

20260503 Lessons from the Book of Numbers - Ps Bruce McDonald

Numbers 11: 16 – 17, 24 - 25

INTRODUCTION:

Most of us probably don't read the book of Numbers very often, for me perhaps only once per year, but as with every book of the Bible it has many lifechanging things to teach us.

Have you noticed the following as I have:

1. The book reveals God as a God of detail. Numbers, names, dates, are important to Him. We must never think that God doesn't see, God doesn't hear us.
2. The book of Numbers repeats the following phrase numerous times, 'The Lord spoke to Moses...'

We follow a God who is not silent. He has been called, 'The ever-speaking voice'. Always expect to hear God speak and understand that if we are not hearing from God, it is not an issue of Him not speaking, but an issue of us not hearing. If you want to know what His voice sounds like, it is always the same as the Word of God. God loves to communicate; He is a good communicator.

3. The book of Numbers is a book of contrasts:
 - a. God's faithfulness vs. Men's rebellion.
 - b. God's Judgment vs, God's mercy.
 - c. Faith in God vs. unbelief.

4. The book of Numbers teaches us, don't complain to God:

When God's people complain it makes God angry. 9 x's in Numbers it tells us that God was angry. Complaining cost, the children of Israel 40 years in the wilderness that didn't need to happen! Complaining to God doesn't work. Faith works. In Numbers there were 2 census' taken of the people, one at the beginning and one at the end. In the first one there were 603,550 fighting men. 38 years later in the 2nd census, there were only 601,730. They were less ready for the conquest of the land at the end than they were at the beginning... except that the new generation had learned a painful lesson.

Don't complain... It doesn't work!

Just trust and blessing will follow!

All these things are powerful lessons for us!

But today, I want our focus to be on another principle that Numbers shows us.

Numbers 11: 16 – 17, 24 - 25

As a result of the challenges of leading the children of Israel through the Wilderness Moses becomes weary (Numbers 11: 11 – 17). God moves to give him help. 70 men are chosen to assist him, to carry something of the gift, the anointing, that was on his life to assist him to lead and carry the responsibility.

- a. Moses chose the men, but it was God who transferred some of the anointing on Moses' life to them:

This was supernatural impartation. They were already leaders; they were already Elders, but now another dimension comes on their lives. That is what having the Holy Spirit upon our lives is like (Acts 1: 8).

The Holy Spirit came on all 70 who Moses chose, even two who were not at the Tabernacle of meeting at the time.

b. All 70 began to Prophecy:

The purpose of what was happening to these men was empowerment to lead, what immediately happens however is that they begin to prophecy. God got hold of their mouths. He wanted His words in their mouths, not the complaining and negativity that many in Israel had.

Friends, we too are a Prophetic people. Paul tells us that we can all prophecy, just like Moses said he wanted for Israel (Numbers 11: 29). We are a prophetic people. We talk differently to others. Our words have life giving power! Sadly, too many Christians use their words to complain and be negative, many more stay quiet, refusing to speak when God wants to fill their mouths with His words of blessing and power for others!

c. Sadly, we are told that, 'they never did it again':

Numbers 11: 25, '... but they never did it again.'

In the environment of faith, they prophesied, but outside of that atmosphere they didn't know how to draw down the anointing that releases prophecy. Through the years I have taught numerous Prophetic seminars. At the Seminars lots of people prophecy, but the next time I visit that church most of them are silent again. I know that the Lord wants us, wants His people, to be prophetic and to speak up.

Insecurity, uncertainty, inferiority, unbelief, doubt... these things daily rob the church, they daily rob God's people. Of hearing God's voice, of being Godly bold leaders.

Two chapters later, in Numbers 13, Moses sends 12 spies into the land. 10 camp back with a bad report BUT the 70 Elders stayed silent, they never said a word. When they

needed to prophecy, to testify, to lead they were silent. 10 spies said we are too small to fight, our enemies are too great, too numerous, too big... and so we should run and not fight, and that bad report cost them their lives that day, and the 70 Elders another 38 years wandering in the wilderness until a whole generation were dead.

If God tells us, we can take the land we can... BUT we will need to fight. We will need to be soldiers / warriors. To have a soldier mentality and not a slave mentality...

I believe that is why in the NT when the Holy Spirit was poured out the first thing that happened was that they spoke in tongues. The purpose for waiting was to receive power... BUT the first thing that happened was that they spoke! God didn't trust them with speaking in their known language, they might stop again.

If we are to become leaders who represent God He must control our tongue, if we are to walk in power, He must control our tongue... AND we must speak.

In Luke 10: 1 – Jesus chose another 70 men. That number is not a coincidence. What God wanted to happen in the time of Moses God was now fulfilling, and they got it right. They spoke up and miracles followed!

Challenge:

Speak up!

Will you be the one. Will you step forward and step out to be different... to lead, to speak God's word, to fight, to prophecy... that is our challenge!

Let's pray.