE gifts were not due unto them by the law, but in the land of Israel only:-

1. The *heave-offering* or FIRST-FRUITS, <sup><R4812></sup>**Numbers 18:12.**
2. The *heave-offering* of the TITHE, <sup><R4808></sup>**Numbers 18:28.**
3. The CAKE, <sup><R4153></sup>**Numbers 15:20.** These three were *holy*.
4. The *first-fruits* of the FLEECE, <sup><R5180></sup>**Deuteronomy 18:4.**
5. The FIELD of POSSESSION, <sup><R4812></sup>**Numbers 35:2** &c. These two were *common*.

FIVE gifts were due unto them both *within* and *without* the land:—

1. The *gifts* of the BEASTS SLAIN, <sup><R5183></sup>**Deuteronomy 18:3.**
2. The redemption of the FIRST-BORN SON, <sup><R4815></sup>**Numbers 18:15.**

3. The LAMB for the *firstling* of an *ass*, <sup><0040></sup>**Exodus 4:20**; <sup><04815></sup>**Numbers 18:15, 16.**
4. The restitution of that taken by violence from a stranger, <sup><04708></sup>**Numbers 5:8.**
5. All DEVOTED *things*, <sup><04814></sup>**Numbers 18:14.**

ONE gift was due unto them from the sanctuary:—

1. The *skins of the burnt-offering*, and all the skins of the other most holy things, <sup><03708></sup>**Leviticus 7:8.** In all 24. See *Ainsworth*.

The gifts which the females of the priests' families had a part in were these:—

1. The *heave-offering*, or *first-fruits*.
2. The heave-offering of the *tithe*.
3. The *cake*.
4. The gifts of the *beast*, <sup><05183></sup>**Deuteronomy 18:3.**
5. The first of the *fleece*.

—See Mishna, Tract. *Biccurim*, and *Ainsworth* on the Pentateuch.

Besides all this the priests had the tribute money mentioned <sup><04328></sup>**Numbers 31:28, 29.**

**Verse 21. Behold, I have given the children of Levi all the tenth]** First, the Levites had the tenth of all the productions of the land.

2. They had forty-eight cities, each forming a square of 4,000 cubits.
3. They had 2,000 cubits of ground round each city.

Total of the land they possessed, 53,000 acres.

4. They had the first-fruits and certain parts of all the animals killed in the land.

Canaan contained about 11,264,000 acres; therefore the portion possessed by the Levites was rather less than as *one to two hundred and twelve*; for 11,264,000 divided by 53,000, quotes only 212 28/53.—See *Lowman, Dodd, &c.* But though this was a very small proportion for a *whole tribe*

that had consented to annihilate its *political existence*, that it might wait upon the service of God, and labour for the people's souls; yet let it be considered that what they possessed was the *best of the land*: and while it was a slender remuneration for their services, yet their portion was such as rendered them independent, and kept them comfortable; so that they could wait on the Lord's work without distraction. This is a proper pattern for the maintenance of the ministers of God: let them have a *sufficiency* for *themselves* and *families*, that there may be no *distracting cares*; and let them not be encumbered with *riches* or *worldly possessions*, that they may not be prevented from taking *care of souls*.

**Verse 28. Thus ye also shall offer a heave-offering]** As the Levites had the tithes of the whole land, they themselves were obliged to give the *tithe* of this *tithe* to the priests, so that this considerably lessened their revenue. And this tithe or tenth they were obliged to select from the *best part* of the substance they had received, ~~<04183>~~ **Numbers 18:29**, &c. A portion of all must be given to God, as an evidence of his goodness, and their dependence on him. **See Clarke at the end of “~~<0418>~~ Numbers 20:28”**

## NUMBERS

## CHAPTER 19

*The ordinance of the red heifer, 1, 2. She shall be slain by Eleazar without the camp, and her blood sprinkled before the tabernacle, 3, 4. Her whole body and appurtenance shall be reduced to ashes, and while burning, cedar wood, scarlet, and hyssop, shall be thrown into the fire, 5, 6. The priest, and he that burns her, to bathe themselves, and be reputed unclean till the evening, 7, 8. Her ashes to be laid up for a water of purification, 9. How, and in what cases it is to be applied, 10-13. The law concerning him who dies in a tent, or who is killed in the open field, 14-16. How the persons, tent, and vessels are to be purified by the application of these ashes, 17-19. The unclean person who does not apply them, to be cut off from the congregation, 20. This is to be a perpetual statute, 21, 22.*

## NOTES ON CHAP. 19

**Verse 2. Speak unto the children of Israel that they bring thee, &c.]**

The ordinance of the red heifer was a sacrifice of general application. All the people were to have an interest in it, and therefore the people at large are to provide the sacrifice. This Jewish rite certainly had a reference to things done under the Gospel, as the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews has remarked: "For if," says he, "the blood of bulls and of goats," alluding, probably, to the sin-offerings and the scape-goat, "and the ashes of a *heifer*, sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh; how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God!" <sup><8013></sup>**Hebrews 9:13, 14.** As the principal stress of the allusion here is to the ordinance of the *red heifer*, we may certainly conclude that it was designed to typify the sacrifice of our blessed Lord.

We may remark several curious particulars in this ordinance.

1. A *heifer* was appointed for a sacrifice, probably, in opposition to the Egyptian superstition which held these *sacred*, and actually worshipped their great goddess *Isis* under this form; and this appears the more likely because *males* in general were preferred for sacrifice, yet here the *female* is chosen.

2. It was to be a *red* heifer, because *red bulls* were sacrificed to appease the evil demon *Typhon*, worshipped among the Egyptians. See *Spencer*.
3. The heifer was to be *without spot*-having no mixture of any other colour. Plutarch remarks, *Deuteronomy Iside et de Osiride*, that if there was a *single hair* in the animal either *white* or black, it marred the sacrifice. See *Calmet*, and see **Clarke's note on "~~04087~~Numbers 8:7"**.
4. *Without blemish*-having no kind of imperfection in her body; the other, probably, applying to the *hair* or *colour*.
5. *On which never came yoke*, because any animal which had been used for any common purpose was deemed improper to be offered in sacrifice to God. The heathens, who appear to have borrowed much from the Hebrews, were very scrupulous in this particular. Neither the Greeks nor Romans, nor indeed the Egyptians, would offer an animal in sacrifice that had been employed for agricultural purposes. Of this we have the most positive evidence from *Homer*, *Porphyry*, *Virgil*, and *Macrobius*.

Just such a sacrifice as that prescribed here, does Diomedes vow to offer to Pallas.-*Iliad*, lib. x., ver. 291.

᾿Ως νυν μοι θελουσα παριστασο, και με φυλασσε`  
 Σοι δ αυ εγω ρεξω βουν ηνιν ευρυμετωπον,  
 Αδμητην, ην οςπω υπο ζυγον ηγαγεν ανηρ`  
 Την τοι εγω ρεξω, χρυσον κερασιν περιχευας.

*“So now be present, O celestial maid;  
 So still continue to the race thine aid;  
 A yearling heifer falls beneath the stroke,  
 Untamed, unconscious of the galling yoke,  
 With ample forehead and with spreading horns,  
 Whose tapering tops refulgent gold adorns.”*

Altered from POPE.

In the very same words Nestor, *Odyss.*, lib. iii., ver. 382, promises a similar sacrifice to Pallas.

The Romans had the same religion with the Greeks, and consequently the same kind of sacrifices; so *Virgil*, *Georg.* iv., ver. 550.

*Quatuor eximios præstanti corpore tauros  
 Ducit, et intacta totidem cervice juvencas.*

“———*From his herd he culls  
 For slaughter four the fairest of his bulls;  
 Four heifers from his female stock he took,  
 All fair, and all unknowing of the yoke.”*  
 -DRYDEN.

It is very likely that the Gentiles learnt their first sacrificial rites from the patriarchs; and on this account we need not wonder to find so many coincidences in the sacrificial system of the patriarchs and Jews, and all the neighbouring nations.

**Verse 9. For a water of separation]** That is, the ashes were to be kept, in order to be mixed with water, <sup><04917></sup>**Numbers 19:17**, and sprinkled on those who had contracted any legal defilement.

**Verse 11. He that toucheth the dead body of any man shall be unclean seven days.]** How low does this lay man! He who touched a dead *beast* was only unclean for one day, <sup><08112></sup>**Leviticus 11:24, 27, 39**; but he who touches a dead *man* is unclean for *seven days*. This was certainly designed to mark the peculiar impurity of man, and to show his sinfulness—*seven times worse than the vilest animal!* O thou son of the morning, how art thou fallen!

**Verse 12. He shall purify himself with it]** **wb acj ty** *yithchatta bo*, literally, *he shall sin himself with it*. This Hebrew form of speech is common enough among us in other matters. Thus to *fleece*, to *bark*, and to *skin*, do not signify to *add* a *fleece*, another *bark*, or a *skin*, but to take one away; therefore, to *sin himself*, in the Hebrew idiom, is not to *add sin*, but to take it away, to *purify*. The verb **acj chata** signifies to *miss the mark*, to *sin*, to *purify from sin*, and to *make a sin-offering*. See Clarke’s note on <sup><01133></sup>**Genesis 13:13**”.

THE Hebrews generally sacrificed males, no matter of what colour; but here a heifer, and a heifer of a red colour, is ordered. The reason of these circumstances is not very well known.

“The rabbins, with all their boldness,” says Calmet, “who stick at nothing when it is necessary to explain what they do not understand, declare that the cause of this law is entirely unknown; and that Solomon, with all his wisdom, could not find it out.”

Several *fathers*, as well *modern* as *ancient*, profess to understand the whole clearly. 1. The *red* heifer with them signifies the *flesh of our Lord*, formed out of an earthly substance. 2. Being *without spot*, &c., the *infinite holiness* of Christ. 3. The *sex* of the animal, the *infirmity* of our flesh, with which he clothed himself. 4. The *red* colour, his *passion*. 5. Being *unyoked*, his being righteous in all his conduct, and never *under the yoke of sin*. 6. *Eleazar's* sacrificing the heifer instead of *Aaron*, <sup><del>CHIB></sup>**Numbers 19:3**, signifies the *change of the priesthood* from the family of *Aaron*, in order that a new and more perfect priesthood might take place. 7. *The red heifer being taken without the camp* (<sup><del>CHIB></sup>**Numbers 19:3**) to be slain, points out the *crucifixion* of our Lord *without the city*. 8. The complete *consuming* of the heifer by fire, the *complete offering* of the whole body and soul of Christ as a sacrifice to God for the sin of man: for as the heifer was *without blemish*, the whole might be offered to God; and as Christ was *immaculate*, his whole body and soul were made a sacrifice for sin. 9. As the fire of this sacrifice *ascended* up to God, so it points out the *resurrection* and *ascension* of our blessed Lord. 10. And as the *ashes* of this victim communicated a legal purity to those who were defiled, so true *repentance*, signified by those *ashes*, is necessary for the expiation of the offences committed after baptism. A great part of this is true in itself; but how little evidence is there that all these things were intended in the ordinance of the *red heifer*? See **Clarke on** <sup><del>CHIB></sup>**Numbers 8:7**".



## NUMBERS

## CHAPTER 20

*The Israelites come to Zin, and Miriam dies, 1. They murmur for want of water, 2-5. Moses and Aaron make supplication at the tabernacle, and the glory of the Lord appears, 6. He commands Moses to take his rod, gather the congregation together, and bring water out of the rock, 7, 8. Moses takes the rod, gathers the Israelites together, chides with them, and smites the rock twice, and the waters flow out plenteously, 9-11. The Lord is offended with Moses and Aaron because they did not sanctify him in the sight of the children of Israel, 12. The place is called Meribah, 13. Moses sends a friendly message to the king of Edom, begging liberty to pass through his territories, 14-17. The Edomites refuse, 18. The Israelites expostulate, 19. The Edomites still refuse, and prepare to attack them, 20, 21. The Israelites go to Mount Hor, 22. Aaron is commanded to prepare for his death, 23, 24. Aaron is stripped on Mount Hor, and his vestments put on Eleazar his son; Aaron dies, 25-28. The people mourn for him thirty days, 29.*

## NOTES ON CHAP. 20

**Verse 1. Then came the children of Israel, &c.]** This was the first month of the *fortieth* year after their departure from Egypt. See <sup><04<33></sup>Numbers 33:38, compared with <sup><04<28></sup>Numbers 20:28 of this chapter, and <sup><06<03></sup>Deuteronomy 1:3. The transactions of *thirty-seven* years Moses passes by, because he writes not as a historian but as a legislator; and gives us particularly an account of the laws, ordinances, and other occurrences of the first and last years of their peregrinations. The year now spoken of was the last of their journeyings; for from the going out of the spies, <sup><04<30></sup>Numbers 13:1, 2, unto this time, was about *thirty-eight* years, <sup><06<12></sup>Deuteronomy 1:22, 23; 2:14.

**Desert of Zin]** Calmet contends that this is not the same desert mentioned <sup><02<60></sup>Exodus 16:1, where Israel had their *eighth* encampment; that in Exodus being called in the original  $\hat{y}s$  *sin*, this here  $\hat{y}x$  *tsin*: but this is no positive proof, as letters of the same organ are frequently interchanged in all languages, and particularly in Hebrew.

**And Miriam died there]** Miriam was certainly older than Moses. When he was an infant, exposed on the river Nile, she was intrusted by her parents to watch the conduct of Pharaoh's daughter, and to manage a most

delicate business, that required much address and prudence. See <sup><0020></sup>**Exodus 2:1-8**. It is supposed that she was at the time of her death *one hundred and thirty* years of age, having been at least *ten* years old at her brother's birth. The Catholic writers represent her as a type of the Virgin Mary; as having preserved a perpetual virginity; as being legislatrix over the Israelitish women, as Moses was over the men; and as having a large portion of the spirit of prophecy. Eusebius says that her tomb was to be seen at *Kadesh*, near the city of Petra, in his time. She appears to have died about *four* months before her brother Aaron, <sup><0438></sup>**Numbers 33:38**, and *eleven* before her brother Moses; so that these three, the most eminent of human beings, died in the space of one year!

**Verse 2. And there was no water for the congregation]** The same occurrence took place to the children of Israel at *Kadesh*, as did formerly to their fathers at *Rephidim*, see <sup><0170></sup>**Exodus 17:1**; and as the *fathers* murmured, so also did the *children*.

**Verse 12. Because ye believed me not]** What was the offence for which Moses was excluded from the promised land? It appears to have consisted in some or all of the following particulars: 1. God had commanded him (<sup><0018></sup>**Numbers 20:8**) *to take the rod in his hand, and go and SPEAK TO THE ROCK, and it should give forth water*. It seems Moses did not think *speaking* would be sufficient, therefore he *smote* the rock without any command so to do. 2. He did this *twice*, which certainly in this case indicated a great perturbation of spirit, and want of attention to the presence of God. 3. He permitted his *spirit* to be carried away by a sense of the people's disobedience, and thus, being *provoked*, he was led to *speak unadvisedly with his lips: Hear now, ye REBELS,* <sup><0010></sup>**Numbers 20:10**. 4. He did not acknowledge GOD in the miracle which was about to be wrought, but took the honour to himself and Aaron: "*Must WE fetch you water out of this rock?*" Thus it plainly appears that they did not properly *believe* in God, and did not *honour* him in the sight of the people; for in their presence they seem to express a doubt whether the thing could be possibly done. As Aaron appears to have been consenting in the above particulars, therefore he is also excluded from the promised land.

**Verse 14. Sent messengers-unto the king of Edom]** Archbishop Usher supposes that the king now reigning in Edom was *Hadar*, mentioned <sup><0139></sup>**Genesis 36:39**.

**Thus saith thy brother Israel]** The Edomites were the descendants of Edom or Esau, the brother of Jacob or Israel, from whom the Israelites were descended.

**Verse 17. We will go by the king's high-way]** This is the first time this phrase occurs; it appears to have been a public road made by the king's authority at the expense of the state.

**Verse 21. Thus Edom refused to give Israel passage through his border]** Though every king has a right to refuse passage through his territories to any strangers; yet in a case like this, and in a *time* also in which *emigrations* were frequent and universally allowed, it was both cruelty and oppression in Edom to refuse a passage to a comparatively unarmed and inoffensive multitude, who were all their own near *kinsmen*. It appears however that it was only the *Edomites of Kadesh* that were thus unfriendly and cruel; for from <sup><R129></sup>**Deuteronomy 2:29** we learn that the *Edomites* who dwelt in *Mount Seir* treated them in a hospitable manner. This cruelty in the Edomites of Kadesh is strongly reprehended, and threatened by the Prophet Obadiah, <sup><31010></sup>**Obadiah 1:10**, &c.

**Verse 26. Strip Aaron of his garments]** This was, in effect, depriving him of his office; and putting the clothes on his son Eleazar implied a transfer of that office to him. A transfer of office, from this circumstance of *putting the clothes* of the late possessor on the person intended to succeed him, was called *investing* or *investment*, (*clothing*;) as removing a person from an office was termed *divesting* or *unclothing*. Among the Catholics, and in the Church of England, this same method is used in degrading ecclesiastics. Hence such a degradation is termed by the common people *stripping a man of his gown*.

**Verse 28. And Aaron died there]** Hence, as Dr. Lightfoot has justly observed, we have an "indisputable proof that the earthly Canaan was not the utmost felicity at which God's promises to the Israelites aimed since the best men among them were excluded from it."

THE remark of some of the fathers here is worthy of attention: "Neither Moses the representative of the law, nor Miriam the representative of the prophets, nor Aaron the representative of the priesthood and its sacrificial rites, could bring the Israelites into possession of the promised land. This was reserved for *Joshua*, who was in name and conduct the lively type of

our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.” He alone can bring those who believe in his name into that rest which remains for the people of God.

There are some observations made by Dr. Lightfoot on this and some of the preceding chapters which should be more generally known.

“The *place* where the people murmured upon the return of the spies was *Kadesh-Barnea*, <sup><04135></sup>**Numbers 13:26; 32:8;** <sup><01019></sup>**Deuteronomy 1:19.** This place was called *Rithmah* before, (<sup><04318></sup>**Numbers 33:18**, compared with <sup><04216></sup>**Numbers 12:16**, and <sup><04135></sup>**Numbers 13:26**;) and was so called probably from the *juniper* trees that grew there; but is now named *Kadesh*, because the Lord was there *sanctified* upon the people, as <sup><02013></sup>**Numbers 20:13;** and *Barnea*, or the *wandering son*, because here was the decree made of their long *wandering* in the wilderness. They continued a good space at *Kadesh* before they removed; for so said Moses, *Ye abode in Kadesh many days;* or as the Hebrew, *According to the days that ye had made abode*, namely, at Sinai, <sup><04106></sup>**Numbers 20:6.** And so they spent *one whole year there*, for so they had done at Sinai. And whereas God commands them at their murmuring to turn back to the Red Sea, (<sup><01040></sup>**Deuteronomy 1:40**;) his meaning was, that at their next march, whensoever it was, they should not go forward unto Canaan, but back again towards the Red Sea, whence they came; (but see on <sup><01010></sup>**Deuteronomy 1:1.**) And they did so, for they wandered by many stations and marches from *Kadesh-Barnea* till they came to *Kadesh-Barnea* again, *seven or eight and thirty years* after they had first left it. These marches, mentioned in <sup><04301></sup>**Numbers 33:1-49**, were these: From *Kadesh* or *Rithmah* to *Rimmon Perez*, to *Libnah*, to *Rissah*, to *Khelathah*, to Mount *Shapher*, to *Haradah*, to *Makheloth*, to *Tahath*, to *Tarah*, to *Mithcah*, to *Hashmonah*, to *Moseroth*, to *Benejaaken*, to *Horhagidgad*, to *Jotbathah*, to *Ebronah*, to *Ezion-Gaber*, to *Kadesh* again, in the fortieth year. And though it was only *eleven days’* journey from Horeb, by the way of Mount Seir to *Kadesh-Barnea*, (<sup><01012></sup>**Deuteronomy 1:2**;) they made it above thrice *eleven years’* journey!” Had they trusted in God, and obeyed him, their enemies long ere this would have been discomfited, and themselves quietly established in possession of the promised inheritance. But they grieved the Spirit of God, and did not believe his promise; and it would have been inconsistent with the whole economy of grace to have introduced unbelievers into that rest which was a type of the kingdom of God.

## NUMBERS

## CHAPTER 21

*Arad, a king of the Canaanites, attacks Israel, and makes some prisoners, 1. They devote him and his people to destruction, 2; which they afterwards accomplished, 3. They journey from Hor, and are greatly discouraged, 4. They murmur against God and Moses, and loathe the manna, 5. The Lord sends fiery serpents among them, 6. They repent, and beg Moses to intercede for them, 7. The Lord directs him to make a brazen serpent, and set it on a pole, that the people might look on it and be healed, 8. Moses does so, and the people who beheld the brazen serpent lived, 9. They journey to Oboth, Ije-abarim, Zared, and Arnon, 10-13. A quotation from the book of the wars of the Lord, 14, 15. From Arnon they came to Beer, 16. Their song of triumph, 17-20. Moses sends messengers to the Amorites for permission to pass through their land, 21, 22. Sihon their king refuses, attacks Israel, is defeated, and all his cities destroyed, 23-26. The poetic proverbs made on the occasion, 27-30. Israel possesses the land of the Amorites, 31, 32. They are attacked by Og king of Bashan, 33. They defeat him, destroy his troops and family, and possess his land, 34, 35.*

## NOTES ON CHAP. 21

**Verse 1. The way of the spies]** *pyrta atharim*. Some think that this signifies the way that the spies took when they went to search the land. But this is impossible, as Dr. Kennicott justly remarks, because Israel had now marched from *Meribah-Kadesh* to Mount *Hor*, beyond *Ezion-Gaber*, and were turning round *Edom* to the south-east; and therefore the word is to be understood here as the name of a *place*.

**Verse 3. The Lord hearkened to the voice of Israel]** The whole of this verse appears to me to have been added after the days of Joshua. It is certain the Canaanites were not utterly destroyed at the time here spoken of, for this did not take place till after the death of Moses. If, instead of *utterly destroyed them*, *µrj yw vaiyacharem*, we translate *they devoted them to utter destruction*, it will make a good sense, and not repugnant to the Hebrew; though some think it more probable that the verse was added afterwards by Joshua or Ezra, in testimony of the fulfilment of God's promise; for *Arad*, who is mentioned as being destroyed here, is mentioned among those destroyed by Joshua long after, (see <sup><6124></sup>**Joshua 12:14**;) but

this is quite consistent with their being *devoted to destruction*, as this might be fulfilled any time after. See Clarke's note on "<sup><R273></sup>Leviticus 27:34".

**Verse 5. This light bread.]** *l q| qh hakkelokel*, a word of excessive scorn; as if they had said, This innutritive, unsubstantial, cheat-stomach stuff.

**Verse 6. Fiery serpents]** *μyprch μyvj nh hannechashim hasseraaphim*. I have observed before, on <sup><O100></sup>Genesis 3:1, that it is difficult to assign a name to the creature termed in Hebrew *nachash*; it has different significations, but its meaning here and in <sup><O100></sup>Genesis 3:1 is most difficult to be ascertained. *Seraphim* is one of the orders of angelic beings, <sup><301></sup>Isaiah 6:2,6; but as it comes from the root *ārc saraph*, which signifies to *burn*, it has been translated *fiery* in the text. It is likely that St. Paul alludes to the seraphim, <sup><8010></sup>Hebrews 1:7: *Who maketh his angels spirits, and his ministers a FLAME of FIRE*. The animals mentioned here by Moses may have been called *fiery* because of the heat, violent inflammation, and thirst, occasioned by their bite; and consequently, if *serpents*, they were of the *prester* or *dipsas* species, whose bite, especially that of the former, occasioned a violent inflammation through the whole body, and a fiery appearance of the countenance. The poet Lucan has well expressed this terrible effect of the bite of the *prester*, and also of the *dipsas*, in the ninth book of his *Pharsalia*, which, for the sake of those who may not have the work at hand, I shall here insert.

Of the mortal effects of the bite of the *dipsas* in the deserts of Libya he gives the following description:—

*“Signiferum juvenem Tyrrheni sanguinis Aulum  
Torta caput retro dipsas calcata momordit.  
Vix dolor aut sensus dentis fuit: ipsaque læti  
Frons caret invidia: nec quidquam plaga minatur.  
Ecce subit virus tacitum, carpitque medullas  
Ignis edax, calidaque incendit viscera tabe.  
Ebibit humorem circum vitalia fusum  
Pestis, et in sicco linguam torrere palato  
Cæpit: defessos iret qui sudor in artus  
Non fuit, atque oculos lacrymarum vena refugit.”*

*Aulus, a noble youth of Tyrrhene blood,  
Who bore the standard, on a dipsas trod;  
Backward the wrathful serpent bent her head,  
And, fell with rage, the unheeded wrong repaid.  
Scarce did some little mark of hurt remain,  
And scarce he found some little sense of pain.*

*Nor could he yet the danger doubt, nor fear  
That death with all its terrors threatened there.  
When lo! unseen, the secret venom spreads,  
And every nobler part at once invades;*

*Swift flames consume the marrow and the brain,  
And the scorched entrails rage with burning pain;  
Upon his heart the thirsty poisons prey,  
And drain the sacred juice of life away.*

*No kindly floods of moisture bathe his tongue,  
But cleaving to the parched roof it hung;  
No trickling drops distil, no dewy sweat,  
To ease his weary limbs, and cool the raging heat.*

ROWE.

The effects of the bite of the *prester* are not less terrible:—

*“Nasidium Marsi cultorem torridus agri  
Percussit prester: illi rubor igneus ora  
Succendit, tenditque cutem, pereunte figura,  
Miscens cuncta tumor toto jam corpore major:  
Humanumque egressa modum super omnia membra  
Effiatur sanies, late tollente veneno.”*

*A fate of different kind Nasidius found,  
A burning prester gave the deadly wound;  
And straight, a sudden flame began to spread,  
And paint his visage with a glowing red.  
With swift expansion swells the bloated skin.  
Naught but an undistinguished mass is seen;  
While the fair human form lies lost within.  
The puffy poison spreads, and leaves around,  
Till all the man is in the monster drowned.*

ROWE.

Bochart supposes that the *hydrus* or *chersydrus* is meant; a serpent that lives in *marshy places*, the bite of which produces the most terrible



inflammations, burning heat, fetid vomitings, and a putrid solution of the whole body. See his works, vol. iii., col. 421. It is more likely to have been a serpent of the *prester* or *dipsas* kind, as the wilderness through which the Israelites passed did neither afford *rivers* nor *marshes*, though *Bochart* endeavours to prove that there *might have been* marshes in that part; but his arguments have very little weight. Nor is there need of a *water serpent* as long as the *prester* or *dipsas*, which abound in the deserts of *Libya*, might have abounded in the deserts of *Arabia* also. But very probably the *serpents* themselves were immediately sent by God for the chastisement of this rebellious people. The *cure* was certainly preternatural; this no person doubts; and why might not the *agent* be so, that inflicted the disease?

**Verse 8. Make thee a fiery serpent]** Literally, make thee a seraph.

**And put it upon a pole]** שׁן | [ *al nes*, upon a *standard* or *ensign*.

**Verse 9. And Moses made a serpent of brass]** תׁׁׁׁׁ ן ן ן ן *nechash nechosheth*. Hence we find that the word for *brass* or *copper* comes from the same root with *nachash*, which here signifies a serpent, probably on account of the *colour*; as most serpents, especially those of the bright spotted kind, have a very glistening appearance, and those who have brown or yellow spots appear something like *burnished brass*: but the true meaning of the root cannot be easily ascertained.

On the subject of the cure of the serpent-bitten Israelites, by looking at the brazen serpent, there is a good comment in the book of Wisdom, {Apoch.}

**Wis 16:4-12**, in which are these remarkable words: “They were admonished, having a sign of salvation, (i.e., the brazen serpent,) to put them in remembrance of the commandments of thy law. For he that turned himself towards It was not saved by the THING that he saw, but by THEE, that art the Saviour of all.” To the circumstance of looking at the brazen serpent in order to be healed, our Lord refers, ~~<RB14>~~ **John 3:14,15**: “As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life.” The brazen serpent was certainly *no type* of Jesus Christ; but from our Lord’s words we may learn, 1. That *as* the serpent was lifted up on the pole or *ensign*, *so* Jesus Christ was lifted up on the cross. 2. That *as* the Israelites were to look at the brazen serpent, *so* sinners must look to Christ for salvation. 3. That *as* God provided no other remedy than this *looking* for the wounded Israelites, *so* he has provided no other way of



salvation than *faith* in the blood of his Son. 4. That *as* he who looked at the brazen serpent was *cured* and did *live*, so he that believeth on the Lord Jesus Christ shall *not perish*, but have *eternal life*. 5. That as neither the *serpent*, nor *looking at it*, but the invisible power of GOD healed the people, so neither the *cross* of Christ, nor his merely *being crucified*, but the *pardon* he has *bought by his blood*, communicated by the *powerful energy of his Spirit*, saves the souls of men. May not all these things be plainly seen in the *circumstances* of this transaction, without making the *serpent* a type of Jesus Christ, (the most exceptionable that could possibly be chosen,) and running the parallel, as some have done, through ten or a dozen particulars?

**Verse 12. They-pitched in the valley of Zared.]** drz l j n nachal zared.

This should be translated *the brook Zared*, as it is in <sup><R2B></sup>**Deuteronomy 2:13, 14**. This *stream* has its origin in the mountains eastward of Moab, and runs from east to west, and discharges itself into the Dead Sea.

**Verse 13. Arnon]** Another river which takes its rise in the mountains of Moab, and, after having separated the ancient territories of the Moabites and Ammonites, falls into the Dead Sea, near the mouth of Jordan.

**Verse 14. The book of the wars of the Lord]** There are endless conjectures about this book, both among ancients and moderns. Dr. Lightfoot's opinion is the most simple, and to me bears the greatest appearance of being the true one. "This book seems to have been some book of *remembrances* and *directions*, written by Moses for Joshua's private instruction for the management of the wars after him. See <sup><D174></sup>**Exodus 17:14-16**. It may be that this was the same book which is called the *book of Jasher*, i.e., the *book of the upright*, or a directory for Joshua, from Moses, what to do and what to expect in his wars; and in this book it seems as if Moses directed the setting up of *archery*, see <sup><K018></sup>**2 Samuel 1:18**, and warrants Joshua to command the sun, and expect its obedience, <sup><G103></sup>**Joshua 10:13**."

**What he did in the Red Sea, and in the brooks of Arnon]** This clause is impenetrably obscure. All the versions, all the translators, and all the commentators, have been puzzled with it. Scarcely any two agree. The original is hpwsb bhw ta eth vaheb besuphah, which our translators render, *what he did in the Red Sea*, following here the Chaldee Targum; but not satisfied with this version, they have put the most difficult words in

*English letters* in the margin, *Vaheb in Suphah*. *Calmet's* conjecture here is ingenious, and is adopted by *Houbigant*; instead of **bhw** *vaheb*, he reads **drz** *zared*. Now a **z** *zain* may be easily mistaken for a **w** *vau*, and vice versa; and a **h** *he* for a **r**, *resh*, if the left limb happened to be a little obliterated, which frequently occurs, not only in *MSS.*, but in *printed books*; the **b** *beth* also might be mistaken for a **d** *daleth*, if the *ruled line* on which it stood happened in that place to be a little *thicker* or blacker than usual. Thus then **bhw** *vaheb* might be easily formed out of **drz** *zared*, mentioned <sup>-0212-</sup>**Numbers 21:12**; the whole might then be read, *They encamped at the brook Zared, and they came to Suphah, and thence to the brook Arnon*. Take the passage as we may, it is evidently defective. As I judge the whole clause to have been a *common proverb* in those days, and *Vaheb* to be a proper name, I therefore propose the following translation, which I believe to be the best: *From Vaheb unto Suph, and unto the streams of Arnon*. If we allow it to have been a proverbial expression, used to point out extensive distance, then it was similar to that well known phrase, *From Dan even unto Beersheba*.

**Verse 17. Spring up, O well, &c.]** This is one of the most ancient war songs in the world, but is not easily understood, which is commonly the case with all very ancient compositions, especially the *poetic*. See **Clarke's** remarks "<sup>-0250-</sup>**Exodus 15:1**", &c.

**Verse 18. The princes digged the well-with their staves.]** This is not easily understood. Who can suppose that the princes dug this well with their *staves*? And is there any other idea conveyed by our translation? The word **wrpj** *chapharu*, which is translated *they digged*, should be rendered *they searched out*, which is a frequent meaning of the root; and **µtn** [**vmb** *bemishanotham*, which we render *with their staves*, should be translated *on their borders* or *confines*, from the root **^** [**v** *shaan*, to *lie along*. With these corrections the whole song may be read thus:—

*Spring up, O well! Answer ye to it.*  
(*i.e. Repeat the other part of the song.*)

*The well, the princes searched it out.*  
(*This is the answer.*)

*The nobles of the people have digged it.  
By a decree, upon their own borders.  
(This was the chorus.)*

This is the whole of the quotation from what is called the book of the wars of the Lord. But see Dr. *Kennicott's* remarks at the end of this chapter.

**Verse 26. For Heshbon was the city of Sihon, &c.]** It appears therefore that the territory now taken from Sihon by the Israelites was taken from a former king of Moab, in commemoration of which an epikedion or war song was made, several verses of which, in their ancient poetic form, are here quoted by Moses.

**Verse 27. They that speak in proverbs]** מַלְאִכֵי מִשְׁלֵי *hammoshelim*, from לְמַשֵּׁל *mashal*, to rule, to exercise authority; hence a *weighty proverbial saying*, because admitted as an *axiom* for the *government of life*. The *moshelim* of the ancient Asiatics were the same, in all probability, as the *Poetæ* among the Greeks and Latins, the [Arabic] *shaara* among the Arabs, who were esteemed as Divine persons, and who had their name from [Arabic] *shaara*, he *knew, understood*; whose poems celebrated past transactions, and especially those which concerned the *military history* of their nation. These poets were also termed [Arabic] *sahebi deewan*, *companions* or *lords of the council of state*, because their *weighty sayings* and *universal knowledge* were held in the highest repute. Similar to these were the *bards* among the ancient *Druids*, and the *Sennachies* among the ancient Celtic inhabitants of these nations.

The ode from the 27th to the 30th verse is composed of three parts. The *first* takes in verses 27 and 28; the *second* verse 29; and the *third* verse 30.

The *first* records with bitter irony the late insults of Sihon and his subjects over the conquered Moabites.

The *second* expresses the compassion of the Israelites over the desolations of Moab, with a bitter sarcasm against their god *Chemosh*, who had abandoned his votaries in their distress, or was not able to rescue them out of the hands of their enemies.

The *third* sets forth the revenge taken by Israel upon the whole country of Sihon, from *Heshbon* to *Dibon*, and from *Nophah* even to *Medeba*. See <sup>23150</sup> **Isaiah 15:1,2.**

The whole poem, divided into its proper hemistichs, as it stands in Kennicott's Hebrew Bible, is as follows:—

VERSE 27. PART I

*Come ye to Heshbon, let it be rebuilt;  
The city of Sihon, let it be established.*

VERSE 28

*For from Heshbon the fire went out,  
And a flame from the city of Sihon:  
It hath consumed the city of Moab,  
With the lords of the heights of Arnon.*

VERSE 29. PART II

*Alas for thee, O Moab!  
Thou hast perished, O people of Chemosh!  
He hath given up his fugitive sons  
And his daughters into captivity,  
To the king of the Amorites, Sihon.*

VERSE 30. PART III

*But on them have WE lifted destruction,  
From Heshbon even to Dibon;  
We have destroyed even to Nophah,  
The fire did reach to Medebah.*

See Kennicott's Remarks.

**Verse 35. So they smote him, and his sons]** There is a curious note of Dr. Lightfoot here, of which I should think it wrong to deprive the reader.

“Sihon and Og conquered, A. M. 2553. Of the life of Moses, 120. From the Exodus, 40. It is now *six* and *twenty* generations from the creation, or from Adam to Moses; and accordingly doth Psa. 136, rehearse the durableness of God's mercy *six* and *twenty* times over, beginning the story with the creation, and ending it in the conquest of Sihon and Og. The numerals of the name **hwwhy** Jehovah amount to the sum of *six* and *twenty*.”

ON some difficulties in this chapter Dr. Kennicott makes the following observations:—

“This one chapter has several very considerable difficulties; and some verses, as now translated, are remarkably unintelligible. A true state of this chapter is not, however, to be despaired of; and it has in it some circumstances which merit more than common attention. It contains the history of the last part of the travels of the Israelites in their way to the promised land; beginning with them at *Mount Hor*, the thirty-fourth encampment, and concluding with them, as in their forty-second and last encampment, near Jordan, in the country which they had acquired by conquest over Sihon, king of the Amorites.

“It begins with saying—that *King Arad, the Canaanite, who dwelt in the south*, (in the land of Canaan, <sup><0330></sup>**Numbers 33:40**,) attacked Israel and was defeated, and that *Israel destroyed their cities*; and that, after destroying these *Canaanite cities*, and consequently after being in a part of Canaan, a part of the very country they were going to, on the *west* of the *Dead Sea*, they returned towards the *Red Sea*, and near the *eastern* tongue or gulf of the *Red Sea*, on the *south of Edom*, marched round *Edom* to the *east* of the *Dead Sea*, in order to enter Canaan from the *east* side of *Jordan*!

“This surprising representation of so vast and dangerous a march, quite unnecessarily performed, is owing to two circumstances. The first is, (<sup><0210></sup>**Numbers 21:1**,) the Canaanites heard that Israel was coming by *the way of the spies*, meaning, by *the way the spies went from Kadesh-Barnea into Canaan*. But this being impossible, because Israel had now marched from *Meribah-Kadesh* to *Mount Hor*, beyond *Ezion-gaber*, and were turning round *Edom*, to the south-east; it is happy that the word rendered *spies*, in our version, is in the Greek a proper name, (*Atharim*,) which removes that difficulty: and the other difficulty (<sup><0210></sup>**Numbers 21:2,3**) is removed by the Greek version likewise, according to which, the vow made, with the facts subsequent, does not signify *destroying* the Canaanite cities, but *devoting them to destruction* at some future time. See *Wall’s Crit. Notes*.

“It proceeds with saying, that after defeating the Canaanites at *Mount Hor*, they journeyed *from Mount Hor by the way of the Red Sea*, (in the road from *Ammon, Midian, &c.*, to the *eastern* gulf of the *Red Sea*,) *to compass the land of Edom*; that on their murmuring for want both of bread and of water they were punished by fiery serpents, after which they marched to *Oboth*, and thence to *Ije-abarim* in the *wilderness, east of Moab*. The

encampments of the Israelites, amounting to *forty-two*, are recorded all together, in historical succession, in <sup><04330></sup>**Numbers 33:1-49**, where *Ije-abarim* is the 38th; *Dibon-gad*, 39; **Almon-Diblathaim**, 40; *mountains of Abarim*, 41; and the *plains of Moab*, by *Jordan*, 42. This regular detail in <sup><04330></sup>**Numbers 33:1-49** has occasioned great perplexity as to <sup><04210></sup>**Numbers 21:10-20**, where, after the stations at *Oboth* and *Ije-abarim*, in <sup><04210></sup>**Numbers 21:10, 11**, we have, in <sup><04219></sup>**Numbers 21:19, 20**, the words *Mattanah*, *Nahaliel*, and *Bamoth*; which are usually considered as the proper names of three places, but widely different from the three proper names after *Ije-abarim* in the catalogue at <sup><04334></sup>**Numbers 33:44-48**.

“But there is, in reality, no inconsistency here. In the plain and historical catalogue (<sup><04334></sup>**Numbers 33:44-48**) the words are strictly *the proper names of the three places*; but here the words *Mattanah*, *Nahaliel*, and *Bamoth* follow some lines of poetry, and seem to form a continuation of the song. They evidently express figurative and poetical ideas. The verbs *journeyed from* and *pitched in* are not found here, though necessary to prose narration: see verses 10 and 11 here, and <sup><04334></sup>**Numbers 33:44-48**. Lastly, verse 20th, (in this 21st chapter,) usually supposed to express *the last encampment*, does not. *Pisgah* signifies *a hill*; and the Israelites could not encamp on the top of any single hill, such as this is described. Balak took Balaam to *the top of Peor*, which *looketh toward Jeshimon*, (<sup><04238></sup>**Numbers 23:28**), which *Peor* undoubtedly was in *Moab*. He took him to another hill in *Moab*, when he took him (<sup><04234></sup>**Numbers 23:14**) to the top of *Pisgah*, in *the field of Zophim*. And if the *Pisgah* or hill in <sup><04210></sup>**Numbers 21:20**, was in the country of *Balak*, it could not point out *the last encampment*, which was not in *Balak’s* country, but *north of Arnon*.

“The word *Mattanah* probably alludes to a place distinguished by some *gift* or *blessing* from God. Fagius says: *Nomen loci, ab eventu aquarum quas Dominus ibi dedit, sic appellati; hntm nam significat donum*—‘The name of the place was so called, from the circumstance of the waters which the Lord gave there; for *Mattanah* signifies a *gift*.’ I ayl hn *Nahaliel* is *torrentes Dei*; i.e., great streams, particularly seasonable or salutary. And twmb *Bamoth* (<sup><04213></sup>**Numbers 21:28**) may point out any high places of signal benefit in the country of *Moab*, or it may answer to *the last station but one*, which was *the mountains of Abarim*. If, therefore, these words were meant to express poetically some eminent blessing, what blessing was so likely to be then celebrated as *copious streams of water*? And after they

had wandered nearly *forty years* through many a barren desert, and after (compare <sup><BRIS></sup>**Deuteronomy 8:15**) having passed through *that great and terrible wilderness*, wherein were *fiery serpents* and *drought*, where there was *no water*, it is no wonder they should shout for joy at finding *water in plenty*, and finding it almost on the banks of *Arnon*, the last river they were to pass, in their way to their last station, east of Jordan. No wonder they should sing in poetic rapture, that after *the wilderness* was (*Mattanah*) the GIFT of GOD; meaning *the great well* in Moab, dug by public authority; and no wonder that, after such a *gift*, there were (*Nahaliel*) *blessed streams*, by which they passed, till they came to (*Bamoth*) the high places from which, perhaps, these streams descended. And the thanksgiving ends, where the blessing was no longer wanted, on their coming down into *the valley*, along the banks of *Arnon*, which was then the north boundary of Moab.

“The Israelites had spent no less than *thirty-eight years* in coming from *Kadesh-Barnea* to their encampment north of *Zared*. Here, at this *fortieth* station, they were commanded to pass through Moab by *r* [ *Ar*, the chief city; but were not to stop till they came to *the valley* on the south of *Arnon*. At this last station but one they probably continued no longer than was necessary for *sending messengers to Sihon*, king of the Amorites, at Heshbon, and receiving his answer. They then crossed the *Arnon*; and having vanquished *Sihon* and *Og*, took possession of the *forty-second* and last encampment.

“This one chapter has *three* pieces of poetry, either fragments or complete; and poetry, seldom found in a historical narrative, may be here accounted for from the exuberance of joy which must have affected these wearied travellers, when arriving thus happily near their journey’s end. What occurs first is in <sup><OZ114></sup>**Numbers 21:14**; and has often been called *the fragment of an old Amorite song*. But it may have been *Amorite* or *Moabite*, or *either* or *neither*, for the subject matter of it, as it is generally understood, if indeed it can be said to be understood at all. The words *taw hpwsb bhw ta ^wnra syl tnh*, usually supposed to contain this fragment, do not signify, as in our English version, *What he did in the Red Sea, and in the brooks of Arnon*. Without enumerating the many interpretations given by others, I shall offer a new one, which seems to make good sense, and a sense very pertinent.

“Observe first, that there must have been a *place* called *Suph*, near the conflux of the *Arnon* and *Jordan*; because Moses, whilst in that last



station, begins *Deuteronomy* with saying, he was on *this* side (i.e., east) of Jordan, over against *Suph*. By this word is not here meant the *Red Sea*; partly, because that has every where else the word for *sea* before it, and partly, because of the great distance of the Red Sea now from Moses. The single word, therefore, signifies here some *place* in itself obscure, because no where mentioned but in these two passages. And yet we cannot wonder that Moses should mention it twice, as the word *Suph*, introduced in speaking of the two last encampments, recalled to mind the *Sea of Suph*, so glorious to Israel, near the beginning of their march towards Canaan.

“Moses had now led Israel *from the Red Sea* to the river Arnon, through many dreadful dangers, partly from hostile nations, partly from themselves; such dangers as no other people ever experienced, and such as no people could have surmounted, without the signal favour of *the Almighty*. And here, just before the battles with *Sihon* and *Og*, he reminds them of *Pharaoh*, &c.; and he asserts, that *in the history of the wars it shall be recorded* that JEHOVAH, who had triumphantly brought *Israel* through *the Sea of Suph*, near Egypt, at first, had now conducted him to *Suph*, near Arnon; that

*JEHOVAH went with him to SUPH,  
And he came to the streams of Arnon.*

“This version removes the difficulties urged by *Hobbes*, page 266, fol. 1750; by *Spinoza*, page 108, 4to., 1670; and retailed in a deistical pamphlet called *The Doubts of the Infidels*, page 4, 8vo., 1781.

“The general meaning of the next piece of poetry seems to be this: that at some distance from the city of *Ar*, by which the Israelites were to pass, (<sup>(~~AR~~)</sup> **Deuteronomy 2:18**,) they came to A WELL of uncommon size and magnificence, which seems to have been *sought out*, *built up*, and *adorned* for the public, by *the rulers* of Moab. And it is no wonder that, on their arrival at *such a well*, they should look upon it as *a blessing from Heaven*, and speak of it as a new miracle in their favour.

*17. Then Israel sang this song:—  
Spring up, O WELL! Sing ye hitherto!*

*18. THE WELL! princes searched it out;  
The nobles of the people have digged it;  
By their decree, by their act of government,  
So, after the wilderness, was Mattanah!*



***19. And after Mattanah were Nahaliel!  
And after Nahaliel were Bamoth!***

***20. And after Bamoth was the valley;  
Where, in the country of Moab,  
Appareth the top of Pisgah,  
Which is over against Jeshimon.***

See Dr. KENNICOTT'S *Remarks upon Select Passages in the Old Testament.*

## NUMBERS

## CHAPTER 22

*The Israelites pitch in the plains of Moab, 1. Balak, king of Moab, is greatly terrified, 2-4; and sends to Balaam, a diviner, to come and curse them, 5, 6. The elders of Moab take a reward and carry it to Balaam, 7. He inquires of the Lord, and is positively ordered not to go with them, 8-12. He communicates this to the elders of Moab, 13. They return to Balak with this information, 14. He sends some of his princes to Balaam with promises of great honour, 15-17. He consults God, and is permitted! to go, on certain conditions, 18-20. Balaam sets off, is opposed by an angel of the Lord, and the Lord miraculously opens the mouth of his ass to reprove him, 21-30. Balaam sees the angel, and is reproved by him, 31-33. He humbles himself, and offers to go back, 34; but is ordered to proceed, on the same conditions as before, 35. The king of Moab goes out to meet him, 36. His address to him, 37. Balaam's firm answer, 38. Balak sacrifices, and takes Balaam to the high places of Baal, that he may see the whole of the Israelitish camp, 39-41.*

## NOTES ON CHAP. 22

**Verse 1. And pitched in the plains of Moab]** They had taken no part of the country that at *present* appertained to the Moabites; they had taken only that part which had formerly belonged to this people, but had been taken from them by Sihon, king of the Amorites.

**On this side Jordan]** On the east side. By *Jericho*, that is, over against it.

**Verse 5. To Pethor, which is by the river of the land of the children of his people]** Dr. Kennicott justly remarks, that “the description now given of Balaam’s residence, instead of being particular, agrees with any place in any country where there is a *river*; for he lived by *Pethor, which is by the river of the land of the children of his people*. But was Pethor then near the *Nile in Egypt*? Or in *Canaan, near Jordan*? Or in *Mesopotamia, near the Euphrates*, and belonging to the *Ammonites*? This last was in fact the case; and therefore it is well that twelve Hebrew MSS. (with two of *Deuteronomy Rossi’s*) confirm the *Samaritan* text here in reading, instead of *wm* [ *ammo, his people*, *^wm* [ *Ammon*, with the Syriac and Vulgate versions.” Houbigant properly contends for this reading; and necessity urges the propriety of adopting it. It should therefore stand thus: *by the*

river of the land of the children of Ammon; and thus it agrees with  
<sup><6270></sup>**Deuteronomy 23:4.**

**Verse 6. Come now, therefore, I pray thee, curse me this people]**

Balaam, once a prophet of the true God, appears to have been one of the *Moshelim*, (see <sup><02127></sup>**Numbers 21:27,**) who had added to his poetic gift that of *sorcery* or *divination*. It was supposed that prophets and sorcerers had a power to *curse persons and places* so as to *confound* all their *designs*, *frustrate* their *counsels*, *enervate* their *strength*, and fill them with fear, terror, and dismay. See <sup><0025></sup>**Genesis 9:25;** <sup><194906></sup>**Psalm 109:6, 20;** <sup><0026></sup>**Joshua 6:26;** <sup><241705></sup>**Jeremiah 17:5, 6.**

*Macrobius* has a whole chapter *Deuteronomy carmine quo evocari solebant dii tutelares, et aut urbes, aut exercitus devoveri*. “Of the incantations which were used to induce the tutelary gods to forsake the cities, &c., over which they presided, and to devote cities and whole armies to destruction.” See *Saturnal.*, lib. iii., cap. ix. He gives us *two* of the ancient forms used in reference to the destruction of *Carthage*; the first, *to call over the protecting deities*, was pronounced by the dictator or general, and none other, when they began the siege. It is as follows, *literatim et punctatim*:—

Si. Deus. si. Dea. est. cui. populus. civitas. que. Karthaginiensis. est  
 in. tutela. te. que. maxime, ille. qui. urbis. hujus. populi. que.  
 tutelam. recepisti. precor. veneror, que. veniam. que. a. vobis. peto.  
 ut. vos. populum. civitatem. que. Karthaginiensem. deseratis. loca.  
 templa. sacra. urbem. que. eorum. relinquatis. absque. his. abeatis.  
 ei. que. popolo. civitati. que. metum. formidinem. oblivionem.  
 injiciatis. proditi. que. Romam. ad. me. meos. que. veniatis. nostra.  
 que. vobis. loca. templa. sacra. urbs. acceptior. probator. que. sit.  
 mihi. que. popolo. que. Romano. militibus. que. meis. præpositi.  
 sitis. ut. sciamus. intelligamus. que. Si. ita. feceritis. voveo. vobis.  
 templa. ludos. que. facturum.

“Whether it be god or goddess, under whose protection the people and city of Carthage are placed; and thee, especially, who hast undertaken to defend this city and people; I pray, beseech, and earnestly entreat that you would forsake the people and city of Carthage, and leave their places, temples, sacred things, and city, and depart from them: and that you would inspire this people and city with fear, terror, and forgetfulness: and that, coming out from

them, you would pass over to Rome, to me, and to mine: and that our places, temples, sacred things, and city may be more agreeable and more acceptable to you: and that you would preside over me, the Roman people, and my soldiers; that we may know and perceive it. If ye will do this, I promise to consecrate to your honour both temples and games.”

The second, to devote the city to destruction, which it was supposed the tutelary gods had abandoned, is the following:

Dis. Pater. Vejovis. Manes. sive. vos. quo. allo. nomine. fas. est. nominare. ut. omnes. iliam. urbem. Karthaginem. exercitum. que. quem. ego. me. sentio. dicere. fuga. formidine. terrore. que. compleatis. qui. que. adversum. legiones. exercitum. que. nostrum. arma. tela. que. ferent. Uti. vos. eum. exercitum. eos. hostes. eos. que. homines. urbes. agros. que. eorum. et. qui. in. his. locis. regionibus. que. agris. urbibus. ve. habitant. abducatis. lumine. supero. privetis. exercitum. que. hostium. urbes. agros. que. eorum. quos. me. sentio. dicere. uti. vos. eas. urbes. agros. que. capita. ætates. que. eorum. devotas. consecratas. que. habeatis. illis. legibus. quibus. quando. que. sunt. maxime. hostes. devoti. eos. que. ego. vicarios. pro. me. fide. magistratu. que. meo. pro. populo. Romano. exercitibus. legionibus. que. nostris. do. devoceo. ut. me. meam. que. fidem. imperium. que. legiones. exercitum. que. nostrum. qui. in. his. rebus. gerundis. sunt. bene. salvos. siritis. esse. Si. haec. ita. faxitis. ut. ego. sciam. sentiam. intelligam. que. tune. quisquis. hoc. votum. faxit. ubi. ubi. faxit. recte. factum. esto. ovibus. atris. tribus. Tellus. mater. te. que. Juppiter. obtestor.

“Dis. Pater. Vejovis. Manes., or by whatsoever name you wish to be invoked, I pray you to fill this city of Carthage with fear and terror; and to put that army to flight which I mention, and which bears arms or darts against OUR legions and armies: and that ye may take away this army, those enemies, those men, their cities and their country, and all who dwell in those places, regions, countries, or cities; and deprive them of the light above: and let all their armies, cities, country, chiefs, and people be held by you consecrated and *devoted*, according to those laws by which, and at what time, enemies can be most effectually devoted. I also give and devote them as vicarious sacrifices for myself and my magistracy;

for the Roman people, and for all our armies and legions; and for the whole empire, and that all the armies and legions which are employed in these countries may be preserved in safety. If therefore ye will do these things, as I know, conceive, and intend, then he who makes this vow wheresoever and whensoever he shall make it, I engage shall sacrifice *three black sheep* to thee, O mother Earth, and to thee. O Jupiter.” “When the execrator mentions the *earth*, he stoops down and places both his hands on it; and when he names *Jupiter*, he lifts up both his hands to heaven; and when he mentions his vow, he places his hands upon his breast.” Among the ancient records, Macrobius says he found many cities and people devoted in this way. The Romans held that no city could be taken till its *tutelary god* had forsaken it; or if it could be taken, it would be unlawful, as it would be sacrilegious to have the gods in captivity. They therefore endeavoured to persuade the gods of their enemies to come over to their party. *Virgil* intimates that Troy was destroyed, only because the tutelary gods had forsaken it:—

*Excessere omnes, adytis arisque relictis,  
Dii, quibus imperium hoc steterat.  
Æn., lib. ii., ver. 351.*

“All the gods, by whose assistance the empire had hitherto been preserved, forsook their altars and their temples.” And it was on this account that the Greeks employed all their artifice to steal away the *Palladium*, on which they believed the safety of Troy depended.

Tacitus observes that when *Suetonius Paulinus* prepared his army to cross over into *Mona*, (Anglesea,) where the *Britons* and *Druids* made their last stand, the *priestesses*, with dishevelled hair, white vestments, and torches in their hands, ran about like furies, *devoting their enemies to destruction*; and he farther adds that the *sight*, the *attitude*, and horrible *imprecations* of these priestesses had such effect on the Roman soldiers, that for a while they stood still and suffered themselves to be pierced with the darts of the Britons, without making any resistance. Tacit. Ann., l. xiv., c. 29. Many accounts are related in the Hindoo *Pooran* of kings employing sages to curse their enemies when too powerful for them.—WARD’S *Customs*.

The Jews also had a most horrible form of execration, as may be seen in Buxtorf's Talmudical Lexicon under the word **µdt**. These observations and authorities, drawn out in so much detail, are necessary to cast light on the strange and curious history related in this and the two following chapters.

**Verse 7. The rewards of divination]** Whoever went to consult a prophet took with him a present, as it was on such gratuitous offerings the prophets lived; but here more than a mere present is intended, perhaps every thing necessary to provide materials for the *incantation*. The *drugs*, &c., used on such occasions were often very expensive. It appears that Balaam was very *covetous*, and that he loved the wages of unrighteousness, and probably lived by it; see <sup><0215></sup>**2 Peter 2:15**.

**Verse 8. I will bring you word again, as the Lord shall speak]** So it appears he knew the true God, and had been in the habit of consulting him, and receiving oracles from his mouth.

**Verse 12. Thou shalt not go with them; thou shalt not curse the people]** That is, Thou shalt not go with them to curse the people. With them he *might go*, as we find he afterwards did by God's own command, but not to *curse* the people; this was wholly forbidden. Probably the command, *Thou shalt not go*, refers here to *that time*, viz., the first invitation: and in this sense it was most punctually obeyed by Balaam; see <sup><0213></sup>**Numbers 22:13**.

**Verse 14. Balaam refuseth to come with us.]** "Observe," says Mr. Ainsworth, "Satan's practice against God's word, seeking to lessen the same, and that from *hand to hand*, till he bring it to naught. Balaam told the princes *less* than God told him, and they relate to Balak *less* than Balaam told them; so that when the answer came to the king of Moab, it was not *the word of God*, but *the word of man*; it was simply, *Balaam refuseth to come*, without ever intimating that God had forbidden him." But in this Balaam is not to blame; he told the messengers in the most positive manner, *Jehovah refuseth to give me leave to go with you*, <sup><0213></sup>**Numbers 22:13**; and more explicit he could not be.

**Verse 18. I cannot go beyond the word of the Lord my God]** Balaam knew God too well to suppose he could reverse any of his purposes; and he respected him too much to attempt to do any thing without his permission. Though he was *covetous*, yet he dared not, even when strongly

tempted both by *riches* and *honours*, to go contrary to the command of his God. Many make all the professions of Balaam, without justifying them by their conduct. “They pretend,” says one, “they would not do any thing against the word of God for a *house full* of gold, and yet will do it for a *handful!*”

**Verse 19. What the Lord will say unto me more.]** He did not know but God might make a farther discovery of his will to him, and therefore he might very innocently seek farther information.

**Verse 20. If the men come-go with them]** This is a confirmation of what was observed on the twelfth verse; though we find his going was marked with the Divine displeasure, because he wished, for the sake of the *honours* and *rewards*, to fulfil as far as possible the will of the king of Moab. Mr. Shuckford observes that the pronoun *awh hu* is sometimes used to denote a person’s *doing a thing out of his own head*, without regard to the *directions* of another. Thus in the case of Balaam, when God had allowed him to go with the messengers of Balak, *if they came in the morning to call him*; because he was more hasty than he ought to have been, and went to *them* instead of staying till *they* should come to *him*, it was said of him, not *ĒI h yk ki halach, that he went*, but *awh ĒI wh yk ki holech hu*, i.e., *he went of his own head*-without being called; and in this, Mr. Shuckford supposes, his iniquity chiefly lay.-*Connex.*, vol. iii., p. 115. How many are restrained from sinning, merely through the *fear* of God! They would gladly do the evil, but it is forbidden on awful penalties; they wish the thing were not prohibited for they have a strong desire to do it.

**Verse 23. And the ass saw the angel]** When God granted *visions* those alone who were particularly interested saw them while others in the same company saw nothing; see ~~27007~~ **Daniel 10:7;** ~~44007~~ **Acts 9:7.**

**Verse 26. And the angel-stood in a narrow place]** In this carriage of the angel says Mr. Ainsworth the Lord shows us the proceedings of his judgments against sinners: *First* he mildly *shakes* his *rod* at them but lets them go untouched. *Secondly* he comes *nearer* and touches them with an easy correction as it were wringing their foot against the wall. *Thirdly*, when all this is ineffectual, he brings them into such *straits*, that they can neither turn to the right hand nor to the left, but must fall before his judgments, if they do not fully turn to him.

**Verse 28. The Lord opened the mouth of the ass]** And where is the wonder of all this? If the *ass* had opened *her own mouth*, and reproved the rash prophet, we might well be astonished; but when *God opens the mouth*, an *ass* can speak as well as a *man*. It is worthy of remark here, that Balaam testifies no surprise at this miracle, because he saw it was the *Lord's* doing. Of animate and inanimate things receiving for a short time the gift of speech, the heathen mythology furnishes many fictitious examples, with which I do not deem it proper to occupy the reader's time.

**Verse 33. Surely now also I had slain thee]** How often are the meanest animals, and the most trivial occurrences, instruments of the preservation of our lives, and of the salvation of our souls! The messenger of justice would have killed Balaam, had not the mercy of God prevented the ass from proceeding.

**Verse 34. If it displease thee, I will get me back again.]** Here is a proof, that though he *loved the wages of unrighteousness*, yet he still feared God; and he is now willing to drop the enterprise if God be displeased with his proceeding. The piety of many called Christians does not extend thus far; they see that the thing displeases God, and yet they proceed. Reader, is this *thy case*?

**Verse 38. The word that God putteth in my mouth, that shall I speak.]** Here was a noble resolution, and he was certainly faithful to it: though he wished to please the king, and get wealth and honour, yet he would not displease God to realize even these bright prospects. Many who slander this poor semi-antinomian prophet, have not half his piety.

**Verse 40. And Balak offered oxen, &c.]** This was to gain the favour of his gods, and perhaps to propitiate Jehovah, that the end for which he had sent for Balaam might be accomplished.

**Verse 41. That-he might see the utmost part of the people.]** As he thought Balaam must have them all in his eye when he pronounced his curse, lest it might not extend to those who were not in sight. On this account he took him up into the high places of Baal.



## NUMBERS

## CHAPTER 23

*Being arrived at the high places of Baal, (<sup>01241</sup>Numbers 22:41,) Balaam orders Balak to build seven altars, and prepare oxen and rams for sacrifice, 1, 2. Balaam inquires of the Lord, receives an answer, with which he returns to Balak, 3-10. Balak, finding that this was a prediction of the prosperity of the Israelites, is greatly troubled, 11. Balaam excuses himself, 12. He brings him to another place, where he might see only a part of Israel, and repeats his sacrifices, 13, 14. Balaam again consults the Lord, 15-17. Returns with his answer, and again predicts the glory of Israel, 18-24. Balak is angry, 25; and Balaam again excuses himself. Balak proposes another trial, takes him to another place, and repeats the same sacrifices, 26-30.*

## NOTES ON CHAP. 23

**Verse 1. Build me here seven altars, &c.]** The *oxen* and the *rams* were such as the Mosaic law had ordered to be offered to God in sacrifice; the building of seven altars was not commanded. Some think that these seven altars were built to the *seven planets*: this is most gratuitously said; of it there is no proof whatever; it is mere trifling, even with conjecture. As seven was a number of perfection, Balaam chose it on this occasion, because he intended to offer a grand sacrifice, and to offer a bullock and a ram upon each of the altars; the whole to be made a burnt-offering at the *same time*. And as he intended to offer seven bullocks and seven rams at the same time, it could not be conveniently done on *one* altar, therefore he ordered seven to be built. We need go no farther to find out his reasons.

**Verse 3. Stand by thy burnt-offering]** We have already seen that blessing and cursing in this way were considered as religious rites, and therefore must be always preceded by sacrifice. See this exemplified in the case of *Isaac*, before he blessed Jacob and Esau, (<sup>01279</sup>Genesis 27:19, 28, 29, 33-40, and the notes there. The venison that was brought to Isaac, of which he did eat, was properly the preparatory sacrifice.

**Verse 7. And he took up his parable]** *wl vm meshalo*, see on (<sup>01277</sup>Numbers 21:27. All these oracular speeches of Balaam are in *hemistich* metre in the original. They are highly dignified, and may be considered as immediate *poetic* productions of the Spirit of God; for it is

expressly said, <sup><0236></sup>**Numbers 23:5**, that God put the *word* in Balaam's mouth, and that *the Spirit of God came upon him*, <sup><0242></sup>**Numbers 24:2**.

**Verse 8. How shall I curse, whom God hath not cursed?]** It was granted on all hands that no *incantations* nor imprecations could avail, unless God concurred and ratified them. From God's communication to Balaam he saw that God was determined to bless and defend Israel, and therefore all endeavours to injure them must be in vain.

**Verse 9. From the top of the rocks I see him]** That is, from the high places of Baal where he went, <sup><0241></sup>**Numbers 22:41**, that he might the more advantageously see the *whole* camp of Israel.

**The people shall dwell alone]** They shall ever be preserved as a *distinct nation*. This prophecy has been literally fulfilled through a period of 3300 years to the present day. This is truly astonishing.

**Verse 10. Let me die the death of the righteous]** Probably Balaam had some presentiment that he should be taken off by a premature death, and therefore he lodges this petition against it. The death of the righteous in those times implied *being gathered to one's fathers in a good old age*, having seen his children, and children's children; and to this, probably, the latter part of this petition applies: *And let my last end be like his*, (**whmk ytyrj a yhtw uthehi acharithi chamohu**, *And let my POSTERITY be like his*.) It has been generally supposed that Balaam is here praying for a happy death, such as true Christians die who die in the Lord; and in this way his words are generally applied; but I am satisfied this is not their meaning. The prayer, however, understood in the common way, is a good one, and may be offered to God profitably. A righteous man is one who is *saved from his sins*, who is *justified* and *sanctified* through the blood of the covenant, and who lives, not only an *innocent*, but also a *holy* and *useful* life. He who would *die well* should *live well*; for a *bad death* must be the issue of a *bad life*.

**Verse 13. Thou shalt see but the utmost part of them]** Balak thought that the sight of such an immense camp had intimidated Balaam, and this he might gather from what he said in the tenth verse: *Who can count the dust of Jacob, &c.*; he thought therefore that he might get Balaam to curse them in *detached parties*, till the *whole camp* should be devoted to destruction by successive execrations.

**Verse 17. What hath the Lord spoken?**] Balak himself now understood that Balaam was wholly under the influence of *Jehovah*, and would say nothing but what God commanded him; but not knowing *Jehovah* as Balaam did, he hoped that he might be induced to change his mind, and curse a people whom he had hitherto determined to bless.

**Verse 19. God is not a man, that he should lie]** This seems to be spoken to correct the foregoing supposition of Balak that God could change his mind. Even the heathen would not allow that their supreme god could be caught in a falsity. Hence ÆSCHYLUS, in *Prometh. vincit.* 1068:—

Ψευδηγορειν γαρ ουκ επισταται στομα  
Το διον, αλλα παν επος τελει.

“*The mouth of Jove knows not to frame a lie;  
But every word finds full accomplishment.*”

**Verse 21. He hath not beheld iniquity in Jacob, neither hath he seen perverseness in Israel]** This is a difficult passage; for if we take the words as spoken of the *people* Israel, as their *iniquity* and their *perverseness* were almost unparalleled, such words cannot be spoken of *them* with strict truth. If we consider them as spoken of the patriarch *Jacob* and *Israel*, or of *Jacob* after he became *Israel*, they are most strictly true, as after that time a more unblemished and noble character (*Abraham* excepted) is not to be found in the page of history, whether sacred or profane; and for his sake, and for the sake of *his* father *Isaac*, and his grandfather *Abraham*, God is ever represented as favouring, blessing, and sparing a rebellious and undeserving people; see **Clarke’s note**, “<sup>01483</sup>Genesis 49:33”. In this way, I think, this difficult text may be safely understood.

There is another way in which the words may be interpreted, which will give a good sense. *wa aven* not only signifies *iniquity*, but most frequently *trouble*, *labour*, *distress*, and *affliction*; and these indeed are its *ideal* meanings, and *iniquity* is only an accommodated or metaphorical one, because of the *pain*, *distress*, &c., produced by sin. *l m* [ *amal*, translated here *perverseness*, occurs often in Scripture, but is never translated *perverseness* except in this place. It signifies simply *labour*, especially that which is of an *afflictive* or *oppressive* kind. The words may therefore be considered as implying that God will not suffer the people either to be exterminated by the *sword*, or to be brought under a yoke of *slavery*.

Either of these methods of interpretation gives a good sense, but our common version gives none.

Dr. Kennicott contends for the reading of the Samaritan, which, instead of *cybh al lo hibbit, he hath not seen*, has *cba al lo abbit, I do not see*, I do not discover any thing among them on which I could ground my curse. But the sense above given is to be preferred.

**Verse 22. The strength of a unicorn.]** *mar reem* and *myar reim*. It is generally allowed that there is no such beast in nature as the *unicorn*; i.e., a creature of the horse kind, with one long rich curled horn in the forehead. The creature painted from fancy is represented as one of the supporters of the *royal arms* of Great Britain. It is difficult to say what kind of beast is intended by the original word. The Septuagint translate the word *μονοκερως*, the *unicorn*, or *one-horned animal*; the Vulgate, sometimes, *unicornus*; and in the text *rhinocerotis*, by which the *rhinoceros*, a creature which has its name from the *horn* on its *nose*, is supposed to be meant. That no single-horned animal can be intended by the *reem* of Moses, is sufficiently evident from this, that Moses, speaking of Joseph, says, “he has the HORNS of A *unicorn*,” or *reem*, where the *horns* are spoken of in the *plural*, the *animal* in the *singular*. The creature referred to is either the *rhinoceros*, some varieties of which have *two* horns on the nose, or the wild *bull*, *urus*, or *buffalo*; though some think the beast intended is a species of *goat*; but the *rhinoceros* seems the most likely. There is literally a *monoceros*, or *unicorn*, with *one large curled ivory horn* growing horizontally out of his *snout*; but this is not a *land animal*, it is the *modiodan* or *nurwal*, a marine animal of the *whale* kind, a horn of which is now before me, measuring seven feet four inches; but I believe the *rhinoceros* is that intended by the sacred writers.

**Verse 23.** There is **no enchantment, &c.]** Because God has determined to save them, therefore no enchantment can prevail against them.

**According to this time, &c.]** I think this clause should be read thus: “As at this time it shall be told to Jacob and to Israel what God worketh;” i.e., this people shall always have *prophetic information* of what God is about to work. And indeed, they are the only people under heaven who ever had this privilege. When God himself designed to punish them because of their sins, he always *forewarned* them by the prophets; and also took care to apprise them of all the plots of their enemies against them.

**Verse 24. Behold, the people shall rise up as a great lion]** *aybl labi*, the *great, mighty, or old lion*, the king of the forest, who is feared and respected by all the other beasts of the field; so shall Israel be the subduer and possessor of the whole land of Canaan. And *as a young lion*, *yra ari* from *hra arah*, *to tear off*, the *predatory lion*, or the lion in the act of *seizing* and *tearing* his prey;-the nations against whom the Israelites are now going shall be no more able to defend themselves against their attacks, than the feeblest beasts of the forest are against the attacks of the strong lion.

**Verse 28. Unto the top of Peor]** Probably the place where the famous Baal-peor had his chief temple. He appears to have been the Priapus of the Moabites, and to have been worshipped with the same obscene and abominable rites.

## NUMBERS

## CHAPTER 24

*Balaam, finding that God was determined to bless Israel, seeks no longer for enchantments, 1. The Spirit of God coming upon him, he delivers a most important prophetic parable, 2-9. Balak's anger is kindled against him, and he commands him to depart to his own country, 10,11. Balaam vindicates his conduct, 12, 13; and delivers a prophecy relative to the future destruction of Moab by the Israelites, 14-17; also of Edom, 18, 19; of the Amalekites, 20; and of the Kenites, 21, 22. Predicts also the destruction of Asshur and Eber, by the naval power of Chittim, which should afterwards be itself destroyed, 23, 24. Balaam and Balak separate, 25.*

## NOTES ON CHAP. 24

**Verse 1. He went not, as at other times, to seek for enchantments]** We have already had occasion to observe that the proper meaning of the word **vj n nachash** is not easily ascertained; see <sup><0210></sup>**Numbers 21:9**, and see on <sup><0100></sup>**Genesis 3:1**. Here the plural **µyvj n nechashim** is rendered *enchantments*; but it probably means no more than the *knowledge of future events*. When Balaam saw that it pleased God to bless Israel, he therefore thought it unnecessary to apply for any farther *prophetic declarations* of God's will as he had done before, for he could safely infer every good to this people, from the evident disposition of God towards them.

**Verse 2. The Spirit of God came upon him.]** This Divine afflatus he had not expected on the present occasion, but God had not yet declared the whole of his will.

**Verse 3. He took up his parable]** His prophetic declaration couched in highly poetic terms, and in regular metre, as the preceding were.

**The man whose eyes are open]** I believe the original **µtv shethum**, should be translated *shut*, not *open*; for in the next verse, where the opening of his eyes is mentioned, a widely different word is used, **hl g galah**, which signifies to *open* or *reveal*. At first the eyes of Balaam were *shut*, and so closely too that he could not *see* the angel who withstood him, till God *opened* his eyes; nor could he see the gracious intentions of God towards Israel, till the *eyes of his understanding were opened* by the

powers of the Divine Spirit. This therefore he mentions, we may suppose, with humility and gratitude, and to the credit of the prophecy which he is now about to deliver, that the Moabites may receive it as the *word of God*, which must be fulfilled in due season. His words, in their meaning, are similar to those of the blind man in the Gospel: “Once I was *blind*, but now I *see*.”

**Verse 4. Falling into a trance]** There is no indication in the Hebrew that he fell into a *trance*; these words are added by our translators, but they are not in the original. **ל** *pn nophel* is the only word used, and simply signifies *falling*, or *falling down*, perhaps in this instance by way of religious prostration.

**Verse 6. Lign aloes which the Lord hath planted]** Or, as the tents which the Lord hath pitched; for it is the same word, **מ** *yl ha ohalim*, which is used in the 5th verse. But from other parts of Scripture we find that the word also signifies a species of *tree*, called by some the *sandal tree*, and by others the *lignum* or wood *aloes*. This tree is described as being *eight* or *ten* feet high, with very large leaves growing at the top; and it is supposed that a forest of those at some distance must bear some resemblance to a numerous encampment. As the word comes from the root **ל** *ha ahal*, which signifies to *spread* or *branch out*, and therefore is applied to *tents*, because of their being *extended* or *spread out* on the ground; so when it is applied to *trees* it must necessarily mean such as were remarkable for their widely-extended branches; but what the particular species is, cannot be satisfactorily ascertained. By the *Lord's planting* are probably meant such trees as grow independently of the *cultivation of man*.—*Nullis hominum cogentibus*; or, as *Virgil* expresses it,

*Sponte sua quæ se tollunt in luminis oras.*  
*VIRG., Geor. ii., 47.*

“*Such as sprung up, spontaneously into the regions of light.*”

**As cedar trees]** *Gabriel Sionita*, a very learned Syrian Maronite, who assisted in editing the Paris Polyglot, a man worthy of all credit, thus describes the cedars of Mount Lebanon, which he had examined on the spot:—

“The *cedar* grows on the most elevated part of the mountain, is taller than the *pine*, and so thick that five men together could

scarcely fathom one. It shoots out its branches at ten or twelve feet from the ground; they are large, and distant from each other, and are perpetually green. The cedar distils a kind of gum, to which different effects are attributed. The wood of it is of a brown colour, very solid, and incorruptible if preserved from *wet*. It bears a small apple, like to that of the *pine*.”

*Deuteronomy la Roque* relates some curious particulars concerning this tree, which he learned from the Maronites of Mount Libanus: “The branches grow in parallel rows round the tree, but lessen gradually from the bottom to the top, shooting out parallel to the horizon, so that the tree is, in appearance, similar to a *cone*. As the snows, which fall in vast quantities on this mountain, must necessarily, by their weight on such a vast surface, break down these branches, nature, or rather the God of nature, has so ordered it, that at the approach of winter, and during the snowy season, the branches erect themselves, and cling close to the body of the tree, and thus prevent any quantity of snow from lodging on them.”

Mr. *Maundrell*, who visited Mount Libanus in 1697, gives the following description of the *cedars* still growing there:—

“These noble trees grow among the snow, near the highest part of Lebanon, and are remarkable, as well for their own age and largeness as for those frequent allusions to them in the word of God. Some of them are very old, and of a prodigious bulk; others younger, and of a smaller size. Of the former I could reckon only *sixteen*, but the latter are very numerous. I measured one of the largest, and found it *twelve* yards and *six* inches in girt, and yet *sound*, and *thirty-seven* yards in the spread of its branches. At about five or six yards from the ground it was divided into five limbs, each of which was equal to a great tree.”—*Journey from Aleppo to Jerusalem*, p. 142.

**Verse 7. He shall pour the water out of his buckets, &c.]** Here is a very plain allusion to their method of raising water in different parts of the East. By the *well* a tall pole is erected, which serves as a fulcrum to a very long lever, to the smaller end of which a bucket is appended. On the opposite end, which is much larger, are many notches cut in the wood, which serve as steps for a man, whose business it is to climb up to the fulcrum, in order to lower the bucket into the well, which, when filled, he raises by walking back on the opposite arm, till his weight brings the bucket above the well’s



mouth: a person standing by the well empties the bucket into a trench, which communicates with the ground intended to be watered.

**His seed shall be in many waters]** Another simple allusion to the sowing of rice. The ground must not only be *well watered*, but *flooded*, in order to serve for the proper growth of this grain. The rice that was sown in *many waters* must be the most fruitful. By an elegant and chaste metaphor all this is applied to the *procreation of a numerous posterity*.

**His king shall be higher than Agag]** This name is supposed to have been as common to all the Amalekitish kings as *Pharaoh* was to those of Egypt. But several critics, with the Septuagint, suppose that a small change has taken place here in the original word, and that instead of *ggam meagag, than Agag*, we should read *gwgm miggog, than Gog*. As *Gog* in Scripture seems to mean the enemies of God's people, then the promise here may imply that the true worshippers of the Most High shall ultimately have dominion over all their enemies.

**Verse 8. God brought him forth out of Egypt]** They were neither *expelled* thence, nor came *voluntarily* away. God alone, with a high hand and uplifted arm, brought them forth. Concerning the *unicorn*, see Clarke "~~422~~Numbers 23:22".

**Verse 9. He couched, he lay down as a lion, &c.]** See the original terms explained ~~423~~Numbers 23:24.

These oracles, delivered by Balaam, are evident prophecies of the victories which the Israelites should gain over their enemies, and of their firm possession of the promised land. They may also refer to the great victories to be obtained by the Lord Jesus Christ, that Lion of the *tribe of Judah*, over sin, death, and Satan, the grand enemies of the human race; and to that most numerous posterity of *spiritual children* which should be begotten by the preaching of the Gospel.

**Verse 11. Lo, the Lord hath kept thee back from honour.]** A bitter and impious sarcasm. "Hadst thou cursed this people, I would have promoted thee to great honour; but thou hast chosen to follow the directions of Jehovah rather than mine, and what will *he* do for thee?"

**Verse 15. The man whose eyes are open]** See Clarke on "~~424~~Numbers 24:3". It seems strange that our version should have fallen into such a

mistake as to render **טתו** *shethum*, *open*, which it does not signify, when the very *sound* of the word expresses the *sense*. The Vulgate has very properly preserved the true meaning, by rendering the clause *cujus obturatus est oculus*, he whose eyes are shut. The Targum first paraphrased the passage *falsely*, and most of the versions followed it.

**Verse 17. I shall see him, but not now]** Or, *I shall see him, but he is not now. I shall behold him, but not nigh-I shall have a full view of him, but the time is yet distant.* That is, The person of whom I am now prophesying does not at present exist among these Israelites, nor shall he appear in this generation. *There shall come a Star out of Jacob, and a Sceptre shall rise out of Israel*-a person *eminent* for wisdom, and *formidable* for strength and power, shall arise as *king* among this people. *He shall smite the corners of Moab*-he shall bring the Moabites perfectly under subjection; (See ~~1082~~ **2 Samuel 8:2**;) and *destroy all the children of Sheth*. The original word **קרק** *karkar*, from **קרח** *karah*, to *meet, associate, join, blend*, and the like, is variously translated;

-*vastabit, he shall waste*, VULGATE.

-**προνομευσει**, *shall prey on*, SEPT.

-**צול** **ו** *yishlot, shall rule over*, TARGUM.

-*Shall shake*, ARABIC.

-[Persian] *barbend, shall put a yoke on*, PERS.

-*Shall unwall*, AINSWORTH, &c., &c.

The *Targum of Onkelos* translates the whole passage thus: “I shall see him, but not now: I shall behold him, but he is not near. When a king shall arise from the house of Jacob, and the Messiah be anointed from the house of Israel, he shall slay the princes of Moab, and rule over all the children of men.”

The *Jerusalem Targum* is a little different: “A king shall arise from the house of Jacob, a redeemer and governor from the house of Israel, who shall slay the chiefs of the Moabites, and empty out and destroy all the children of the East.”

*Rabbi Moses ben Maimon* has, in my opinion, perfectly hit the meaning of the prophecy in the following paraphrase of the text: “*I shall see him, but*

*not now.* This is DAVID.-*I shall behold him, but not nigh.* This is the king MESSIAH.-*A Star shall come out of Jacob.* This is DAVID.-*And a Sceptre shall rise out of Israel.* This is the king MESSIAH.-*And shall smite the corners of Moab.* This is DAVID, (as it is written, <sup><1082></sup>**2 Samuel 8:2:** *And he smote Moab, casting them down to the ground.*)-*And shall destroy all the children of Sheth.* This is the king MESSIAH, of whom it is written, (<sup><19718></sup>**Psalm 72:8,**) *He shall have dominion from sea to sea."*

**Verse 18. And Edom shall be a possession]** That is, to DAVID: as it is said: "And all they of Edom became David's servants;" <sup><10814></sup>**2 Samuel 8:14.**

**Seir also shall be a possession]** That is, unto the king MESSIAH; as it is said: "And saviours shall come upon Mount Zion to judge the Mount of Esau; and the kingdom shall be the Lord's;" Obad., <sup><10121></sup>**Obadiah 1:21.** See *Ainsworth.*

**Verse 19. Out of Jacob shall come, &c.]** This is supposed to refer to Christ, because of what is said <sup><014910></sup>**Genesis 49:10.**

It is exceedingly difficult to fix the true sense of this prophecy in all its particulars. Probably the *star*, <sup><02417></sup>**Numbers 24:17**, is only an emblem of *kingly* power. Among the Egyptians a *star* is said to have been the symbol of the Divine Being. The *sceptre* refers to the *kingly* power in *exercise*. The *corners* or outskirts may mean the petty Moabitish governments, as the Chaldee has understood the term. If *karkar*, which we translate *utterly destroy*, be not the name of a *place* here, as it is in <sup><07810></sup>**Judges 8:10**, (which is not very likely,) it may be taken in one of those senses assigned to it, (see **Clarke** on "<sup><02417></sup>**Numbers 24:17**",) and signify the *blending together the children of Sheth*, that is, all the inhabitants of the earth; for so the children of *Sheth* must necessarily be understood, unless we consider it here as meaning some king of the *Moabites*, according to *Grotius*, or a city on the borders of Moab, according to *Rabbi Nathan*. As neither Israel nor the Messiah ever destroyed all the children of men, we must (in order to leave the children of *Sheth* what they are generally understood to be, *all the inhabitants of the world*) understand the whole as a prophecy of the final universal sway of the sceptre of Christ, when the middle wall of partition shall be broken down, and the *Jews and Gentiles* become one *united, blended* fold, under one shepherd and bishop of their souls.

I cannot think that the *meteoric star* which guided the wise men of the east to Bethlehem can be intended here; nor do I think that Peter refers to this

prophecy when he calls Christ *the day star*, <sup><61019></sup>**2 Peter 1:19**; nor that <sup><6128></sup>**Revelation 2:28**, where Christ is called *the morning star*, nor <sup><6216></sup>**Revelation 22:16**, where he is called *the bright and morning star*, refers at all to this prophecy of Balaam. Nor do I think that the *false Christ* who rose in the time of *Adrian*, and who called himself *Barcochab*, which literally signifies the *son of a star*, did refer to this prophecy. If he had, he must have defeated his own intention, because the *SON of the star* is not *THE STAR* that should arise, but at the utmost a *descendant*; and then, to vindicate his right to the Jewish throne, he must show that the person who was called *the star*, and of whom he pretended to be the *son* or *descendant*, had actually reigned before him. As the *sun, moon, stars, planets, light, splendours, effulgence, day, &c.*, were always considered among the Asiatics as emblems of *royalty, government, &c.*, therefore many, both men and women, had these names given to them as titles, surnames, &c. So the queen of Alexander the Great, called Roxana by the Greeks, was a *Persian* princess, and in her native tongue her name was [Persian] *Roushen*, splendour. *Hadassah*, who became queen to *Ahasuerus*, in place of the repudiated *Vashti*, and is called *Esther* by Europeans in general, was called in the language of Persia [Persian] *Sitareh*; from whence by corruption came both *Esther*, the Persian queen, and our word *star*. And to waive all farther examples, a Mohammedan prince, at first named *Eesouf* or *Joseph*, was called [Arabic] *Roushen Akhter* when he was raised to the throne, which signifies a *splendid or luminous star*. This prince, by a joyful reverse of fortune, was brought from a gloomy prison and exalted to the throne of Hindostan; on which account the following couplet was made, in which there is a paronomasia or play on the name *Roushen Akhter*; and the last line alludes to the history of the patriarch *Joseph*, who was brought out of *prison* and exalted to the highest honours in Egypt.

[Arabic]

[Arabic]

*Roushen Akhter bood, aknoon mah shud:*

*Yousef az zendan ber amd shah shud.*

*“He was a bright star, but is now become a moon.*

*Joseph is brought out of prison, and is become a glorious king.”*

**Verse 20. Amalek was the first of the nations]** The most *ancient* and most powerful of all the nations or states then within the view of Balaam;

but his latter end shall be that he perish for ever, or his posterity **wtyrj a acharitho**, shall be destroyed, or shall utterly fail. This oracle began to be fulfilled by Saul, <sup><09157></sup>**1 Samuel 15:7, 8**, who overthrew the Amalekites, and took their king, Agag, prisoner. Afterwards they were nearly destroyed by David, <sup><09278></sup>**1 Samuel 27:8**, and they were finally exterminated by the sons of Simeon in the days of Hezekiah, <sup><13041></sup>**1 Chronicles 4:41-43**; since that time they have ceased to exist as a people, and now no vestige of them remains on the face of the earth; so completely is their *posterity* cut off, according to this prophecy. The *marginal reading* does not appear to give the proper sense.

**Verse 21. He looked on the Kenites]** Commentators are not well agreed who the Kenites were. Dr. Dodd's opinion is, I think, nearest to the truth. *Jethro*, the father-in-law of Moses, is called a priest or prince of Midian, <sup><00001></sup>**Exodus 3:1**, and in <sup><07016></sup>**Judges 1:16** he is called a *Kenite*; we may infer, therefore, says he, that the Kenites and the Midianites were the same, or at least that the Kenites and the Midianites were confederate tribes. Some of these we learn from Judg. i., followed the Israelites, others abode still among the Midianites and Amalekites. When Saul destroyed the latter, we find he had no commission against the Kenites, <sup><09156></sup>**1 Samuel 15:6**, for it appears that they were then a small and inconsiderable people; they had doubtless been *wasted*, as the text says, though by what means does not appear from history. On the other hand, it may be observed that the Midianites mentioned here lived close to the Dead Sea, at a great distance from the Midian where Jethro lived, which was near Horeb. Perhaps they were a colony or tribe that had migrated from the vicinity of Mount Sinai. It seems that at this time the *Kenites* occupied a very strong position: *Strong is thy dwelling place, and thou puttest thy nest in a rock*; where there is a play on the original word **ִּיֻֿק**, which signifies both a Kenite and a nest. High rocks in these countries were generally used as their strong places.

**Verse 22. Until Asshur shall carry thee away captive.]** The Assyrians and Babylonians who carried away captive the ten tribes, <sup><12176></sup>**2 Kings 17:6**, and the Jews into Babylon, <sup><12271></sup>**2 Kings 25:1, 11**, probably carried away the Kenites also. Indeed this seems pretty evident, as we find some Kenites mentioned among the Jews after their return from the Babylonish captivity, <sup><13255></sup>**1 Chronicles 2:55**.

**Verse 23. Who shall live when God doeth this!]** There are two senses in which these words may be taken: -1. That the event is so distant that none then alive could possibly live to see it. 2. That the times would be so distressing and desolating that scarcely any should be able to escape. The words are very similar to those of our Lord, and probably are to be taken in the same sense: “Wo to them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days.”

**Verse 24. Ships shall come from the coast of Chittim]** Some think by Chittim the Romans, others the Macedonians under Alexander the Great, are meant. It is certain that the Romans did conquer the Assyrians, including all the people of Syria, Mesopotamia, &c., but Calmet strongly contends that by Chittim Macedonia is meant, and that the prophecy refers to the conquests of Alexander. Chittim was one of the sons of Javan, the son of Japheth, the son of Noah, <sup><0110></sup>**Genesis 10:4**; and his posterity, according to Josephus, *Antiq.*, l. iii., c. 22, settled in Cilicia, Macedonia, Cyprus, and Italy also; and therefore, says Mr. Ainsworth, the prophecy may imply both the troubles that befell the Assyrians and Jews by the Greeks and Seleucidæ, in the troublous days of Antiochus.

**And shall afflict Eber]** Probably not the Hebrews, as some think, but the people on the other side the Euphrates, from **rb** [ *abar, to pass over, go beyond*; all which people were discomfited, and their empire destroyed by Alexander the Great.

**Verse 25. And Balaam-returned to his place]** Intended to have gone to Mesopotamia, his native country, (see <sup><05234></sup>**Deuteronomy 23:4**;) but seems to have settled among the Midianites, where he was slain by the Israelites; see <sup><05108></sup>**Numbers 31:8**.

THOUGH the notes in the preceding chapters have been extended to a considerable length, yet a few additional remarks may be necessary: the reader's attention is earnestly requested to the following propositions:—

1. It appears sufficiently evident from the preceding account that Balaam knew and worshipped the true God.
2. That he had been a true prophet, and appears to have been in the habit of receiving oracles from God.
3. That he practised some illicit branches of knowledge, or was reputed by the Moabites as a sorcerer, probably because of the high reputation he had

for wisdom; and we know that even in our own country, in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, persons who excelled their contemporaries in wisdom were reputed as magicians.

4. That though he was a believer in the true God, yet he was covetous; *he loved the wages of unrighteousness.*

5. That it does not appear that in the case before us he *wished* to curse Israel when he found they were the servants of the true God.

6. That it is possible he did not know this at first. Balak told him that there was a numerous people come out of Egypt; and as marauders, wandering hordes, freebooters, &c., were frequent in those days, he might take them at first for such spoilers, and the more readily go at Balak's request to consult God concerning them.

7. That so conscientiously did he act in the whole business, that as soon as he found it displeased God he cheerfully offered to return; and did not advance till he had not only the permission, but the authority of God to proceed.

8. That when he came in view of the Israelitish camp he did not attempt to make use of any means of sorcery, evocation of spirits, necromantic spells, &c., to accomplish the wish of Balak.

9. That he did seek to find out the will of the true God, by using *those means* which God himself had prescribed, viz., supplication and prayer, and the sacrifice of the clean beasts.

10. That though he knew it would greatly displease Balak, yet he most faithfully and firmly told him all that God said on every occasion.

11. That notwithstanding his allowed covetous disposition, yet he refused all promised honours and proffered rewards, even of the most extensive kind, to induce him to act in any respect contrary to the declared will of God.

12. That God on this occasion communicated to him some of the most extraordinary prophetic influences ever conferred on man.

13. That his prophecies are, upon the whole, clear and pointed, and have been fulfilled in the most remarkable manner, and furnish a very strong argument in proof of Divine revelation.

14. That notwithstanding the wicked counsel given to the Midianites, the effects of which are mentioned in the following chapter, on which account he probably lost his life, (<sup><0310></sup>**Numbers 31:8**.) the badness of this man's character has been very far overrated; and that it does not appear that he was either a *hypocrite*, *false prophet*, or a *sorcerer* in the common acceptation of the term, and that he risked even life itself in following and fulfilling the will of the Lord!

15. That though it is expressly asserted, (<sup><0316></sup>**Numbers 31:16**, and <sup><0214></sup>**Revelation 2:14**, that Israel's committing whoredom with the daughters of Moab was brought about by the evil counsel given by Balaam to cast this stumbling-block in their way, yet it does not appear from the text that he had those most criminal intentions which are generally attributed to him; for as we have already seen so much good in this man's character, and that this, and his love of money (and who thinks this a *sin*?) are almost the only blots in it, it must certainly be consistent with candour and charity to suggest a method of removing at least some part of this blame.

16. I would therefore simply say that the counsel given by Balaam to Balak might have been "to form alliances with this people, especially through the medium of *matrimonial connections*; and seeing they could not conquer them, to endeavour to make them their *friends*." Now, though this might not be designed by Balaam to bring them into a snare, yet it was a bad doctrine, as it led to the corruption of the holy seed, and to an unequal yoking with unbelievers; which, though even in a *matrimonial* way, is as contrary to sound policy as to the word of God. **See Clarke's notes on** "<sup><0253></sup>**Numbers 25:3**" and "<sup><0256></sup>**Numbers 25:6**".

17. That it was the Moabitish women, not Balaam, that called the people to the sacrifice of their gods; and it argued great degeneracy and iniquity in the hearts of the people on so slight an invitation to join so suddenly so impure a worship, and so speedily to cast off the whole form of godliness, with every portion of the fear of the Almighty; therefore the high blame rests ultimately with themselves.



## NUMBERS

## CHAPTER 25

*While Israel abode in Shittim the people commit whoredom with the daughters of Moab, 1. They become idolaters, 2. The anger of the Lord is kindled against them, and he commands the ringleaders to be hanged, 3, 4. Moses causes the judges to slay the transgressors, 5. Zimri, one of the Israelitish princes of the tribe of Simeon, brings a Midianitish princess, named Cozbi, into his tent, while the people are deploring their iniquity before the tabernacle, 6. Phinehas, the son of Eleazar, incensed by this insult to the laws and worship of God, runs after them and pierces them both with a javelin, 7, 8. Twenty-four thousand die of the plague, sent as a punishment for their iniquity, 9. The Lord grants to Phinehas a covenant of peace and an everlasting priesthood, 10-13. The name and quality of the Israelitish man and Midianitish woman, 14, 15. God commands the Israelites to vex and smite the Midianites, who had seduced them to the worship of Baal-peor, 16-18.*

## NOTES ON CHAP. 25

**Verse 3. Israel joined himself unto Baal-peor]** The same as the Priapus of the Romans, and worshipped with the same obscene rites as we have frequently had occasion to remark.

The *joining to Baal-peor*, mentioned here, was probably what St. Paul had in view when he said, <sup><ref064></sup>**2 Corinthians 6:14:** *Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers.* And this joining, though done even in a matrimonial way, was nevertheless *fornication*, (see <sup><ref024></sup>**Revelation 2:14.**) as no marriage between an Israelite and a Midianite could be legitimate, according to the law of God. See the propositions at the close of the preceding chapter.

**Verse 4. Take all the heads of the people, &c.]** Meaning the chiefs of those who had transgressed; as if he had said, “Assemble the chiefs and judges, institute an inquiry concerning the transgressors, and hang them who shall be found guilty *before the Lord*, as a matter required by his justice.” *Against the sun*-in the most public manner, and in daylight.

Dr. Kennicott has remarked that the Samaritan and Hebrew texts must be both taken together, to make the sense here complete: And the Lord said unto Moses, SPEAK unto *all* the heads of the people; AND LET THEM SLAY

THE MEN THAT WERE JOINED TO BAAL-PEOR; *and hang them up before the Lord against the sun, &c.*

**Verse 5. Slay ye every one his men]** In the different departments where you preside over *thousands, hundreds, fifties, and tens*, slay all the *culprits* that shall be found.

**Verse 6. One of the children of Israel]** *Zimri*, the son of *Salu*, a prince of a chief family in the tribe of *Simeon*, <sup><02514></sup> **Numbers 25:14**, brought a *Midianitish woman, Cozbi*, daughter of *Zur*, head over a people of one of the chief families in Midian, <sup><02515></sup> **Numbers 25:15**. The *condition* of these two persons plainly proves it to have been a *matrimonial* alliance, the one was a *prince*, the other a *princess*; therefore I must conclude that fornication or whoredom, in the common sense of the word, was not practised on this occasion. The matter was bad enough, as the marriage was in flat opposition to the law of God; and we need not make it worse by representing the woman as a common prostitute, as the *Vulgate* and several others have done. In such a case this is absolutely inadmissible. Josephus positively says that *Zimri* had married *Cozbi*, *Antiq.*, 1. iv., cap. 6; and if he had not said so, still the thing is nearly self-evident. See **Clarke** “<sup><025></sup> **Numbers 24:25**”.

**The children of Israel, who were weeping]** This aggravated the crime, because the people were then in a state of great humiliation, because of the late impure and illegal transactions.

**Verse 8. Thrust both of them through]** Inspired undoubtedly by the Spirit of the God of justice to do this act, which can never be a *precedent* on any common occasion. An act something similar occurs in our own history. In 1381, in the minority of Richard II., a most formidable insurrection took place in Kent and Essex; about 100,000 men, chiefly under the direction of *Wat Tyler*, seized on London, massacred multitudes of innocent people, and were proceeding to the greatest enormities, when the king requiring a conference in Smithfield with the rebel leader, Sir *William Walworth*, then mayor of London, provoked at the insolence with which *Tyler behaved* to his sovereign, knocked him off his horse with his mace, after which he was instantly despatched. While his partisans were bending their bows to revenge the death of their leader, Richard, then only *sixteen* years of age, rode up to them, and with great courage and presence of mind thus addressed them: “What, my people, will you kill your king! be not concerned for the death of your leader; follow me, and I will be your

general.” They were suddenly appeased, and the rebellion terminated. The action of Sir William Walworth was that of a *zealot*, of essential benefit at the time, and justified only by the pressing exigencies of the case.

**Verse 9. Those that died-were twenty and four thousand.]** St. Paul, <sup><6108></sup>**1 Corinthians 10:8**, reckons only *twenty-three* thousand; though some MSS. and versions, particularly the latter *Syriac* and the *Armenian*, have *twenty-four* thousand, with the Hebrew text. Allowing the 24,000 to be the genuine reading, and none of the Hebrew MSS. exhibit any various reading here, the two places may be reconciled thus: 1,000 men were slain in consequence of the examination instituted <sup><02504></sup>**Numbers 25:4**, and 23,000 in consequence of the orders given <sup><02515></sup>**Numbers 25:5**; making 24,000 in the whole. St. Paul probably refers only to the latter number.

**Verses 12. - 13. My covenant of peace-of an everlasting priesthood]** As the word *peace* implied all kinds of blessings, both spiritual and temporal, it may mean no more here than the promise of God, to grant him and his family the *utmost prosperity* in reference to *both worlds*. The *everlasting priesthood* refers properly to the *priesthood of Christ* which was shadowed out by the priesthood under the law; no matter in what family it was continued. Therefore the ׀ל װ[ תנחך *kehunnath olam*, or *eternal priesthood*, does not merely refer to any sacerdotal ministrations which should be continued in the family of Phinehas, during the Mosaic dispensation, but to that priesthood of Christ typified by that of Aaron and his successors. The priesthood alone is everlasting, and a covenant or grant of that was made to Phinehas, and his descendants. The Jews reckon twelve high priests of the race of Phinehas, from this time to the days of Solomon, nine more from that time to the captivity, (see <sup><13004></sup>**1 Chronicles 6:4, 15**.) and fifteen from their return to the time of *Antiochus Eupator*, the last of whom was Onias, slain by Lysias. Ezra, the great priest and scribe, was of this line, <sup><13701></sup>**Ezra 7:1, 5**. The family of Ithamar, uncle of Phinehas, had the priesthood for about 150 years; but it was restored to the family of Phinehas in the person of *Zadok* the priest, <sup><13751></sup>**1 Chronicles 6:50**, in which it continued in the whole about 950 years. Probably the *Maccabees* were of the same family; but though this is not certain, there is no evidence against it. See *Calmet*. God therefore sufficiently fulfilled his promise; he gave to him and his descendants almost the *utmost temporal* length that could be given of *that* priesthood which is, in its own nature, eternal. Here then the

word  $\mu\lambda$  w[ *olam* means, not a limited time, but what is eternal in its duration. See Clarke's note on "<sup><02133></sup>Genesis 21:33".

**Verse 17. Vex the Midianites, &c.]** See this order fulfilled, <sup><0310></sup>**Numbers 31:1-20**. Twelve thousand Israelites attacked the Midianites, destroyed all their cities, slew their five kings, every male, and every grown up woman, and took all their spoils.

## NUMBERS

## CHAPTER 26

*Moses and Eleazar are commanded to take the sum of the Israelites, in the plains of Moab, 1-4. Reuben and his posterity, 43,730, ver. 5-11. Simeon and his posterity, 22,200, ver. 12-14. Gad and his posterity, 40,500, ver. 15-18. Judah and his posterity, 76,500, ver. 19-22. Issachar and his posterity, 64,300, ver. 23-25. Zebulun and his posterity, 60,500, ver. 26, 27. Manasseh and his posterity, 52,700, ver. 28-34. Ephraim and his posterity, 32,500, ver. 35-37. Benjamin and his posterity, 45,600, ver. 38-41. Dan and his posterity, 64,400, ver. 42, 43. Asher and his posterity, 53,400, ver. 44-47. Naphtali and his posterity, 45,400, ver. 48-50. Total amount of the twelve tribes, 601,730, ver. 51. The land is to be divided by lot, and how, 52-56. The Levites and their families, 57, 58. Their genealogy, 59-61. Their number, 23,000, ver. 62. In this census or enumeration not one man was found, save Joshua and Caleb, of all who had been reckoned 38 years before, the rest having died in the wilderness, 63-65.*

## NOTES ON CHAP. 26

**Verse 2. Take the sum of all the congregation]** After thirty-eight years God commands a *second census* of the Israelites to be made, to preserve the distinction in families, and to regulate the tribes previously to their entry into the promised land, and to ascertain the proportion of land which should be allowed to each tribe. For though the whole was divided by *lot*, yet the portions were so disposed that a numerous tribe did not draw where the lots assigned small inheritances. See <sup><0163></sup>Numbers 26:53-56, and also see Clarke's note on "<sup><0101></sup>Numbers 1:1".

**Verse 10. Together with Korah]** The Samaritan text does not intimate that Korah was *swallowed up*, but that he was *burnt*, as appears in fact to have been the case. *And the earth swallowed them up, what time that company died; and the fire devoured Korah with the two hundred and fifty men, who became a sign.*

**Verse 11. The children of Korah died not.]** It is difficult to reconcile this place with <sup><0167></sup>Numbers 16:27, 31-33, where it seems to be intimated that not only the *men*, but the *wives*, and the *sons*, and the *little ones* of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, were swallowed up by the earthquake; see especially <sup><0167></sup>Numbers 16:27, collated with <sup><0163></sup>Numbers 16:33. But the text here

expressly says, *The children of Korah died not; and on a close inspection of <sup><04162></sup>Numbers 16:27 of the above-mentioned chapter, we shall find that the sons and the little ones of Dathan and Abiram alone are mentioned. So they gat up from the tabernacle of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, on every side: and Dathan and Abiram came out-and their wives, and their sons, and their little ones. Here is no mention of the children of Korah, they therefore escaped, while it appears those of Dathan and Abiram perished with their fathers. See Clarke's note on <sup><04163></sup>Numbers 16:30".*

**Verse 51.** These were the numbered of the children of Israel, six hundred thousand and a thousand seven hundred and thirty.] The following comparative statement will show how much some of the tribes had *increased*, and others had *diminished*, since the enumeration in <sup><04102></sup>Numbers 1:2, &c.

	Now	Before		
Reuben	43,730	46,500	2,770	<i>decrease</i>
Simeon	22,200	59,300	37,100	<i>decrease</i>
Gad	40,500	45,650	5,150	<i>decrease</i>
Judah	76,500	74,600	1,900	<i>increase</i>
Issachar	64,300	54,400	9,900	<i>increase</i>
Zebulun	60,500	57,400	3,100	<i>increase</i>
Manasseh	52,700	32,200	20,500	<i>increase</i>
Ephraim	32,500	40,500	8,000	<i>decrease</i>
Benjamin	45,600	35,400	10,200	<i>increase</i>
Dan	64,400	62,700	1,700	<i>increase</i>
Asher	53,400	41,500	11,900	<i>increase</i>
Naphtali	45,400	53,400	8,000	<i>decrease</i>
	————	————	————	
Total	601,730	603,550	1,820	<i>decrease on the whole, in 38 years.</i>
<i>Decrease in all, 61,020.</i>			<i>Increase in all, 59,200.</i>	

Let it be observed, 1. That among these there was not a man of the former census, save Joshua and Caleb, see <sup><04264></sup>Numbers 26:64, 65. 2. That

though there was an *increase* in seven tribes of not less than 74,800 men, yet so great was the *decrease* in the other *five* tribes, that the balance against the present census is 1,820, as appears above: thus we find that there was an increase of 601,728 from 603,550 in the space of thirty-eight years.

Notwithstanding the amazing increase in some and decrease in other tribes, the same sort of proportion is preserved in the *east, west, north, and south* divisions, as before; so as to keep the division of *Judah*, which was always in the *front* or *van*, the largest; and the division of *Dan*, which was always in the *rear*, the next in number. But it is worthy of remark that as they are now, properly speaking, to commence their grand military operations, so their *front*, or *advanced division*, is increased from 186,400 to 201,300; and their *rear* from 157,600 to 163,200. The *first* division is strengthened 14,900 men, and the *last* division 5,600 men. The reasons for this are sufficiently obvious.

Mr. *Ainsworth* has a curious remark on the number of families in the 12 tribes. “Here are families

1.	Of Manasseh	8
2.	Of Benjamin	7
3.	Of Gad	7
4.	Of Simeon	5
5.	Of Judah	5
6.	Of Asher	5
7.	Of Reuben	4
8.	Of Issachar	4
9.	Of Ephraim	4
10.	Of Naphtali	4
11.	Of Zebulun	3
12.	Of Dan	1

“In all 57; to whom if we add the 12 *patriarchs*, and *Jacob* their father, the whole number is 70, the exact number of the souls in Jacob’s house that went down to Egypt, <sup><014627></sup> **Genesis 46:27.**” In a variety of things in this ancient economy there is a most surprising *proportion* kept up, which never could have been a fortuitous effect of general causes. But

*proportion, harmony, and order* distinguish all the works of God, both in the *natural* and *moral* world.

**Verse 55. The land shall be divided by lot]** The word *l rwg goral*, translated *lot*, is supposed by some to signify the *stone* or *pebble* formerly used for the purpose of what we term *casting lots*. The word [Anglo-Saxon] *hlot* is Anglo-Saxon, from [Anglo-Saxon] to *divide*, or *portion out*, i.e., fortuitously: it answers to the Greek *κληρος*, which some think comes from *κλαω* to *break*; because the lot, being a sort of appeal to God, (“The lot is cast into the lap, but the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord,” <sup><0163></sup>**Proverbs 16:33**,) *broke* off all contentions and litigations relative to the matter in dispute. From this original division of the promised land by *lot* to the children of Israel, all *portions, appointments, offices, shares, or divisions* in spiritual and ecclesiastical matters, were termed *lots*. So in the New Testament, the word *κληρος*, *lot*, is used to signify a *portion of spiritual blessedness*, and *κληρονομια*, a *division by lot*, an *inheritance*; and *κληροι*, the *lotted* or *appointed persons* to different works, shares, &c.; hence our word *clergy*, *κληροι*, *persons appointed by lot* to a lot, portion, or inheritance; see the case of Matthias, <sup><0126></sup>**Acts 1:26**. Persons thus appointed were by accommodation termed *inheritors*, because originally, when there could be no *claims* of exclusive *right*, all lands where a wandering tribe chose to take up its residence were divided by lot, as the promised land in the case before us. So Judah says to Simeon his brother, <sup><0103></sup>**Judges 1:3**: “Come up with me into my *lot*.” And as God was ever supposed to be the whole disposer in such matters, whatever *fell out* in the course of God’s *providence* was called a *lot*. “This is the *lot* of them that rob us;” <sup><0174></sup>**Isaiah 17:14**. “Thou hast neither part nor *lot* in this matter;” <sup><0421></sup>**Acts 8:21**. A *lot* in the promised *land* was evidently *typical* of a *place* in *eternal glory*. “That they may receive forgiveness of sins, and an inheritance (*κληρον*, a *lot*) among them that are sanctified;” <sup><0518></sup>**Acts 26:18**. “Who hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance, *κληρον*, of the *lot*) of the saints in light;” <sup><0112></sup>**Colossians 1:12**. “Which is the earnest of our inheritance, (*κληρονομιας*, of our *allotted portion*;)” <sup><0104></sup>**Ephesians 1:4**. “What is the riches of the glory of his inheritance,” (*κληρονομιας*, *allotted portion*;)” <sup><0118></sup>**Ephesians 1:18**. As therefore the promised land was divided by lot to the believing Israelites, God determining the lot as he saw good, none of the people having any *claim* on or *right* to it; so the kingdom of heaven is a *lot* given by the mere good will of God to them that believe and obey him; for as unbelief and



disobedience threw 600,000 people out of the inheritance of the promised land; so none who disbelieve God's word, and rebel against his authority, shall ever enter into the kingdom of heaven.-See *Ainsworth*. These things happened unto them for examples: see then, reader, that thou fall not after the same example of unbelief.

## NUMBERS

## CHAPTER 27

*The daughters of Zelophehad claim their inheritance, 1-4. Moses brings their case before the Lord, 5. He allows their claim, 6, 7; and a law is made to regulate the inheritance of daughters, 8-11. Moses is commanded to go up to Mount Abarim, and view the promised land, 12; is apprised of his death, 13; and because he did not sanctify God at the waters of Meribah, he shall not enter into it, 14. Moses requests the Lord to appoint a person to supply his place as leader of th Israelites, 15-17. God appoints a Joshua, commands Moses to lay his hands upon him, to set him before Eleazar the priest, and give him a charge in the sight of the people, 18-20. Eleazar shall ask counsel for him by Urim, and at his command shall the Israelites go out and come in, 21. Moses does as the Lord commanded him, and consecrates Joshua, 22, 23.*

## NOTES ON CHAP. 27

**Verse 1. The daughters of Zelophehad]** The singular case of these women caused an additional law to be made to the civil code of Israel, which satisfactorily ascertained and amply secured the right of succession in cases of inheritance. The law, which is as reasonable as it is just, stands thus: 1. On the demise of the *father* the estate goes to the *sons*; 2. If there be no *son*, the *daughters* succeed; 3. If there be no *daughter*, the *brothers* of the deceased inherit; 4. If there be no *brethren* or paternal *uncles*, the estate goes to the *brothers* of his *father*; 5. If there be no *grand uncles* or *brothers* of the *father* of the deceased, then the *nearest akin* succeeds to the inheritance. Beyond the *fifth* degree the law does not proceed, because as the families of the Israelites were kept distinct in their respective tribes, there must always be some who could be called *kinsmen*, and were really such, having descended without interruption from the patriarch of the tribe.

**Verse 7. Thou shalt surely give them-an inheritance among their father's brethren]** There is a curious anomaly here in the Hebrew text which cannot be seen in our translation. In Hebrew *they*, *them*, and *their*, *you*, *ye*, and *your*, are both of the masculine and feminine genders, according as the nouns are to which they are affixed; but these words are of no gender in English. In this verse, speaking of the brethren of the father of those women, the *masculine* termination  $\mu h$  *hem*, THEIR, is used instead of the *feminine*,  $\hat{h}$  *hen*, governed by  $twnb$  *benoth*, daughters. So  $\mu hl$

*lahem*, to THEM, and **phyba** *abihem*, THEIR *fathers*, masculine, are found in the present text, instead of **hl** *lahen* and **hyba** *abihen*, *feminine*.

Interpreters have sought for a *hidden* meaning *here*, and they have found several, whether *hidden here* or not. One says, “the *masculine* gender is used because these daughters are treated as if they were *heirs male*.” Another, “that it is because of their *faith* and conscientious regard to the ancient customs, and to keep the memory of their father in being, which might well benefit *men*.” Another, “that it signifies the free gift of God in Christ, where there is neither *male* nor *female*, *bond* or *free*, for all are one in Christ;” and so on, for where there is no rule there is no end to conjecture. Now the plain truth is, that the masculine is in the present printed text a mistake for the feminine. The *Samaritan*, which many think by far the most authentic copy of the Pentateuch, has the *feminine* gender in both places; so also have upwards of *fourscore* of the MSS. collated by *Kennicott* and *Deuteronomy Rossi*. Therefore all the curious reasons for this anomaly offered by interpreters are only serious trifling on the blunder of some heedless copyists.

While on the subject of mysterious reasons and meanings, some might think it unpardonable if I passed by the mystery of the *fall*, *recovery*, and *full salvation* of man, signified, as some will have it, by the *names* of Zelophehad and his daughters. “1. Zelophehad’s daughters, claiming a portion in the promised land, may represent believers in Christ claiming an inheritance among the saints in light. 2. These five virgins may be considered as the *five wise virgins*, (**Matthew 25:1-10**), who took oil in their vessels with their lamps, and consequently are types of those who make a wise provision for their eternal state. 3. They are examples of encouragement to weak and *destitute* believers, who, though they are *orphans* in this world, shall not be deprived of their heavenly inheritance. 4. Their *names* are mysterious; for *Zelophehad*, **dj pl x** TSELOPHCHAD, signifies the *shadow of fear* or *dread*. His first daughter, **hl j m** MACHLAH, *infirmity*; the second, **h[n** NOAH, *wandering*; the third, **hl gj** CHOGLAH, *turning about* or *dancing* for joy: the fourth, **hkl m** MILCAH, a *queen*; the fifth, **hxr t** TIRTSAH, *well-pleasing* or *acceptable*. By these names we may observe our reviving by grace in Christ; for we are all born of the *shadow of fear*, (*Tselophchad*), being brought forth in sin, and through fear of death being all our life time subject to bondage, **Hebrews 2:15**. This begets (*Machlah*) *infirmity* or *sickness-grief* of

heart for our estate. After which (*Noah*) wandering about for help and comfort we find it in Christ, by whom our sorrow is turned into *joy* (*Choglah*.) He communicates of his *royalty* (*Milcah*) to us, making us *kings* and priests unto God and his Father, <sup><6006></sup>**Revelation 1:6**. So we shall at last be presented unto him glorious and without blemish, being (*Tirtsah*) *well-pleasing* and *acceptable* in his sight.” This is a specimen of *pious* **INGENUITY**, which has been endeavouring to do *the work of an* **EVANGELIST** in the Church of God from the time of Origen to the present day.

**Verse 12. Get thee up into this Mount Abarim]** The mountain which Moses was commanded to ascend was certainly Mount *Nebo*, see <sup><6349></sup>**Deuteronomy 32:49**, &c., which was the same as *Pisgah*, see <sup><6340></sup>**Deuteronomy 34:1**. The mountains of *Abarim*, according to Dr. Shaw, are a long ridge of frightful, rocky, precipitous hills, which are continued all along the eastern coast of the Dead Sea, as far as the eye can reach. As in Hebrew **rb** [*abar* signifies to *pass over*, *Abarim* here probably signifies *passages*; and the ridge in this place had its name in all likelihood from the *passage* of the Israelites, as it was opposite to these that they passed the Jordan into the promised land.

**Verse 14. Ye rebelled against my commandment]** See Clarke’s notes on <sup><4012></sup>“**Numbers 20:12**”.

**Verse 16. The Lord, the God of the spirits of all flesh]** See Clarke’s notes on <sup><4162></sup>“**Numbers 16:22**”.

**Verse 17. That the congregation of the Lord be not as sheep which have no shepherd.]** This is a beautiful expression, and shows us in what light Moses viewed himself among his people. He was their *shepherd*; he sought no higher place; he *fed* and *guided* the flock of God under the direction of the Divine Spirit, and was faithful in all his Master’s house. To this saying of Moses our Lord alludes, <sup><4936></sup>**Matthew 9:36**.

**Verse 18. In whom is the spirit]** This must certainly mean the *Spirit of God*; and because he was endued with this Spirit, therefore he was capable of leading the people. How miserably qualified is that man for the work of God who is not guided and influenced by the Holy Ghost! God never chooses a man to accomplish his designs but that one whom he himself has qualified for the work.

**Verse 20. And thou shalt put, &c.]** *Ēdwlj m mechodecha*, of *thine honour* or *authority* upon him. Thou shalt show to the whole congregation that thou hast *associated* him with thyself in the government of the people.

**Verse 21. Eleazar the priest-shall ask counsel for him]** Here was a remarkable difference between *him* and *Moses*. God talked with *Moses* face to face; but to *Joshua* only through the *medium* of the high priest.

**Verse 23. He laid his hands upon him]** As a proof of his being appointed to and qualified for the work. So at the word of *Joshua* they were to *go out*, and at his word to *come in*, <sup><02721></sup>**Numbers 27:21**. And thus he was a type of our blessed Lord as to his mediatorial office, and Divine appointment as *man* to the work of our salvation; and to this circumstance of the appointment of *Joshua* to this work, and his receiving of *Moses*'s honour and glory, St. Peter seems to refer in these words, <sup><60116></sup>**2 Peter 1:16, 17**: "We were eye-witnesses of his majesty; for he received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory: This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; HEAR HIM." See <sup><01705></sup>**Matthew 17:5**. But one infinitely greater than either *Moses* or *Joshua* is here.

## NUMBERS

## CHAPTER 28

*All the offerings of God to be offered in their due season, 1, 2. The continual burnt-offering for the morning, 3-6; and its drink-offering, 7. The continual burnt-offering for the evening, 8. The offerings for the Sabbath, 9, 10. The offerings for the beginning of each month, 11-15. Repetition of the ordinances concerning the passover, 16-25. Ordinances concerning the day of first-fruits or pentecost, 26-31.*

## NOTES ON CHAP. 28

**Verse 2. Command the children of Israel, &c.]** It is not easy to account for the reason of the introduction of these precepts here, which had been so circumstantially delivered before in different parts of the books of Exodus and Leviticus . It is possible that the *daily, weekly, monthly, and yearly* services had been considerably interrupted for several years, owing to the unsettled state of the people in the wilderness, and that it was necessary to *repeat* these laws for two reasons: 1. Because they were now about to enter into the promised land, where these services must be established and constant. 2. Because the former generations being all dead, multitudes of the present might be ignorant of these ordinances.

**In their due season]** Moses divides these offerings into:—

1. DAILY. The *morning* and *evening* sacrifices: *a lamb* each time, <sup><0428:3></sup>**Numbers 28:3, 4.**
2. WEEKLY. The *Sabbath* offerings, *two lambs* of a year old, <sup><0428:9></sup>**Numbers 28:9, &c.**
3. MONTHLY. At the beginning of each month *two young bullocks, one ram, and seven lambs* of a year old, and a *kid* for a sin-offering, <sup><0428:11></sup>**Numbers 28:11, &c.**
4. ANNUAL. 1. The passover to last seven days; the offerings, *two young bullocks, one ram, seven lambs* of a year old, and a *he-goat* for a sin-offering, <sup><0428:16></sup>**Numbers 28:16, &c.** 2. The day of FIRST-FRUITS. The sacrifices, the same as on the beginning of the month, <sup><0428:26></sup>**Numbers 28:26, &c.** With these sacrifices were offered *libations, or drink-offerings of*

*strong wine*, <sup><042307></sup>**Numbers 28:7, 14**, and *minchahs*, or *meat-offerings*, composed of *fine flour* mingled with *oil*, <sup><042308></sup>**Numbers 28:8, 12**, &c. For an ample account of all these offerings, see **Clarke's notes on** <sup><080738></sup>**Leviticus 7:38** and <sup><011101></sup>**Exodus 12:1-51**.

**Verse 7. Strong wine]** *Sikera*; see **Clarke's note on** <sup><081009></sup>**Leviticus 10:9**, where this is largely explained.

**Verse 26. Day of the first-fruits]** Called also the feast of weeks, and the feast of pentecost. See it explained, **Clarke** <sup><02314></sup>**Exodus 23:14**, and <sup><02315></sup>**Leviticus 23:15**.

**Verse 31. Without blemish]** This is to be understood as applying, not only to the animals, but also to the *flour*, *wine*, and *oil*; every thing must be *perfect* in its *kind*.

## NUMBERS

## CHAPTER 29

*The feast of trumpets on the first day of the seventh month, and its sacrifices, 1-6. The feast of expiation, or annual atonement, on the tenth day of the same month, with its sacrifices, 7-11. The feast of tabernacles, held on the fifteenth day of the same month, with its eight days' offerings, 12. The offerings of the first day, thirteen bullocks, two rams, fourteen lambs, and one kid, 13-16. The offerings of the second day, twelve bullocks, two rams, fourteen lambs, and one kid, 17-19. The offerings of the third day, eleven bullocks; the rest as before, 20-22. The offerings of the fourth day, ten bullocks; the rest as before, 23-25. The offerings of the fifth day, nine bullocks, &c., 26-28. The offerings of the sixth day, eight bullocks, &c., 29-31. The offerings of the seventh day, seven bullocks, &c., 32-34. The offerings of the eighth day, one bullock, one ram, seven lambs, and one goat, 35-38. These sacrifices to be offered, and feasts to be kept, besides vows, freewill-offerings, &c., &c., 39. Moses announces all these things to the people, 40.*

## NOTES ON CHAP. 29

**Verse 1. And in the seventh month, &c.]** This was the beginning of their civil year, and was a time of great festivity, and was ushered in by the blowing of trumpets. It answers to a part of our September. In imitation of the Jews different nations began their new year with sacrifices and festivity. The ancient Egyptians did so; and the *Persians* still celebrate their [Persian] *nawi rooz*, or *new year's day*, which they hold on the vernal equinox. The first day of the year is generally a time of festivity in all civilized nations. On this day the Israelites offered *one young bullock, one ram, seven lambs*, and a *kid*, for a sin-offering, besides *minchahs* or *meat-offerings*.

**Verse 7. On the tenth day]** See Clarke's notes on "<sup>(1629)</sup>Leviticus 16:29"; and "<sup>(1224)</sup>Leviticus 23:24".

**Verse 12. On the fifteenth day of the seventh month]** On this day there was to be a solemn assembly, and for *seven* days sacrifices were to be offered; on the *first* day thirteen young bullocks, two rams, and fourteen lambs. On each succeeding day one bullock *less*, till on the seventh day there were only *seven*, making in all *seventy*. What an expensive service! How should we magnify God for being delivered from it! Yet these were



all the taxes they had to pay. At the public charge there were annually offered to God, independently of trespass-offerings and voluntary vows, fifteen goats, twenty-one kids, seventy-two rams, one hundred and thirty-two bullocks, and eleven hundred and one lambs! But how little is all this when compared with the lambs slain every year at the *passover*, which amounted in one year to the immense number of 255,600 slain in the temple itself, which was the answer that *Cestius*, the Roman general, received when he asked the priests *how many persons* had come to Jerusalem at their annual festivals; the priests, numbering the *people* by the *lambs* that had been slain, said, “twenty-five myriads, five thousand and six hundred.”-For an account of the feast of tabernacles, see **Clarke on** “~~<R234>~~**Leviticus 23:34**”.

**Verse 35. On the eighth day ye shall have a solemn assembly]** This among the Jews was esteemed the chief or high day of the feast, though fewer sacrifices were offered on it than on the others; the people seem to have finished the solemnity with a greater measure of spiritual devotion, and it was on this day of the feast that our blessed Lord called the Jews from the *letter* to the *spirit* of the law, proposing himself as the sole fountain whence they could derive the streams of salvation, ~~<R375>~~**John 7:37**. On the subject of this chapter see the notes on Lev. 12., 16. and 23.

## NUMBERS

## CHAPTER 30

*The law concerning vows of men, 1, 2. Of women under age, and in what cases the father may annul them, 3-5. The vows of a wife, and in what cases the husband may annul them, 6-8. The vows of a widow, or divorced woman, in what cases they may be considered either as confirmed or annulled, 9-15. Recapitulation of these ordinances, 16.*

## NOTES ON CHAP. 30

**Verse 2. If a man vow a vow]** A *vow* is a religious promise made to God. Vows were of several kinds:—

1. Of *abstinence* or *humiliation*, see ver. <sup><04013></sup>**Numbers 30:13**;
2. Of the *Nazarite*, see <sup><04016></sup>**Numbers 6:1-21**;
3. Of *giving certain things* or *sacrifices* to the Lord, <sup><03716></sup>**Leviticus 7:16**;
4. Of *alms* given to the *poor*, see <sup><02201></sup>**Deuteronomy 23:21**.

The law in this chapter must have been very useful, as it both *prevented* and *annulled rash vows*, and provided a proper sanction for the support and performance of those that were rationally and piously made. Besides, this law must have acted as a great preventive of *lying* and *hypocrisy*. If a vow was properly made, a man or woman was bound, under penalty of the displeasure of God, to fulfil it.

**Verse 3. In her youth]** That is, say the rabbins, under *twelve* years of age; and under *thirteen* in case of a *young man*. Young persons of this age were considered to be under the authority of their parents, and had consequently no power to vow away the property of another. A *married woman* was in the same circumstances, because she was under the *authority* of her *husband*. If however the *parents* or the *husband* heard of the vow, and objected to it in the *same day in which they heard of it*, (<sup><03715></sup>**Numbers 30:5**.) then the vow was annulled; or, if having heard of it, they held their peace, this was considered a ratification of the vow.

A *rash vow* was never to be kept; “for,” says Philo, and common sense and justice say the same, “he who commits an unjust action because of his vow

adds one crime to another, 1. By making an unlawful *vow*; 2. By doing an unlawful *action*.”

**Verse 12. Concerning the bond of her soul]** Her life is at stake if she fulfil not the obligation under which she has laid herself.

**Verse 16. These are the statutes]** It is very probable that this law, like that concerning the succession of *daughters*, (<sup><042705></sup>**Numbers 27:1-11**,) rose from the exigency of some particular case that had just then occurred.

Making vows, in almost any case, is a dangerous business; they seldom do any good, and often much evil. He who does not feel himself bound to do what is *fit*, *right*, and *just*, from the standing testimony of God’s word, is not likely to do it from any obligation he may lay upon *his own* conscience. If God’s *word* lack weight with him, his own will prove lighter than vanity. Every man who professes the Christian religion is under the most *solemn obligation* to devote body, soul, and spirit to God, not only to the utmost extent of his powers, but also as long as he exists. Being *baptized*, and receiving the *sacrament* of the Lord’s Supper, are additional ratifications of the great, general, Christian vow; but every true follower of Christ should always remember, and frequently renew, his covenant with God.

## NUMBERS

## CHAPTER 31

*The command of the Lord to make war on the Midianites, 1, 2. One thousand men are chosen out of each of the twelve tribes, and sent with Phinehas against the Midianites, 3-6. They slay all the males, 7; their five kings and Balaam, 8. They take all the women captives, with the flocks and goods, 9; burn their cities, and bring away the spoil, 10,11. They bring the captives, &c., to Moses, who is wroth with the officers for sparing the women, who had formerly been the cause of their transgression and punishment, 12-16. He commands all the male children and all the grown up females to be slain, 17, 18. How the soldiers were to purify themselves, 19, 20; and the different articles taken in war, 21-24. They are commanded to take the sum of the prey, to divide it into two parts; one for the 12,000 warriors, and the other for the rest of the congregation, 25-27. One of 500, both of persons and cattle, of the share of the warriors, to be given to the Lord, 28, 29; and one part of fifty, of the people's share, to be given to the Levites, 30. The sum of the prey remaining after the above division; sheep 675,000, beeves 72,000, asses 61,000, young women 32,000, ver. 31-35. How the soldiers' part was divided, 36-40. How the part belonging to the congregation was divided, 41-47. The officers report that they had not lost a man in this war, 48, 49. They bring a voluntary oblation to God, of gold and ornaments, 50, 51; the amount of which was 16,750 shekels, 52, 53. Moses and Eleazar bring the gold into the tabernacle for a memorial, 54.*

## NOTES ON CHAP. 31

**Verse 2. Gathered unto thy people.]** Where? Not in the *grave* surely. Moses was gathered with *none of them*, his burial-place no man ever knew. “But being gathered unto one’s people means dying.” It does *imply* dying, but it does not *mean* this only. The truth is, God considers all those who are *dead to men* in a state of *conscious existence* in another world. Therefore he calls himself the *God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob; now God is not the God of the dead, but of the living*; because all LIVE to HIM, whether *dead to men* or not. Moses therefore was to *be gathered to his people*—to enter into that *republic of Israel* which, having died in the faith, fear, and love of God, were now living in a state of conscious blessedness beyond the confines of the grave. See Clarke’s note on “<sup><0258></sup>Genesis 25:8”, and “<sup><0493></sup>Genesis 49:33”.

**Verse 3. Avenge the Lord of Midian.]** It was God’s *quarrel*, not their *own*, that they were now to take up. These people were idolaters; idolatry

is an offence against GOD; the *civil* power has no authority to meddle with what belongs to Him, without especial directions, certified in the most unequivocal way. Private revenge, extension of territory, love of plunder, were to have no place in this business; the Lord is to be avenged; and through HIM the children of Israel, (<sup><0310></sup>**Numbers 31:2,**) because their *souls* as well as their *bodies* had been well nigh ruined by their idolatry.

**Verse 6. A thousand of every tribe]** Twelve thousand men in the whole. *And Phinehas, the son of Eleazar*; some think he was made general in this expedition, but this is not likely. The ark and its contents must proceed to this battle, because the battle was the Lord's, and he dwelt between the cherubim over the ark; and *Phinehas*, who had before got a grant in the eternal priesthood, was chosen to accompany the ark in place of his father *Eleazar*, who was probably now too far advanced in years to undergo the fatigue. Who then was general? *Joshua*, without doubt, though not here mentioned, because the battle being the Lord's, he alone is to have the supreme direction, and all the glory. Besides, it was an extraordinary war, and not conducted on the common principle, for we do not find that peace was offered to the Midianites, and that they refused it; see

<sup><0310></sup>**Deuteronomy 20:10,** &c. In such a case only hostilities could lawfully commence; but they were sinners against GOD; the cup of their iniquity was full, and God thought proper to destroy them. Though a leader there certainly was, and *Joshua* was probably that leader, yet because God, for the above reason, was considered as *commander-in-chief*, therefore no one else is mentioned; for it is evident that the sole business of *Phinehas* was to take care of the *holy instruments* and to *blow with the trumpet*.

**Verse 8. Balaam-they slew with the sword.]** This man had probably committed what St. John calls *the sin unto death*-a sin which God punishes with temporal death, while at the same time he extends mercy to the soul. See **Clarke's remarks at** "<sup><0325></sup>**Numbers 24:25**".

**Verse 17. Kill every male among the little ones]** For this action I account simply on the principle that God, who is the author and supporter of life, has a right to dispose of it *when* and *how* he thinks proper; and the Judge of all the earth can do nothing but what is *right*. Of the *women* killed on this occasion it may be safely said, their lives were forfeited by their *personal* transgressions; and yet even in this case there can be little doubt that God showed mercy to their souls. The little ones were safely lodged; they were taken to heaven and saved from the evil to come.

**Verse 23. The water of separation]** The *water* in which the *ashes of the red heifer* were mingled; See Clarke “<sup><04807></sup>**Numbers 8:7**”; “<sup><04802></sup>**Numbers 19:2**”, &c. Garments, whether of cloth or skins, were to be *washed*. Gold, silver, brass, iron, tin, and lead, to pass through the *fire*, probably to be *melted* down.

**Verse 28. And levy a tribute unto the Lord-one soul of five hundred, &c.]** The *person* to be employed in the Lord’s service, under the Levites-the *cattle* either for sacrifice, or for the use of the Levites, <sup><04813></sup>**Numbers 31:30**. Some monsters have supposed that *one* out of every *five hundred* of the captives was offered in sacrifice to the Lord! but this is abominable. When God chose to have the life of a man, he took it in the way of *justice*, as in the case of Midianites above, but never in the way of *sacrifice*.

**Verse 32. The booty]** It appears from the enumeration here that the Israelites, in this war against the Midianites, took 32,000 female prisoners, 61,000 asses, 72,000 beeves, 675,000 sheep and small cattle; besides the immense number of *males* who fell in battle, and the *women* and *children* who were slain by the Divine command, <sup><04817></sup>**Numbers 31:17**. And it does not appear that in this expedition, a single man of Israel fell! This was naturally to be expected, because the battle was the Lord’s, <sup><04814></sup>**Numbers 31:49**.

As the booty was divided into two equal parts, <sup><04812></sup>**Numbers 31:22**, one for the *soldiers* employed in the expedition, and the other for *those* who, being equally willing to be employed, were ordered to stay in the camp; so each of the parties in this booty was to give a certain proportion to the Lord. The *soldiers* to give to the Lord *one* out of every *five hundred persons, beeves, asses, and sheep*, <sup><04818></sup>**Numbers 31:28**. The *people*, who by staying at home risked nothing, and had no fatigue, were to give *one* out of *fifty* of the above, <sup><04813></sup>**Numbers 31:30**. The booty, its divisions among the soldiers and people, the proportion given by each to the Lord and to the Levites, will be seen in one view by the following table, which I copy from *Houbigant*.

Total of sheep		} 675,000 }	To the soldiers	337,500	To the <i>Lord</i> from the <i>soldiers</i>	675
		} }	To the people	337,500	To the <i>Levites</i> from the <i>people</i>	6,750
of beeves		} 72,000 }	To the soldiers	36,000	To the <i>Lord</i> from the <i>soldiers</i>	72
		} }	To the people	36,000	To the <i>Levites</i> from the <i>people</i>	720
of asses		} 61,000 }	To the soldiers	30,500	To the <i>Lord</i> from the <i>soldiers</i>	61
		} }	To the people	30,500	To the <i>Levites</i> from the <i>people</i>	610
of persons		} 32,000 }	To the soldiers	16,000	To the <i>Lord</i> from the <i>soldiers</i>	32
		} }	To the people	16,000	To the <i>Levites</i> from the <i>people</i>	320

In this table the booty is equally divided between the people and the soldiers; a five-hundredth part being given to the Lord, and a fiftieth part to the Levites.

**Verse 50. We have-brought an oblation for the Lord]** So it appears there was a great deal of booty taken which did not come into the general account; and of this the soldiers, of their own will, made a very extensive offering to God, because he had preserved them from falling in battle. That not one man should have been slain is a most extraordinary circumstance, and powerfully marks the peculiar superintendence of God's especial providence. The Midianites must certainly have made some resistance; but that was ineffectual, because it was against the Lord. When any nation undertakes a *crusade* against those whom they are pleased to call the *Lord's enemies*, let them bring from the contest this proof of their Divine mission, viz., that not one man of them is either *lost* or *missing*; and then, and *not till then*, shall we believe that God hath sent them.

**To make an atonement for our souls]** That is, to make an acknowledgment to God for the preservation of their *lives*. The gold offered on this occasion amounted to 16,750 shekels, equal to £37,869, 16s. 5d. of our money. See Clarke's note on "<sup>(1253)</sup>Exodus 25:39", where the true value of the shekel is given, and a rule laid down to reduce it to English money.

## NUMBERS

## CHAPTER 32

*The Reubenites and Gadites request Moses to give them their inheritance on this side of Jordan, 1-5. Moses expostulates with and reproves them, 6-15. They explain themselves, and propose conditions, with which Moses is satisfied—they are to build cities for their wives and children, and folds for their cattle, and go over Jordan armed with the other tribes, and fight against their enemies till the land is subdued; after which they are to return, 16-27. Moses proposes the business to Eleazar, Joshua, and the elders, 28-30. The Gadites and Reubenites promise a faithful observance of the conditions, 31, 32; on which Moses assigns to them, and the half tribe of Manasseh, the kingdom of Sihon, king of the Amorites, and the kingdom of Og, king of Bashan, 33. The cities built by the Gadites, 34-36. The cities built by the Reubenites, 37, 38. The children of Machir, the son of Manasseh, expel the Amorites from Gilead, 39, which Moses grants to them, 40. Jair, the son of Manasseh, takes the small towns of Gilead, 41. And Nobah takes Kenath and its villages, 42.*

## NOTES ON CHAP. 32

**Verse 3. Ataroth, and Dibon, &c.]** The places mentioned here belonged to Sihon, king of the Amorites, and Og, king of Bashan, which being conquered by the Israelites, constituted ever after a part of their territories, ~~41233~~ **Numbers 32:33.**

**Verse 5. Let this land be given unto thy servants]** Because it was good for *pasturage*, and they had many *flocks*, ~~41301~~ **Numbers 32:1.**

**Verse 12. Caleb the son of Jephunneh the Kenezite]** It was Jephunneh that was the Kenezite, and not Caleb. Kenaz was probably the *father* of Jephunneh.

**Verse 16. We will build-cities for our little ones]** It was impossible for these, numerous as they might be, to build cities and fortify them for the defence of their families in their absence. Calmet supposes they meant no more than *repairing* the cities of the Amorites which they had lately taken; which work might have been very easily accomplished in the time which they spent on this side of Jordan, before they went over with their brethren, to put them in possession of the land.



**Verse 17. Because of the inhabitants of the land.]** These were the Ammonites, Moabites, Idumeans, and the remains of the Midianites and Amorites. But could the women and children even keep the defenced cities, when placed in them? This certainly cannot be supposed possible. Many of the men of war must of course stay behind. In the last census, chap. 26., the tribe of Reuben consisted of 43,730 men; the tribe of Gad, 40,500; the tribe of Manasseh, 52,700; the half of which is 26,350. Add this to the sum of the other two tribes, and the amount is 110,580. Now from <sup><0043></sup>**Joshua 4:13** we learn that of the tribes of Reuben and Gad, and the half of the tribe of Manasseh, only 40,000 armed men passed over Jordan to assist their brethren in the reduction of the land: consequently the number of 70,580 men were left behind for the defence of the women, the children, and the flocks. This was more than sufficient to defend them against a people already panic struck by their late discomfitures and reverses.

**Verse 34. The children of Gad built-Aroer]** This was situated on the river Arnon, <sup><01236></sup>**Deuteronomy 2:36**; <sup><21033></sup>**2 Kings 10:33**. It was formerly inhabited by the Emim, a warlike and perhaps gigantic people. They were expelled by the Moabites; the Moabites by the Amorites; and the Amorites by the Israelites. The Gadites then possessed it till the captivity of their tribe, with that of Reuben and the half of the tribe of Manasseh, by the Assyrians, <sup><21529></sup>**2 Kings 15:29**, after which the *Moabites* appear to have repossessed it, as they seem to have occupied it in the days of Jeremiah, <sup><244815></sup>**Jeremiah 48:15-20**.

**Verse 38. And Nebo-their names being changed]** That is, Those who conquered the cities called them after their own names. Thus the city *Kenath*, being conquered by *Nobah*, was called after his name, <sup><04342></sup>**Numbers 32:42**.

**Verse 41. Havoth-jair.]** That is, the *villages* or *habitations of Jair*; and thus they should have been translated. As these two tribes and a half were the *first*, says Ainsworth, who had their inheritance assigned to them in the promised land, so they were the first of all Israel that were carried captive out of their own land, because of their sins. "For they transgressed against the God of their fathers, and went a whoring after other gods. And God delivered them into the hands of *Pul* and *Tiglath-Pilneser*, kings of Assyria, and they brought them to *Halah*, *Habor*, *Hara*, and *Gozan*, unto this day." See <sup><13625></sup>**1 Chronicles 5:25, 26**.

## NUMBERS

## CHAPTER 33

*The journeyings of the Israelites written out by Moses, according to the commandment of the Lord, 1, 2. They depart from Rameses on the fifteenth day of the first month, on the day after the passover, the first-born of the Egyptians having been slain, 3, 4. Their forty-two stations enumerated, 5-49. They are authorized to expel all the former inhabitants, and destroy all remnants of idolatry, 50-53. The land is to be divided by lot, 54. Should they not drive out the former inhabitants, they shall be to them as pricks in their eyes and thorns in their sides, 55. And if not obedient, God will deal with them as he has purposed to do with the Canaanites, 56.*

## NOTES ON CHAP. 33

**Verse 2. And Moses wrote their goings out according to their journeys]** We may consider the whole book of Numbers as a *diary*, and indeed the first *book of travels* ever published. Dr. Shaw, Dr. Pococke, and several others, have endeavoured to mark out the route of the Israelites, through this great, dreary, and trackless desert, and have ascertained many of the stages here described. Indeed there are sufficient evidences of this important journey still remaining, for the descriptions of many are so particular that the places are readily ascertained by them; but this is not the case with all. Israel was the Church of God in the wilderness, and its unsettled, wandering state under Moses may point out the unsettled state of religion under the law. Their being brought, after the death of Moses, into the promised rest by Joshua, may point out the establishment, fixedness, and certainty of that salvation provided by Jesus Christ, of whom Joshua, in *name* and conduct, was a remarkable type. Mr. Ainsworth imagines that the *forty-two* stations here enumerated, through which the Israelites were brought to the verge of the promised land, and afterwards taken over Jordan into the rest which God had promised, point out the *forty-two* generations from Abraham unto Christ, through whom the Saviour of the world came, by whose blood we have an entrance into the holiest, and enjoy the inheritance among the saints in light. And Mr. Bromley, in his *Way to the Sabbath of Rest*, considers each name and place as descriptive of the spiritual state through which a soul passes in its way to the kingdom of God. But in cases of this kind *fancy* has much more to do than *judgment*.

**Verse 3. From Rameses]** This appears to have been the metropolis of the land of Goshen, and the place of rendezvous whence the whole Israelitish nation set out on their journey to the promised land; and is supposed to be the same as *Cairo*. See Clarke's notes on "<sup><D1237></sup>Exodus 12:37".

#### HERE FOLLOW THE FORTY-TWO STATIONS

STATION I. **Verse 5. And pitched in SUCCOTH.]** This name signifies *booths* or *tents*, and probably refers to no *town* or *village*, but simply designates the *place* where they pitched their tents for the first time after their departure from *Rameses*.

STAT. II. **Verse 6. ETHAM, which is in the edge of the wilderness.]** This place is not well known; Dr. Shaw supposes it to have been *one* mile from *Cairo*. Calmet thinks it is the city of *Buthum* mentioned by Herodotus, which he places in Arabia, on the frontiers of Egypt.

STAT. III. **Verse 7. PI-HAHIROTH]** See on <sup><D140></sup>Exodus 14:1,2. *Baal-zephon* Calmet supposes to be the *Clysm* of the Greeks, and the *Kolzum* of the Arabians.

STAT. IV. **Verse 8. And went three days' journey in the wilderness of Etham]** Called the wilderness of *Shur*, <sup><D152></sup>Exodus 15:22.

**And pitched in MARAH.]** Dr. Shaw supposes this place to be at *Sedur*, over against the valley of *Baideah*, on the opposite side of the Red Sea.

STAT. V. **Verse 9. And came unto ELIM]** A place on the skirts of the deserts of *Sin*, two leagues from *Tor*, and nearly thirty from *Corondel*, a large bay on the east side of the Red Sea. Dr. Shaw, when he visited this place, found but *nine* of the *twelve* wells mentioned in the text, and instead of 70 palm trees, he found upwards of 2,000. See Clarke "<sup><D157></sup>Exodus 15:27".

STAT. VI. **Verse 10. Encamped by the RED SEA.]** It is difficult to assign the *place* of this encampment, as the Israelites were now on their way to *Mount Sinai*, which lay considerably to the east of *Elim*, and consequently farther from the sea than the former station. It might be called *by the Red Sea*, as the Israelites had *it*, as the principal object, still in view. This station however is mentioned nowhere else. By the *Red Sea* we are not to understand a sea, the waters of which are *red*, or the *sand* red, or any thing else *about* or *in* it *red*; for nothing of this kind appears. It is called in

Hebrew *āws my yam suph*, which signifies the *weedy sea*. The *Septuagint* rendered the original by *θαλασσα εραθρα*, and the *Vulgate* after it by *mare rubrum*, and the European versions followed these, and, in opposition to etymology and reason, translated it *the Red Sea*. See **Clarke's note on "<sup><0210></sup>Exodus 10:19"**.

STAT. VII. **Verse 11. The wilderness of SIN.**] This lies between *Elim* and *Mount Sinai*. Dr. Shaw and his companions traversed these plains in nine hours.

STAT. VIII. **Verse 12. ΔΟΦΚΑΗ.**] This place is not mentioned in *Exodus* and its situation is not known.

STAT. IX. **Verse 13. ALUSH.**] Neither is this mentioned in *Exodus* and its situation is equally unknown.

STAT. X. **Verse 14. REPHIDIM.**] Remarkable for the rebellion of the Israelites against Moses, because of the want of water, <sup><0270></sup>**Exodus 17:1-3**.

STAT. XI. **Verse 15. The WILDERNESS of SINAI.**] Somewhere northward of *Mount Sinai*, on the straight road to the promised land, to which they now directed their course.

STAT. XII. **Verse 16. KIBROTH-HATTA AVAH.**] No city, village, &c., but a *place* in the open desert, which had its name from the plague that fell upon the Israelites, through their murmuring against God, and their inordinate desire of flesh. See **Clarke on "<sup><0400></sup>Numbers 6:1"** &c. But it appears that the Israelites had travelled three days' journey in order to reach this place, <sup><0410></sup>**Numbers 10:33**, and commentators suppose there must have been other stations which are not laid down here, probably because the places were not remarkable.

STAT. XIII. **Verse 17. HAZEROTH.**] This place Dr. Shaw computes to have been about thirty miles distant from *Mount Sinai*.

STAT. XIV. **Verse 18. RITHMAH.**] This place lay somewhere in the wilderness of *Paran*, through which the Israelites were now passing. See <sup><0410></sup>**Numbers 13:1,3**. The name signifies the juniper tree; and the place probably had its name from the great number of those trees growing in that district.

STAT. XV. **Verse 19. RIMMON-PAREZ.**] Unknown.

STAT. XVI. **Verse 20. LIBNAH.**] The situation of this place is uncertain. A city of this name is mentioned <sup><6109></sup>**Joshua 10:29**, as situated between Kadesh-barnea and Gaza.

STAT. XVII. **Verse 21. RISSAH.**] A place mentioned nowhere else in the sacred writings. Its situation utterly uncertain.

STAT. XVIII. **Verse 22. KEHELATHAH.**] Utterly unknown; though some conjecture that it might have been the place called Keilah, <sup><9201></sup>**1 Samuel 23:1**, &c., but this is unlikely.

STAT. XIX. **Verse 23. SHAPHER.**] Where this mountain lay cannot be determined.

STAT. XX. **Verse 24. HARADAH.**] Unknown, Calmet supposes that it may be the place called *Bered*, <sup><0164></sup>**Genesis 16:14**, which was in the vicinity of *Kadesh*.

STAT. XXI. **Verse 25. MAKHELOTH.**] A name found nowhere else in Scripture.

STAT. XXII. **Verse 26. TAHATH.**] Unknown.

STAT. XXIII. **Verse 27. TARAHAH.**] Also unknown.

STAT. XXIV. **Verse 28. MITHCAH.**] Calmet conjectures that this may be *Mocha*, a city in Arabia Petraea.

STAT. XXV. **Verse 29. HASHMONAH.**] Supposed by some to be the same as *Azmon*, <sup><0304></sup>**Numbers 34:4**.

STAT. XXVI. **Verse 30. MOSEROTH.**] Situation unknown. In <sup><6106></sup>**Deuteronomy 10:6** it is said that the Israelites took their journey from Beeroth, the wells of the children of *Jaakan*, to Mosera, and there Aaron died. If so, Mosera, Moseroth, and Hor, must be different names of the same place; or Moseroth, or Mosera, must have been some town or village near Mount Hor, for there Aaron died. See <sup><0338></sup>**Numbers 33:38**.

STAT. XXVII. **Verse 31. BENE-JAAKAN.**] Unknown. The *sons of Jaakan*. See the preceding verse, Clarke <sup><0330></sup>**Numbers 33:30**".

STAT. XXVIII. **Verse 32. HOR-HAGIDGAD.**] The *hole* or *pit of Gidgad*. Unknown. It was a place perhaps remarkable for some vast pit or cavern, from which it took its name.

STAT. XXIX. **Verse 33. JOTRATHAH.**] Situation unknown. It is said in <sup><5107></sup>**Deuteronomy 10:7** to be a *land of rivers of waters*.

STAT. XXX. **Verse 34. EBRONAH.**] Nowhere else mentioned.

STAT. XXXI. **Verse 35. EZION-GABER.**] Dr. Shaw places this port on the western coast of the *Elantic gulf* of the Red Sea. It is now called *Meenah el Dsahab*, or the *golden port*, by the Arabs; because it was from this place that Solomon sent his ships for gold to Ophir, <sup><1026></sup>**1 Kings 9:26**. He supposes it to be about sixty miles distant from Mount Sinai.-*Travels*, p. 322, 4to. edition.

STAT. XXXII. **Verse 36. ZIN, which is KADESH.**] A place remarkable for the death of Miriam the prophetess, and bringing water out of the rock. As this place was on the borders of *Edom*, the Israelites, being denied permission to pass through their land, which lay on the direct road to the promised land, were obliged to turn to the right to Mount Hor, now called *Accaba* by the Arabs.

STAT. XXXIII. **Verse 37. HOR.**] Famous for the death of Aaron. See on <sup><0125></sup>**Numbers 20:25-28**. Perhaps Moseroth or Mosera, <sup><0330></sup>**Numbers 33:30**, was a village near this mountain. See Clarke's note on <sup><0330></sup>**Numbers 33:30**".

STAT. XXXIV. **Verse 41. ZALMONAH.**] Probably in the neighborhood of the land of Edom. As  $\mu\lambda$   $\times$  *tselem* signifies an *image*, this place probably had its name from the brazen serpent set up by Moses. See Clarke <sup><0210></sup>**Numbers 21:9**", &c. From the same root the word *telesm*, corruptly called *talisman*, which signifies a consecrated *image*, is derived.

STAT. XXXV. **Verse 42. PUNON.**] A place in *Idumea*. Nowhere else mentioned.

STAT. XXXVI. **Verse 43. OBOH.**] Mentioned before, <sup><0210></sup>**Numbers 21:10**.

STAT. XXXVII. **Verse 44. IJE-ABARIM.**] The *heaps of Abarim*. See <sup><0211></sup>**Numbers 21:11**. Situation uncertain. It is called *Iim* in the following verse. As the word signifies heaps or protuberances, it probably means turmoil or small hills near some of the *fords* of Jordan.

STAT. XXXVIII. **Verse 45. DIBON-GAD.**] Supposed to be the same as *Dibon*, <sup><06234></sup>**Numbers 32:34**, and to be situated on the brook *Arnon*.

STAT. XXXIX. **Verse 46. ALMON-DIBLATHAIM.**] Situation not known. It belonged to the Moabites in the time of the prophet Jeremiah. <sup><2482></sup>**Jeremiah 48:22.**

STAT. XL. **Verse 47. Mountains of ABARIM, before NEBO.**] The mountain on which Moses died. They came to this place after the overthrow of the *Amorites*. See <sup><04234></sup>**Numbers 21:34, 35.**

STAT. XLI. **Verse 48. The PLAINS of MOAB.**] This was the scene of the transactions between *Balaam* and *Balak*; see chapters xxiii., xxiv., xxv.

STAT. XLII. **Verse 49. From BETH-JESIMOTH even unto ABEL-SHITTIM]** The former of these places fell to the Reubenites, <sup><06315></sup>**Joshua 13:15-20.** The Israelites were now come to the edge of Jordan, over against Jericho, where they afterwards passed.

For farther information on the subject of these different encampments, the reader is requested to refer to the extracts from Dr. Shaw at the end of the book of Exodus. See Clarke <sup><02488></sup>**Exodus 40:38**".

**Verse 52. Ye shall-destroy all their pictures]**  $\mu\tau ykcm$  *maskiyotham*, from  $h j c$  *sachah*, to be *like*, or *resemble*, either *pictures*, *carved work*, or *embroidery*, as far as these things were employed to exhibit the abominations of idolatry. *Molten images*  $\mu\tau ksm yml x$  *tsalmey massechotham*, metallic *talismanical figures*, made under certain constellations, and supposed in consequence to be possessed of some extraordinary influences and virtues.

**Verse 55. Shall be pricks in your eyes]** Under these metaphors, the continual mischief that should be done to them, both in soul and body, by these idolaters, is set forth in a very expressive manner. What can be more vexatious than a continual goading of each side, so that the attempt to avoid the one throws the body more forcibly on the other? And what can be more distressing than a continual pricking in the eye, harassing the mind, tormenting the body, and *extinguishing the sight*?

1. It has been usual among pious men to consider these Canaanites *remaining* in the land, as emblems of *indwelling sin*; and it must be granted that what those remaining Canaanites were to the people of Israel, who



were disobedient to God, *such is indwelling sin* to all those who will not have the blood of the covenant to cleanse them from all unrighteousness. For a time, while conscience is tender, such persons feel themselves straitened in all their goings, hindered in all their religious services, and distressed beyond measure because of the *law-the authority and power of sin*, which they find warring in their members: by and by the *eye* of their mind becomes obscured by the constant piercings of sin, till at last, fatally persuaded *that sin must dwell in them as long as they live*, they accommodate their minds to their situation, their consciences cease to be tender, and they content themselves with expecting redemption where and when it has never been promised, viz., *beyond the grave!* On the subject of the journeyings of the Israelites, the following observations from old Mr. *Ainsworth* cannot fail to interest the reader.

2. “The TRAVELS of Israel through that *great and terrible wilderness, wherein were fiery serpents, and scorpions, and drought, where there was no water*, <sup><60815></sup>**Deuteronomy 8:15**, which was a land of deserts, and of pits, a land of drought, and of the shadow of death, a land that no man passed through, and where no man dwelt, <sup><24116></sup>**Jeremiah 2:6**, signified the many troubles and afflictions through which we must enter into the kingdom of God, <sup><4442></sup>**Acts 14:22**. The helps, comforts, and deliverances which God gave unto his people in their distresses, are examples of his love and mercy towards his followers; for he comforts them in all their tribulation, that as the sufferings of Christ abound in them, so their consolation also abounds in Christ, <sup><7006></sup>**2 Corinthians 1:5**. The punishments which God inflicted upon the disobedient, who perished in the wilderness for their sins, happened unto them for ensamples, and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come, <sup><6101></sup>**1 Corinthians 10:1, 11**; <sup><8017></sup>**Hebrews 3:17, 18, 19**; <sup><8001></sup>**Hebrews 4:1, 2**. By the names of their encamping places, and histories adjoined, it appears how Israel came sometimes into straits and troublesome ways, as at *Pihahiroth*, <sup><12402></sup>**Exodus 14:2, 3, 10, &c.**; and at *Zalmonah*, <sup><4001></sup>**Numbers 2:1, 4, &c.**; sometimes into large and ample room, as at the plains of *Moab*; sometimes to places of hunger and thirst, as at *Rephidim* and *Kadesh*, <sup><12160></sup>**Exodus 16:1-3**; <sup><12170></sup>**Exodus 17:1-3**; <sup><04312></sup>**Numbers 20:2-5**; sometimes to places of refreshing, as at *Elim* and *Beer*, <sup><12157></sup>**Exodus 15:27**; <sup><02116></sup>**Numbers 21:16**; sometimes where they had wars, as at *Rephidim*, *Kadesh*, *Edrei*, <sup><12178></sup>**Exodus 17:8**; <sup><02101></sup>**Numbers 21:1, 33**; sometimes where they had rest, as at *Mount Sinai*: sometimes they went right forward, as



from *Sinai* to *Kadesh-barnea*; sometimes they *turned backward*, as from *Kadesh-barnea* to the *Red Sea*: sometimes they came to *mountains*, as *Sinai*, *Shapher*, *Hor-Gidgad*; sometimes to *valleys*, as *Tahath*, &c.; sometimes to places of *bitterness*, as *Marah*; sometimes, of *sweetness*, as *Mithcah*.

3. “The SINS which they committed in the wilderness were many and great; as open IDOLATRY by the calf, at Horeb, <sup><0233B></sup> **Exodus 32:3, 4**, and with *Baal-peor*, <sup><0251G></sup> **Numbers 25:16-18**. UNBELIEF, at *Kadesh*, <sup><0441I></sup> **Numbers 14:11**; and afterwards PRESUMPTUOUS BOLDNESS in the same place; MURMURING against God sundry times, with tempting of Christ, (as the apostle speaks, <sup><460D></sup> **1 Corinthians 10:9**.) CONTENTION and REBELLION against their governors often; *lusting for flesh* to fill their appetites, and *loathing manna*, the heavenly food; WHOREDOME with the daughters of Moab, and many other provocations; so that this complaint is after made of them, *How oft did they provoke him in the wilderness, and grieve him in the desert!* <sup><0784D></sup> **Psalm 78:40**. All sorts of persons sinned against God; the *multitude* of people very often; the *mixed multitude* of strangers among them, <sup><04104></sup> **Numbers 11:4-6**. The *princes*, as the ten spies, *Dathan*, *Abiram*, &c. The *Levites*, as *Korah* and his company; *Miriam* the prophetess, <sup><0420I></sup> **Numbers 12:1, 2**; *Aaron* the priest with her, besides his sin at Horeb, <sup><0230I></sup> **Exodus 32:1-4**; and at the water of *Meribah*, <sup><041B4></sup> **Numbers 20:24**. Moses also himself at the same place, for which he was excluded from the land of Canaan.

4. “The PUNISHMENTS laid on them by the Lord for their disobedience were many. They died by the *sword of the enemy*, as of the *Amalekites*, <sup><0217D></sup> **Exodus 17:9-11**, and of the *Canaanites*, <sup><04145></sup> **Numbers 14:45**; and some by the *sword of their brethren*, <sup><02325></sup> **Exodus 32:25-29** Some were *burned with fire*, <sup><04101></sup> **Numbers 11:1; 16:35**; some *died with surfeit*, <sup><04134></sup> **Numbers 11:34**; some were *swallowed up alive in the earth*, <sup><04163></sup> **Numbers 16:31-34**; some were *killed with serpents*, <sup><04206></sup> **Numbers 21:6**; many *died of the pestilence*, <sup><04166></sup> **Numbers 16:46**, and <sup><04025></sup> **Numbers 5:25**; and generally all that generation which were first mustered, after their coming out of Egypt, perished, <sup><04264></sup> **Numbers 26:64, 65**. God consumed their days in vanity, and their years in terror, <sup><07833></sup> **Psalm 78:33**.

5. “Nevertheless, for his name’s sake, he magnified his MERCIES unto them and their posterity. *He had divided the sea*, and led them through on dry land, drowning their enemies, <sup><02147></sup> **Exodus 14:27, 28**. He led them with a

*cloud by day, and a pillar of fire by night, continually. He gave them manna from heaven daily. He clave the rock, and gave them water for their thirst. He fed them with quails, when they longed for flesh. He sweetened the bitter waters. He saved them from the sword of their enemies. He delivered them from the fiery serpents and scorpions. Their raiment waxed not old upon them, neither did their foot swell for forty years,*

<sup><0804></sup>**Deuteronomy 8:4.** He delivered them from the intended curse of Balaam, and turned it into a blessing, because he loved them, <sup><04213></sup>**Numbers 22:13, 38;** <sup><05205></sup>**Deuteronomy 23:5.** He came down from Mount Sinai, and spake with them from heaven, and gave them right judgments and true laws, good statutes and commandments, and gave also his good Spirit to instruct them, <sup><09013></sup>**Nehemiah 9:13, 20.** In the times of his wrath he remembered mercy; his eye spared them from destroying them, neither did he make an end of them in the wilderness, <sup><20017></sup>**Ezekiel 20:17, 22.** He gave them kingdoms and nations, and they possessed the lands of their enemies; and he multiplied their children as the stars of heaven, and brought them into the land promised unto their forefathers. <sup><09022></sup>**Nehemiah 9:22, 23.** Now whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we, through patience and comfort of the Scriptures, might have hope, <sup><051504></sup>**Romans 15:4.**” Let him that readeth understand.”

## NUMBERS

## CHAPTER 34

*The land of Canaan is described, 1, 2. The south quarter, 3-5. The western border, 6. The north border, 7-9. The east border, 10-12. This land to be divided by lot among the nine tribes and half, 13; two tribes and half, Reuben and Gad, and the half of Manasseh, having already got their inheritance on the east side of Jordan, 14, 15. Eleazar the priest, and Joshua, to assist in dividing the land, 16, 17; and with them a chief out of every tribe, 18. The names of the twelve chiefs, 19-29.*

## NOTES ON CHAP. 34

**Verse 2. The land of Canaan with the coasts thereof]** All description here is useless. The situation and boundaries of the land of Canaan can only be known by actual survey, or by consulting a good map.

**Verse 3. The salt sea]** The Dead Sea, or lake Asphaltites. See Clarke's note on "<sup>011925</sup>Genesis 19:25".

**Verse 5. The river of Egypt]** The eastern branch of the river Nile; or, according to others, a river which is south of the land of the Philistines, and falls into the gulf or bay near *Calieh*.

**Verse 6. Ye shall even have the great sea for a border]** The *Mediterranean* Sea, called here the *Great Sea*, to distinguish it from the *Dead Sea*, the *Sea of Tiberias*, &c., which were only a sort of *lakes*. In Hebrew there is properly but one term, **יָם** *yam*, which is applied to all *collections* of water apparently stagnant, and which is generally translated *sea*. The Greek of the New Testament follows the Hebrew, and employs, in general, the word **θαλασσα**, SEA, whether it speaks of the *Mediterranean*, or of the *sea* or *lake* of *Galilee*.

**Verse 11. The sea of Chinnereth]** The same as the *sea of Galilee*, *sea of Tiberias*, and *sea of Gennesareth*.

**Verse 12. The border shall go down to Jordan]** This river is famous both in the Old and New Testaments. It takes its rise at the foot of Mount Libanus, passes through the sea of *Chinnereth* or *Tiberias*, and empties itself into the lake *Asphaltites* or *Dead Sea*, from which it has no outlet. In

and by it God wrought many miracles. God cut off the waters of this river as he did those of the Red Sea, so that they stood on a heap on each side, and the people passed over on dry ground. Both *Elijah* and *Elisha* separated its waters in a miraculous way, <sup><1188></sup>**2 Kings 2:8-14**. *Naaman*, the Syrian general, by washing in it at the command of the prophet, was miraculously cured of his leprosy, <sup><1510></sup>**2 Kings 5:10-14**. In this river *John* baptized great multitudes of Jews; and in it was CHRIST himself baptized, and the Spirit of God descended upon him, and the voice from heaven proclaimed him the great and only Teacher and Saviour of men, <sup><1016></sup>**Matthew 3:16, 17**; <sup><1005></sup>**Mark 1:5-11**.

**Verse 13. This is the land which ye shall inherit by lot]** Much of what is said concerning this land is peculiarly emphatic. It is a land that contains a multitude of advantages in its climate, its soil, situation, &c. It is bounded on the *south* by a *ridge of mountains*, which separate it from *Arabia*, and screen it from the burning and often pestiferous winds which blow over the desert from that quarter. On the *west* it is bounded by the *Mediterranean Sea*; on the *north*, by *Mount Libanus*, which defends it from the cold northern blasts; and on the *east* by the *river Jordan*, and its fertile, well-watered plains. It is described by God himself as “a good land, a land of brooks of water, of fountains, and depths that spring out of valleys and hills; a land of wheat, and barley, and vines, and fig trees, and pomegranates; a land of olive oil and honey; a land wherein there was no scarcity of bread, and where both iron and copper mines abounded,”

<sup><607></sup>**Deuteronomy 8:7-9**: a land finely diversified with hills and valleys, and well watered by the rain of heaven, in this respect widely different from Egypt; a land which God cared for, on which his eyes were continually placed from the beginning to the end of the year; watched over by a most merciful Providence; in a word, a land which flowed with milk and honey, and was the most pleasant of all lands; <sup><6111></sup>**Deuteronomy 11:11,12**; <sup><316></sup>**Ezekiel 20:6**. Such was *the land*, and such were the advantages that this most favoured people were called to possess. They were called to possess it *by lot* that each might be satisfied with his possession, as considering it to be appointed to him by the especial providence of God; and its boundaries were ascertained on Divine authority, to prevent all covetousness after the territories of others.

**Verse 19. - &c. And the names of the men-are these]** It is worthy of remark that Moses does not follow any order hitherto used of placing the tribes, neither that in chap. i., nor that in chap. vii., nor that in chap. xxvi.,

nor any other; but places them here exactly in that order in which they possessed the land. 1. Judah; 2. Simeon; 3. Benjamin; 4. Dan; 5. Manasseh; 6. Ephraim; 7. Zebulun; 8. Issachar; 9. Asher; 10. Naphtali. *Judah* is first, having the first lot; and he dwelt in the south part of the land, <sup><6150></sup>**Joshua 15:1**, &c.; and next to him *Simeon*, because his inheritance was *within the inheritance of the children of Judah*, <sup><6190></sup>**Joshua 19:1**. *Benjamin* was *third*; he had his inheritance by Judah, *between the children of Judah and the children of Joseph*, <sup><6181></sup>**Joshua 18:11**. *Dan* was the *fourth*; his lot fell westward of that of Benjamin, in the country of the Philistines, as may be seen in <sup><6194></sup>**Joshua 19:40, 41**, &c. *Fifth*, *Manasseh*; and *sixth*, by him, his brother *Ephraim*, whose inheritances were behind that of Benjamin, <sup><6147></sup>**Joshua 16:7**. Next to these dwelt, *seventh*, *Zebulun*; and *eighth*, *Issachar*; concerning whose lots see <sup><6190></sup>**Joshua 19:10-17**. *Ninth*, *Asher*; and *tenth*, *Naphtali*; see <sup><6192></sup>**Joshua 19:24,32**, &c. And as in encamping about the tabernacle they were arranged according to their *fraternal* relationship, (see <sup><400></sup>**Numbers 2:1-31**.) so they were in the division and inheriting of the promised land. *Judah* and *Simeon*, both sons of *Leah*, dwelt abreast of each other. *Benjamin*, son of *Rachel*, and *Dan*, son of *Rachel's* maid, dwelt next abreast. *Manasseh* and *Ephraim*, both sons of *Joseph*, son of *Rachel*, had the next place abreast. *Zebulun* and *Issachar*, who dwelt next together, were both sons of *Leah*; and the last pair were *Asher*, of *Leah's* maid, and *Naphtali*, of *Rachel's* maid. Thus God, in nominating princes that should divide the land, signified beforehand the manner of their possession, and that they should be so situated as to dwell together as brethren in unity, for the mutual help and comfort of each other. See *Ainsworth*. In this arrangement there is much skill, judgment, and kindness every where displayed.

## NUMBERS

## CHAPTER 35

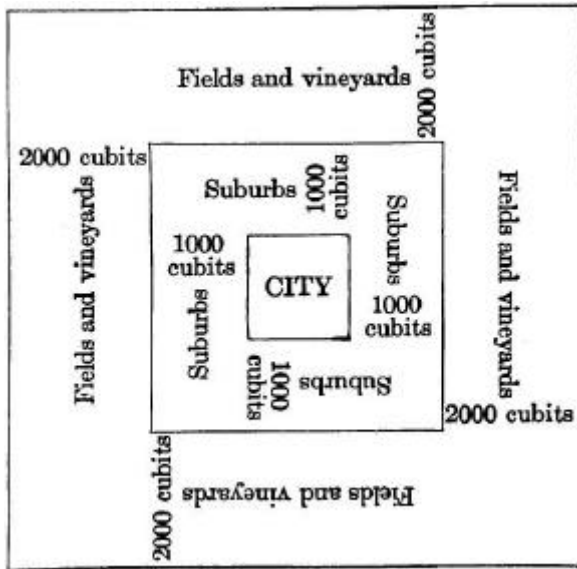
*The Israelites are commanded to give the Levites, out of their inheritances, cities and their suburbs for themselves and for their cattle, goods, &c., 1-3. The suburbs to be 3,000 cubits round about from the wall of the city, 4, 5. The cities to be forty-two, to which six cities of refuge should be added, in all forty-eight cities, 6, 7. Each tribe shall give of these cities in proportion to its possessions, 8. These cities to be appointed for the person who might slay his neighbour unawares, 9-12. Of these six cities there shall be three on each side Jordan, 13, 14. The cities to be places of refuge for all who kill a person unawares, whether they be Israelites, strangers, or sojourners, 15. Cases of murder to which the benefit of the cities of refuge shall not extend, 16-21. Cases of manslaughter to which the benefits of the cities of refuge shall extend, 22, 23. How the congregation shall act between the manslayer and the avenger of blood, 24, 25. The manslayer shall abide in the city of refuge till the death of the high priest; he shall then return to the land of his possession, 26-28. Two witnesses must attest a murder before a murderer can be put to death, 29, 30. Every murderer to be put to death, 31. The manslayer is not to be permitted to come to the land of his inheritance till the death of the high priest, 32. The land must not be polluted with blood, for the Lord dwells in it, 33, 34.*

## NOTES ON CHAP. 35

**Verse 4.** And the suburbs of the cities—shall reach from the wall of the city and outward a thousand cubits round about.

**Verse 5.** And ye shall measure from without the city—two thousand cubits, &c.] Commentators have been much puzzled with the accounts in these two verses. In <sup><04504></sup>Numbers 35:4 the measure is said to be 1,000 cubits from the wall; in <sup><04505></sup>Numbers 35:5 the measure is said to be 2,000 from without the city. It is likely these two measures mean the same thing; at least so it was understood by the Septuagint and Coptic, who have **δισχιλίους πήχεις**, 2,000 cubits, in the *fourth*, as well as in the *fifth* verse; but this reading of the Septuagint and Coptic is not acknowledged by any other of the ancient versions, nor by any of the MSS. collated by Kennicott and Deuteronomy Rossi. We must seek therefore for some other method of reconciling this apparently contradictory account. Sundry modes have been proposed by commentators, which appear to me, in general, to require full as much explanation as the text itself. Maimonides is the only

one intelligible on the subject. "The suburbs," says he, "of the cities are expressed in the law to be 3,000 cubits on every side from the wall of the city and outwards. The first thousand cubits are the suburbs, and the 2,000, which they measured without the suburbs, were for fields and vineyards." The whole, therefore, of the city, suburbs, fields, and vineyards, may be represented by the following diagram:—



**Verse 11. Ye shall appoint-cities of refuge]** The cities of refuge among the Israelites were widely different from the *asyla* among the Greeks and Romans, as also from the *privileged altars* among the Roman Catholics. Those among the Hebrews were for the protection of such only as had slain a person involuntarily. The temples and altars among the latter often served for the protection of the most profligate characters. Cities of refuge among the Hebrews were necessary, because the old patriarchal law still remained in force, viz., that the *nearest akin* had a right to avenge the death of his relation by slaying the murderer; for the original law enacted that *whosoever shed man's blood, by man should his blood be shed,* <sup><0006></sup>**Genesis 9:6,** and none was judged so proper to execute this law as the man who was nearest akin to the deceased. As many rash executions of this law might take place, from the very nature of the thing, it was deemed necessary to qualify its claims, and prevent injustice; and the cities of refuge were judged proper for this purpose. Nor do we ever read that they were ever found inefficient, or that they were ever abused.

**Verse 12. Until he stand before the congregation in judgment.]** So one of these cities was not a perpetual asylum; It was only a *pro tempore* refuge, till the case could be fairly examined by the magistrates in the presence of the people, or the elders their representatives; and this was done in the city or place where he had done the murder, <sup><0304></sup>**Joshua 20:4, 6.** If he was found worthy of death, they delivered him to the avenger that he might be slain, <sup><051912></sup>**Deuteronomy 19:12;** if not, they sent him back to the city of refuge, where he remained till the death of the high priest, <sup><04325></sup>**Numbers 35:25.** Before the cities of refuge were appointed, the *altar* appears to have been a sanctuary for those who had killed a person unwittingly; see on <sup><02113></sup>**Exodus 21:13, 14.**

**Verse 19. The revenger of blood]** *μdh l ag goel haddam*, the *redeemer of blood*; the next in blood to him who was slain. See on the preceding verse.

**Verse 30. But one witness shall not testify against any]** This was a just and necessary provision. One may be *mistaken*, or so violently *prejudiced* as to impose even on his own judgment, or so *wicked* as to endeavour through malice to compass the life of his neighbour: but it is not likely that *two* or *more* should be of this kind; and even were they, their separate examination would lead to a discovery of the truth, and to their conviction.

**Verse 31. Ye shall take no satisfaction for the life of a murderer]** No atonement could be made for *him*, nor any *commutation*, so as to save him from death. All the laws of the civilized world have either adjudged the murderer to death, or to a punishment equivalent to it; such as perpetual imprisonment, in a dungeon, under ground, on a stone floor, without light, and to be fed on a small portion of bread and water. In such circumstances a man could live but a short time; and though it is not called the punishment of *death*, yet, from its inevitable consequences, it only differed from it by being a little longer respite than was usual where the punishment of death was awarded. See Clarke's note on <sup><010306></sup>**Genesis 9:6**".

**Verse 32. Until the death of the priest.]** Probably intended to typify, that no sinner can be delivered from his banishment from God, or recover his forfeited inheritance, till Jesus Christ, the great high priest, had died for his offences, and risen again for his justification.

**Verse 33. For blood it defileth the land]** The very land was considered as guilty till the blood of the murderer was shed in it. No wonder God is so



particularly strict in his laws against murderers, 1. Because he is the author of life, and none have any right to dispose of it but himself. 2. Because life is the time to prepare for the eternal world, and on it the salvation of the soul accordingly depends; therefore it is of infinite consequence to the man that his life be lengthened out to the utmost limits assigned by Divine Providence. As he who takes a man's life away before his time may be the murderer of his soul as well as of his body, the severest laws should be enacted against this, both to punish and prevent the crime.

THE Mosaic *cities of refuge* have in general been considered, not merely as civil institutions, but as types or representations of infinitely better things; and in this light St. Paul seems to have considered them and the *altar of God*, which was a place of *general refuge*, as it is pretty evident that he had them in view when writing the following words: "God, willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath; that by two immutable things, (his *oath* and *promise*.) in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation who have FLED for REFUGE to lay HOLD upon the HOPE set before us," <sup><31617></sup> **Hebrews 6:17, 18.** Independently of this, it was a very wise political institute; and while the patriarchal law on this point continued in force, this law had a direct tendency to cool and moderate the spirit of *revenge*, to secure the proper accomplishment of the ends of *justice*, and to make way for every claim of *mercy* and *equity*. But this is not peculiar to the ordinance of the *cities of refuge*; every institution of God is distinguished in the same way, having his own glory, in the present and eternal welfare of man, immediately in view.

## NUMBERS

## CHAPTER 36

*The inconveniences which might be produced by daughters, inheritances, marrying out of their own tribe, remedied on the recommendation of certain chiefs of the tribe of Joseph, who stated the case of the daughters of Zelophehad, 1-4. The daughters of Zelophehad are commanded to marry in their own tribe, 5, 6; which is to be an ordinance in all similar circumstances, 7-9. The daughters of Zelophehad marry their father's brother's sons, and thus their inheritance is preserved in their own tribe, 10-12. The conclusion of the commandments given by the Lord to the Israelites in the plains of Moab, 13.*

## NOTES ON CHAP. 36

**Verse 2. To give the inheritance of Zelophehad-unto his daughters.]**

See this case spoken of at large on <sup><0470></sup>Numbers 27:1-11.

Either the first *eleven* verses of <sup><0470></sup>Numbers 27:1-11 should come in before this chapter, or this chapter should come in immediately after those eleven verses; they certainly both make parts of the same subject.

Here Moses determines that heiresses should marry in their own tribe, that no part of the ancient inheritance might be alienated from the original family.

**Verse 6. Let them marry to whom they think best]** Here was latitude sufficient, and yet a salutary and reasonable restraint, which prevented a vexatious mixture of property and possession.

**Verse 8. Every daughter that possesseth an inheritance]** This law affected none but *heiresses*; all others were at liberty to marry into any of the other tribes. The priests and Levites, who could have no inheritance, were exempt from the operation of this law. Jehoiada had the king of Judah's daughter to wife, <sup><1421></sup>2 Chronicles 22:11. And another priest had for wife one of the daughters of *Barzillai the Gileadite*, <sup><1506></sup>Ezra 2:61. "By reason of such marriages," says Mr. Ainsworth, "there might be kindred between Elisabeth, the mother of John the Baptist, who was of the daughters of Aaron, and Mary the virgin, the mother of our Lord, who was of the lineage of David, and tribe of Judah;" <sup><4016></sup>Luke 1:5, 36; <sup><0123></sup>Luke 3:23-31.

**Verse 11. Mahlah, Tirza, &c.]** For a curious account of these names, see Clarke's notes on "<sup><402707></sup>Numbers 27:7".

**Verse 12. And their inheritance remained in-the family]** "By this example, and the law of inheritances in the Holy Land, the people of God," says Ainsworth, "are taught to hold fast their inheritance in his promises, and their right in Christ, which they hold by faith; that as the Father hath made them meet to be partakers of the inheritance among the saints in light, <sup><510112></sup>Colossians 1:12, so they may keep the faith and grace which they have received to the end."

**Verse 13. These are the commandments, &c.]** See these different terms analyzed and explained, Clarke "<sup><032615></sup>Leviticus 26:15".

THUS ends the book of Numbers, containing a series of astonishing providences and events. Scarcely any piece of history in the sacred writings is better calculated to impress the mind of a serious reader with a sense of the goodness and severity of God. In every transaction his holiness and justice appear in closest union with his benevolence and mercy. From such a *Being* what have the wicked not to fear! From such a *Father* and *Friend* what have the upright not to hope! His *justice* requires him to punish iniquity, but his *mercy* inclines him to pardon all who truly repent and believe in the Son of his love.

The journeyings of this people, from the time they left Egypt, exhibit a series of *providential wonders*. Every *where*, and in every *circumstance*, God appears: and yet there is no *circumstance* or *occasion* that does not justify those signal displays of his GRACE and his JUSTICE. The genuine history of God's providence must be sought for in this book alone; and as every *occurrence* happened as an *example*, we have authority to conclude that in every case where his own glory and the salvation of man are interested, he will interfere and give the fullest proofs that he is the *same to-day* that he was *yesterday*, and will continue unchangeable for *ever* and *ever*. Reader, are these matters *ensamples to thee*? Art *thou*, like the Israelites, come into the plains of Moab, on the very verge of the promised land? Jordan alone separates thee from the promised inheritance. O, watch and pray, that thou come not short of the glory of God. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is *death*; see then that the sting of death, which is *sin*, be extracted from thy soul, that, being justified by Christ's blood, thou mayest be made an heir according to the hope of an eternal life. Amen, amen.

“I will bring you into the WILDERNESS of the people, and there will I plead with you face to face, like as I pleaded with your fathers in the WILDERNESS of the land of Egypt. And I will cause you to pass under the rod, and bring you into the bond of the covenant,” <sup><0308></sup>**Ezekiel 20:35-37.**

“He (Christ) is the Mediator of the New Testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions *that were* under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance,” <sup><0015></sup>**Hebrews 9:15.**

SECTIONS In the Book of Numbers, carried on from Leviticus , which ends with the THIRTY-THIRD.

The THIRTY-FOURTH, called **rbdmb** *bemidbar*, begins <sup><0010></sup>**Numbers 1:1**, and ends <sup><0403></sup>**Numbers 4:20.**

The THIRTY-FIFTH, called **acn** *nasa*, begins <sup><0402></sup>**Numbers 4:21**, and ends <sup><0478></sup>**Numbers 7:89.**

The THIRTY-SIXTH, called **Ëtl** [**hb** *behaalothecha*], begins <sup><0400></sup>**Numbers 8:1**, and ends <sup><04216></sup>**Numbers 12:16.**

The THIRTY-SEVENTH, called **j l v** *shelach*, begins <sup><0430></sup>**Numbers 13:1**, and ends <sup><0454></sup>**Numbers 15:41.**

The THIRTY-EIGHTH, called **j r q** *korach*, begins <sup><0460></sup>**Numbers 16:1**, and ends <sup><0483></sup>**Numbers 18:32.**

The THIRTY-NINTH, called **tqj** *chukkath*, begins <sup><0490></sup>**Numbers 19:1**, and ends <sup><0420></sup>**Numbers 22:1.**

The FORTIETH, called **ql b** *balak*, begins <sup><0422></sup>**Numbers 22:2**, and ends <sup><0420></sup>**Numbers 25:9.**

The FORTY-FIRST, called **sj nyp** *pinechas*, begins <sup><04510></sup>**Numbers 25:10**, and ends <sup><0430></sup>**Numbers 30:1.**

The FORTY-SECOND, called **twcm** *mattoth*, begins <sup><0432></sup>**Numbers 30:2**, and ends <sup><0434></sup>**Numbers 32:42.**

The FORTY-THIRD, called **y[ sm** *masey*, begins <sup><0430></sup>**Numbers 33:1**, and ends <sup><04613></sup>**Numbers 36:13.**

## MASORETIC Notes on NUMBERS.

The *number of verses* in this book is 1,288, of which **j pra** is the symbol: for **a aleph** stands for 1,000, **r, resh** for 200, **p phe** for 80, and **j cheth** for 8.

The *middle verse* is <sup><04172></sup>**Numbers 17:20**. *And the man's rod whom I shall choose shall blossom.* (N. B. In our English Bibles this is <sup><04175></sup>**Numbers 17:5**.)

Its *pareshioth*, or larger sections, are 10, expressed by the letters of the word **ddb badad**, alone: *The Lord ALONE did lead him,*

<sup><63212></sup>**Deuteronomy 32:12**. **d daleth** stands for 4, repeated here, 8, and **b beth** for 2.

Its *sedarim*, or Masoretic sections, are 32, expressed by the word **bl leb, heart,** <sup><65112></sup>**Psalms 51:12**: *Create in me a clean HEART, O God;* in which word **b beth** stands for 2, and **l lamed** for 30.

Its *chapters* are 36, expressed by the word **wl lu, O!** <sup><65229></sup>**Deuteronomy 32:29**: *O that they were wise!* in which word **l lamed** stands for 30, and **w vau** for 6.

The number of its *open* sections is 92; its *close* or *shut* sections, 66; together 158; expressed in the memorial word **Ëql j chelkecha**: *I am THY PORTION*; in which word **q koph** stands for 100, **l lamed** for 30, **Ë caph** for 20, and **j , cheth** for 8.

Though this sort of notations may appear trifling to some, yet to an upright Jew they were of much consequence. The very technical words used in such cases put him always in mind of something in which the glory of God and the happiness and salvation of his own soul were concerned. See the note at the end of Genesis, **See Clarke** <sup><01516></sup>**Genesis 50:26**", and see the concluding notes on the Book of Deuteronomy. **See Clarke** <sup><05340></sup>**Deuteronomy 34:10**".

*Revised and corrected for a new edition, August 4th, 1827.-A. CLARKE.*