

Book of Numbers Commentary

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17 March 2025

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Interpretation of Numbers - Introduction

The name of this book, "Numbers," came from the Septuagint translation, and from it, all the modern translations were taken. This name is appropriate for the first and twenty-sixth chapters of the book, as each contains a census of the people. The first census took place in Sinai in the second year of their Exodus, and the second took place about 39 years later in the plains of Moab, just before they entered the Promised Land. As for the Hebrew version, the name of this book came in "Bamidbar," meaning in the wilderness, which are the fourth and fifth words in the first chapter. The Hebrew name expresses more accurately what the book contains, as it is the book of the people's journeys in the wilderness.

Features of the Book of Numbers:

1. This book tells us the story of the wandering of the children of Israel in the wilderness of Sinai, their arrival at Moab, and their approaching the Promised Land (the journey time is 38 years and nine months).
2. We find in this book a presentation of God's work with the people to prepare them to enter the Promised Land, hence its importance in our lives, for we are now in the wilderness of this world. "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever." (Hebrews 13: 8). Therefore, God is still working with us to prepare us to enter the heavenly Jerusalem. So, we see the story of God's dealings with us, and we also see a picture of our dealings with God.
3. This book comes after the book of Exodus and the crossing of the Red Sea, which represents our lives after the baptism (1 Corinthians 10: 1, 2).
- 4- We see in this book God's great care for His people (manna, quail, water, and victory against their enemies...), and we see the continuous grumbling of the people, and despite their grumbling, He was leading them as a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night. But we also see God as a chastiser for his people, and the chastisement is out of His love so that He may lead them back to the right path, and in His chastisement and care, we see His justice and mercy.
- 5- We note that grumbling deprives us of God's blessings, just as grumbling deprived the people of Israel of God's blessings.
- 6- Modern scholars have questioned how to support three million people in a barren wilderness, but these people lack faith that God was the journey leader, and He supported His people.

The relationship of the Book of Numbers to what preceded it

1. We find in the Book of Exodus, from its beginning to (Exodus 19:1) the story of the Exodus of the people from Egypt to Sinai. In (Numbers 1:1), we find that the people had come to the wilderness of Sinai. "Now the Lord spoke to Moses in the Wilderness of Sinai, in the tabernacle of meeting, on the first day of the second month, in the second year after they had come out of the land of Egypt, saying: "Take

a census of all the congregation of the children of Israel, by their families, by their fathers' houses, according to the number of names, every male individually,"

2. The rest of the events of the Book of Exodus all take place in the Sinai desert.

3. Receiving the laws and the events of the Book of Leviticus took place in this place, the wilderness of Sinai.

4. The Book of Numbers begins in the wilderness of Sinai in the same place until we come to (Numbers 10: 11), and we find that the cloud has moved, announcing to them the movement from this place.

5- From (Numbers 10: 11 - the end of the book of Numbers) we find the story of the movement of the people from Sinai to the plains of Moab.

6- The people spent in the wilderness of Sinai about 11 months, and they reached this place in the third month of their Exodus, and they set out in the second month of the second year (Exodus 19: 1 + Numbers 10: 11, 12).

7- The people spent about 38 years, eight months and 11 days from the day they moved from the wilderness of Sinai until they reached the eastern bank of Jordan (the plains of Moab) (Numbers 10: 11 + Deuteronomy 1: 3).

8- The people spent about 3-4 months in the plains of Moab. We find the story of these months in (Numbers 22-36).

Naming the Book as Numbers:

1. It is incredible that 70 souls enter Egypt, and in 215 years, approximately 2-3 million souls leave it. This is God's blessing. And some doubt this, and until we eliminate all doubt, let us imagine that a person has given birth to 4 sons except for daughters, then if we imagine that each child begot four children at the age of thirty. And suppose we imagine that there are no epidemics or God's blessing and care includes them. In that case, we will find that this person, when entering Egypt, was one. After 30 years, he counts 4; after 60 years, the number becomes 16; after 90 years, the number is 64; after 120 years, the number is 256; after 150 years, the number is 1024, and after 180 years, the number is 4096. After 210 years, the number is 16384. Adding two generations is very likely the number is 20480 souls, and what would happen if each person had five or six children. So the number is not exaggerated. This is what we call a blessing. Blessing does not make sense to calculate it with pen and paper. Review the story of the five loaves and the two fishes in the Gospel of John and whether there was a meaning for Philip's calculations.

2. Their servants: When the tribes entered Egypt, they entered with their servants and those who worked with them. Note that Abraham had 318 fighters from his trained servants, the sons of his house, who fought with him to save his nephew Lot (Genesis 14: 14). And thus, Isaac had his men (Genesis 26:

14). We find that when Esau went to meet his brother Jacob, he was surprised that Jacob had a large army with him (Genesis 33:8). And when they lived in Egypt, there were no longer masters and servants, but all became equal, servants to Pharaoh and mingled with each other. Rather, intermarriage occurred between the people and the Egyptians (Leviticus 24: 10). Hence this large number also occurred.

3. But the book mentions the 70 souls of the children of Jacob because it wants to say: As the 70 souls submitted to Pharaoh as slaves, so the 70 peoples, who are all the descendants of Noah (all the peoples of the world – Genesis 10) submitted to the bondage of the devil, but in the hope that a Savior would come to set them free (Romans 8: 20). And this Savior was Moses for the people of Israel, and Jesus was the Messiah for the whole world. [Please review the interpretation of the verses (Exodus 1: 2-5)].

4. But let us also see God's hand. During their wanderings in the wilderness, their number increased from 601,730 to 603,550, an increase of 1,820 people (this is for men over twenty years old) within 40 years. The explanation is found in the book of Numbers. Epidemics would reap thousands of them because of their grumbling against God and because of the burning serpents as well. Indeed, the earth swallowed many of them..... Thus we see the effect of sin that brings a curse compared to the blessing when the Lord is pleased. Here we see the opposite and what we call no blessing.

5. Many complain of boredom from studying the Book of Numbers because of the many names and numbers, but we have great consolation in this, for God knows us by our names one by one.

A comparison between the exodus journey, the tent of meeting and Christ's work for the church:

Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever (Hebrews 13: 8). He is the way of salvation, whether He appears in the tabernacle or the people's Exodus as a symbol or in His church as a reality.

Exodus Journey	The Tabernacle	The Church
Passover Lamb / Brass Serpent	Altar of burnt offering	The Cross
Strike of the firstborns / Drowning of the army of Pharaoh		Defeating Satan
Pharaoh himself did not perish but was defeated		Satan is not finished forever yet
The defeat of the Amalekites (The Prayer of Moses and the War of the People Led by Joshua)	Altar of Incense (Christ the Intercessor)	Striving + praying to defeat the devil

Crossing the sea	The Laver	Baptism
Manna	The Table	Eucharist
Water from the rock	The lampstand	Work of the Holy Spirit in the church
The tent continually amid the people	Divine glory in the Holy of Holies	Christ amid His Church
People look to the serpent to be healed	All tents look to the tabernacle	Believing in Christ, the saviour
Continuous sacrifices	Continuous sacrifices	Continuous Liturgies
Cross the Jordan to enter earthly Canaan	Entering the Holy of Holies is a symbol of our entry into the glories of heaven	Death is the golden bridge to cross to Heavenly Canaan

Chapter 1

(Verses 1-54): Now the Lord spoke to Moses in the Wilderness of Sinai, in the tabernacle of meeting, on the first day of the second month, in the second year after they had come out of the land of Egypt, saying: 2 "Take a census of all the congregation of the children of Israel, by their families, by their fathers' houses, according to the number of names, every male individually, 3 from twenty years old and above—all who are able to go to war in Israel. You and Aaron shall number them by their armies. 4 And with you there shall be a man from every tribe, each one the head of his father's house. 5 "These are the names of the men who shall stand with you: from Reuben, Elizur the son of Shedeur; 6 from Simeon, Shelumiel the son of Zurishaddai; 7 from Judah, Nahshon the son of Amminadab; 8 from Issachar, Nethanel the son of Zuar; 9 from Zebulun, Eliab the son of Helon; 10 from the sons of Joseph: from Ephraim, Elishama the son of Ammihud; from Manasseh, Gamaliel the son of Pedahzur; 11 from Benjamin, Abidan the son of Gideon; 12 from Dan, Ahiezer the son of Ammishaddai; 13 from Asher, Pagiel the son of Ocran; 14 from Gad, Eliasaph the son of Deuel; 15 from Naphtali, Ahira the son of Enan." 16 These were chosen from the congregation, leaders of their fathers' tribes, heads of the divisions in Israel. 17 Then Moses and Aaron took these men who had been mentioned by name, 18 and they assembled all the congregation together on the first day of the second month; and they recited their ancestry by families, by their fathers' houses, according to the number of names, from twenty years old and above, each one individually. 19 As the Lord commanded Moses, so he numbered them in the Wilderness of Sinai. 20 Now the children of Reuben, Israel's oldest son, their genealogies by their families, by their fathers' house, according to the number of names, every male individually, from twenty years old and above, all who were able to go to war: 21 those who were numbered of the tribe of Reuben were forty-six thousand five hundred. 22 From the children of Simeon, their genealogies by their families, by their fathers' house, of those who were numbered, according to the number of names, every male individually, from twenty years old and above, all who were able to go to war: 23 those who were numbered of the tribe of Simeon were fifty-nine thousand three hundred. 24 From the children of Gad, their genealogies by their families, by their fathers' house, according to the number of names, from twenty years old and above, all who were able to go to war: 25 those who were numbered of the tribe of Gad were forty-five thousand six hundred and fifty. 26 From the children of Judah, their genealogies by their families, by their fathers' house, according to the number of names, from twenty years old and above, all who were able to go to war: 27 those who were numbered of the tribe of Judah were seventy-four thousand six hundred. 28 From the children of Issachar, their genealogies by their families, by their fathers' house, according to the number of names, from twenty years old and above, all who were able to go to war: 29 those who were numbered of the tribe of Issachar were fifty-four thousand four hundred. 30 From the children of Zebulun, their genealogies by their families, by their fathers' house, according to the number of names, from twenty years old and above, all who were able to go to war: 31 those who were numbered of the tribe of Zebulun were fifty-seven thousand four hundred. 32 From the sons of Joseph, the children of Ephraim, their genealogies by their families, by their fathers' house, according to the number of names, from twenty years old and above, all who were able to go to war: 33 those who were numbered of the tribe of Ephraim were forty thousand five hundred. 34 From the children

of Manasseh, their genealogies by their families, by their fathers' house, according to the number of names, from twenty years old and above, all who were able to go to war: 35 those who were numbered of the tribe of Manasseh were thirty-two thousand two hundred. 36 From the children of Benjamin, their genealogies by their families, by their fathers' house, according to the number of names, from twenty years old and above, all who were able to go to war: 37 those who were numbered of the tribe of Benjamin were thirty-five thousand four hundred. 38 From the children of Dan, their genealogies by their families, by their fathers' house, according to the number of names, from twenty years old and above, all who were able to go to war: 39 those who were numbered of the tribe of Dan were sixty-two thousand seven hundred. 40 From the children of Asher, their genealogies by their families, by their fathers' house, according to the number of names, from twenty years old and above, all who were able to go to war: 41 those who were numbered of the tribe of Asher were forty-one thousand five hundred. 42 From the children of Naphtali, their genealogies by their families, by their fathers' house, according to the number of names, from twenty years old and above, all who were able to go to war: 43 those who were numbered of the tribe of Naphtali were fifty-three thousand four hundred. 44 These are the ones who were numbered, whom Moses and Aaron numbered, with the leaders of Israel, twelve men, each one representing his father's house. 45 So all who were numbered of the children of Israel, by their fathers' houses, from twenty years old and above, all who were able to go to war in Israel— 46 all who were numbered were six hundred and three thousand five hundred and fifty. 47 But the Levites were not numbered among them by their fathers' tribe; 48 for the Lord had spoken to Moses, saying: 49 "Only the tribe of Levi you shall not number, nor take a census of them among the children of Israel; 50 but you shall appoint the Levites over the tabernacle of the Testimony, over all its furnishings, and over all things that belong to it; they shall carry the tabernacle and all its furnishings; they shall attend to it and camp around the tabernacle. 51 And when the tabernacle is to go forward, the Levites shall take it down; and when the tabernacle is to be set up, the Levites shall set it up. The outsider who comes near shall be put to death. 52 The children of Israel shall pitch their tents, everyone by his own camp, everyone by his own standard, according to their armies; 53 but the Levites shall camp around the tabernacle of the Testimony, that there may be no wrath on the congregation of the children of Israel; and the Levites shall keep charge of the tabernacle of the Testimony." 54 Thus the children of Israel did; according to all that the Lord commanded Moses, so they did.

Determining the lineage and number of God's people:

After the Lord brought His people out of the land of slavery (Book of Exodus) and gave them the commandments and laws, i.e. His divine constitution (Leviticus + Exodus), we see Him in the Book of Numbers accompanying His people during their sojourn in the wilderness, overflowing with grace on them. When they deviate, He disciplines them until ensuring their arrival in the Promised Land. Whoever errs, the promised land will be lost from him.

We find God commanding Moses to count the people, while God reprimanded David and punished him when he counted the people. The reason is that the census that David conducted was motivated by pride to satiate his heart with his strength and the strength of his army as if his victories were due to this army and not to God's help for him.

But why did God ask for a census?

1. To show God fulfill His promise to Abraham, to make his descendants as the dust of the earth (Genesis 28: 14). After they were 70 people, if they had the faith and piety of Abraham, God's blessing would surround them.
2. It is very comforting that God asks for a census. This census is not for God, for God knows the number before Moses counted them, but this census is for the people. Each individual knows that he belongs to the people whom God cares about and commands that they be counted, and thus each individual feels vital to God. God knows how many people belong to this tribe and how many belong to the other tribe, and God's concern for the number means that God will not let one of them perish (Matthew 10: 30).
3. The census includes a classification of who follows this tribe and who follows the other. Who has no tribe; is a stranger and does not fall into the census. So the census separated God's people from the strangers. By census, each one feels that he is affiliated with God's people, a member of the heavenly family. Let us note that the enemy of good fights God's children by making them doubt that they are God's children, and He cares for them and accompanies them
4. The census indicates how God works and that He is a God of peace and not the author of confusion (1 Corinthians 14: 33). God cares about how His people walk in the wilderness, their numbers and the location of each tribe (the miracle of the five loaves).
5. When the people see that the first promise to Abraham to increase his offspring has been fulfilled, they will be encouraged in their wars to inherit the land. This is the second promise of Abraham that the land is for his descendants.
6. This census is a military census. Everyone who went to war (Numbers 1: 3) as they understood that they were on a military mission. Note that Pharaoh's army sank in the sea, but the book did not mention that Pharaoh himself drowned. And our life in the church now is similar to this journey in the exile of the wilderness (the world). We are in a constant struggle against Satan, who was defeated in the battle of the cross, but he did not end forever. Rather always appears in different forms (Amalek - Moab - curses of Balaam - fornication with the daughters of Moab, ... etc.). Note that the Church is not weak, as it is feared as an army with banners (Song of Solomon 6: 10). Review (Philippians 4: 3 + 2 Timothy 2: 19) to see that God knows His people by their names.
7. When the people see that in 215 years, they have become 600,000 after they were 70 souls, with the blessing of God, they are not afraid of the coming wars against them.
8. The number was 600,000, and the number 6 indicates imperfect human perfection. Number 6 refers to human resources for defence and striving against enemies, but although we have to use them in our striving even to blood, we must know that without God's grace, we can do nothing (to know our talents, use them, and win by God's grace).

9. The real number is 603,550, and when it is said 600,000, it is an approximation, as in (Numbers 11: 21). We note that the census of all the tribes is a rounded number, either in hundreds or fifty! There are possibilities for this:

A. God willed the number to be like this.

B. Moses used rounding to mention numbers.

C. Moses used a method of census like this. He counted the captains of hundreds and the captains of fifties whom he appointed instead of counting the same people one by one (Exodus 18: 25).

10. After all the plagues and epidemics that befallen the people, the number at the end of the journey (the wandering journey) was similar to the number at the beginning of the journey, rather bigger. This indicates God's care for his people.

11. Who are the numbered? In other words who are the people of God:

A. Those who crossed the Red Sea = Baptism.

B. Those who were freed from the bondage of Pharaoh by the blood of the Passover lamb = who was freed by the blood of Christ from the bondage of Satan.

C. Those whom God resides among them in the tabernacle of meeting = who lives inside the church.

D. Those whom God sustains with manna = He who partakes of the Eucharist.

E. He who has received the Law and the Commandments = He who loves Me keeps My commandments.

F. Those who drank from the water that came out of the rock = those who became a temple of the Holy Spirit.

G. Whoever goes out to war against the Amalekites / Moab.. etc. = whoever fights even unto bloodshed against the devil.

H. To be a male = females do not fight. Therefore, the apostle Paul says: Be brave (1 Corinthians 16: 13), which applies to both men and women. And in Arabic "be men".

I. over 20 years old = someone who has transcended the role of spiritual childhood as a starting point for a life of spiritual maturity.

J. Capable of War = We are in a continuous war with the spiritual forces of evil.

K. Affiliated with God's people = having sonship to God by the Spirit of God.

12. The Levites are not numbered with the people, for they have another role. Their role is to pray. Just as Joshua was fighting the Amalekites, Moses raised his hands and prayed. Prayer is striving. Therefore, in the census of the Levites, the Bible calls them those who perform the service (Numbers 4: 23). The

secret of the people's victory over their enemies was the presence of the tent in their midst. The Levites guarded the tent.

The meanings of the names of the chiefs of the tribes:

Elizur = My God is a rock	Eliab = My God is a Father	Abidan = My Father judges
Shelumiel = God is peace	Elishama = My God listens	Pagiel = God met me
Nethanel = God's gift	Gamaliel = God is my reward	Eliasaph = God adds

Nahshon = serpent / snake	Ahiezer = My brother is support	Ahira = My brother is evil.
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1. Choosing leaders to help Moses from the congregation affirms the congregants' role in managing the Church's affairs.

2. The names of the heads have spiritual meanings, as nine names are specific to our relationship with God. During our journey in the wilderness of this world, God wants us to focus our eyes on Him as a strong supporting father. However, we will meet our brothers in the world during our journey, including the helper and the evil one. We will also meet wars from the demons (serpent).

Tribe of Judah:

1. Its number is greater than the rest of the tribes, as this tribe is the one who will advance the procession towards the east. And this tribe is the one from whom the Lord Christ came in the flesh as if the Lord Christ is the leader of our procession towards the heavenly Jerusalem. And this is the fulfillment of Jacob's prophecy (Genesis 49: 8, 10).

2. The leader of the tribe is Nahshon the son of Amminadab, who is one of the ancestors of Christ (Matthew 1: 4 + Luke 3: 32,33), and the meaning of his name is a serpent. Christ is symbolized in this book as a brass serpent (having the shape of a serpent but without a poison inside it) = taking the form of human beings when He was incarnate and became man. He resembled us in everything except for sin alone, "For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him." (2 Corinthians 5: 21).

Verse 2: **Take a census of all the congregation of the children of Israel, by their families, by their fathers' houses, according to the number of names, every male individually,**

by their families, by their fathers' houses: Every person belonged to his father's house, the father's house belonged to the clan, the clan belonged to the tribe, and the word clan means tribe. We note that the interest in genealogy was to preserve the lineage of Christ. Let us ask here an important question... Did someone doubt His lineage to His clan, His father's house, and His tribe? Therefore, we must make sure that we belong to God and have sonship with Him. In our wars in the wilderness of this world with Satan, we fight with doubt about our sonship, and that we will not be able to such and such because God abandoned us, and that God rejected us as His children and will not forgive us. During any experience we go through, we think that God takes revenge on us... All this doubting comes from the devil, so we quarrel with God for no reason, but Satan is a liar (John 8: 44).

The way to respond to this war is that we do not deserve anything, as we are sinners, and condemn ourselves as publicans and sinners, as the tax collector and the right thief did. We do not justify ourselves as the Pharisee and the left thief, so we ask that we get what is better because of our righteousness. But we stand before God, contrite, and ask only for mercy because we grieved his heart by our sins. We ought to be confident that God, in His mercy and love that appeared on the cross, will accept us and He will forgive us and bring us back to His bosom and the heavens rejoice in our repentance. But if God has accepted the right thief, the prodigal son, and the adulterous woman, then why will He not accept us, and we have become His children by baptism? Here, the Holy Spirit testifies within us that we are children and feel forgiveness and acceptance (Galatians 4: 5-7), and we understand that any temptation was to discipline us, for God disciplines every son He loves, but rather scourges him to ensure that he reaches heaven (Hebrews 12: 6). So we feel when we are in the temptation with joy that God loves us when we are in trials (James 1: 2), so we qualify for heaven, as God disciplines us as a father disciplines his son.

every male individually: Meaning solemnly.

Verse 4: **And with you there shall be a man from every tribe, each one the head of his father's house**

each one the head of his father's house: There were several heads in each tribe, and here he chooses the best or most famous of them as the head of the tribe.

Verse 16: **These were chosen from the congregation, leaders of their fathers' tribes, heads of the divisions in Israel**

heads of the divisions in Israel: Moses' father-in-law had advised him to appoint leaders (Exodus 18: 21).

Verse 18: **and they assembled all the congregation together on the first day of the second month; and they recited their ancestry by families, by their fathers' houses, according to the number of names, from twenty years old and above, each one individually.**

Note that Moses carried out the command immediately, without delay and without relentlessness.

Verses 51: **And when the tabernacle is to go forward, the Levites shall take it down; and when the tabernacle is to be set up, the Levites shall set it up. The outsider who comes near shall be put to death.**

The outsider: This means anyone who is not from the tribe of Levi.

Verse 53: **but the Levites shall camp around the tabernacle of the Testimony, that there may be no wrath on the congregation of the children of Israel; and the Levites shall keep charge of the tabernacle of the Testimony."**

wrath: The same word was said after the subject of Korah and Dathan... (Numbers 16: 1, 35, 46).

"Now Korah the son of Izhar, the son of Kohath, the son of Levi, with Dathan and Abiram the sons of Eliab, and On the son of Peleth, sons of Reuben, took men; 2 and they rose up before Moses with some of the children of Israel, two hundred and fifty leaders of the congregation, representatives of the congregation, men of renown. 3 They gathered together against Moses and Aaron, and said to them, "You take too much upon yourselves, for all the congregation is holy, every one of them, and the Lord is among them. Why then do you exalt yourselves above the assembly of the Lord?"

"And a fire came out from the Lord and consumed the two hundred and fifty men who were offering incense."

"So Moses said to Aaron, "Take a censer and put fire in it from the altar, put incense on it, and take it quickly to the congregation and make atonement for them; for wrath has gone out from the Lord. The plague has begun." 47 Then Aaron took it as Moses commanded, and ran into the midst of the assembly; and already the plague had begun among the people. So he put in the incense and made atonement for the people. 48 And he stood between the dead and the living; so the plague was stopped. "

Why did Moses not offer incense to stop the plague? Because Aaron had assumed his position as high priest and thus Moses did not accept to transgress against Aaron so that Aaron could carry out his priestly function and intercede for the people.

that there may be no wrath = This was a basic function of the Levites, to protect the house of God, so that no one from the people (the laymen) would transgress and enter the house of God. Notice what happened when God was angry with Korah, Dathan, and Abiram. When the priests stood before King Uzziah and prevented him from entering the house of God to offer incense before God, saying to him, "It is not for you, Uzziah, to burn incense to the Lord," but in the face of the king's stubbornness, the leprosy struck the king. As for the priests, because they did their duty and prevented the king from entering the holy place, the wrath did not come upon them (2 Chronicles 26: 16-21).

Note:

This census may be the one referred to in (Exodus 38: 25,26), which is related to determining atonement silver.

Verse 54: **Thus the children of Israel did; according to all that the Lord commanded Moses, so they did.**

Chapter 2

Banners and flags

After the people have determined their lineage and number, that is, who the people of God are, the important question comes: To whom do these people belong? Therefore, God asks Moses here to have banners and flags for His people. This reminds us of the verse in the Song of Songs, "And his banner over me was love."

And his banner over me was love = The picture here is that the groom took his bride into the house "The king has brought me into his chambers. We will be glad and rejoice in you. We will remember your love more than wine." (Song of Solomon 1: 4). To give her a taste of His love which is like wine, "Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth—For your love is better than wine." (Song of Solomon 1: 2). Wine is a symbol of joy. Christ's love is all joy. The bridegroom placed his banner over this house. What is this flag?

1. A sign of God's ownership of this soul. Christ bought me with His blood and freed me from the slavery of Satan. "You were bought at a price; do not become slaves of men." (1 Corinthians 7: 23). When an army liberates their land from the enemy, the first thing the soldiers do is to raise the flag over the liberated land.
2. A sign of His presence in His royal house (the heart). Wherever the king is, his banner is raised.
3. A sign of His protection of this place, as no one can attack a place on which the flag of a powerful king is raised.
4. Around the flag, the king's armies gather to fight. And God is the Lord of hosts. And the soul of His beloved is also a struggling, fighting soul. Rather, it is awesome, like an army with banners (Song of Solomon 6: 10), fighting the kingdom of demons, and "and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it" (Matthew 16: 18). Christ who "went out conquering and to conquer" (Revelation 6: 2) is the one who conquers the kingdom of demons in His Church.
5. In all cultures, the flag carries meanings of nobility and independence. The signs, colours, and symbols placed on flags summarize the history of the nation associated with it and express the heritage that it is proud of. The word "flag" comes from the fact that it is a raised sign for vision.
6. Thus, the flag expresses the nation with its past that it is proud of and cherishes. And for which it struggles.
7. As for us as Christians, we are proud of our powerful God who protects us. He is the One who liberated us and restored to us eternal life, joy, and glory.

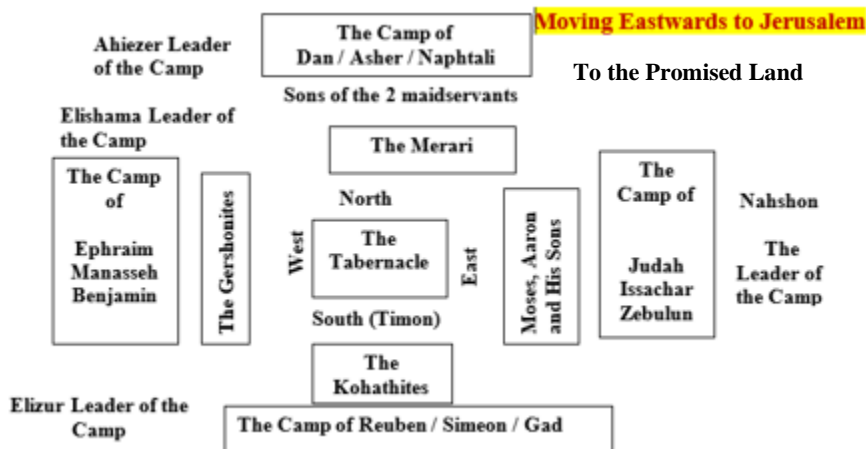
We are ambassadors for Christ, carrying His banner, His sign before the world. The banners may be:

1. The Cross of Christ (for we only boast of the cross, Galatians 6: 14).
2. Or it may be our life as a light to the world and salt to the earth, for by this, we bear witness to Christ. As we pray in the Liturgy, according to St. Basil, "Your death, O Lord, we proclaim, and your Holy resurrection we confess." This means that we stand before the pleasures of the world as dead, "Likewise you also, reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord." (Romans 6: 11 + Colossians 1: 5) This is because: A) We died with Christ in Baptism. b) We believe that we have a share in heavenly glory. c) In front of this glory, we despise the world with its sinful pleasures.
3. Or we carry the cross of persecution or pain proudly as soldiers of Christ in whom we are proud.

Note that the first chapter must precede the second, i.e. we must verify our affiliation with God before we enter under His banner.

See (Exodus 17: 15) The Lord is my banner. So, Moses built an altar and called its name "The Lord is my banner." The Lord is their true banner, and in His way, they strive, and by His power, they conquer. He is our banner. We raise Him above our heads and look to Him, take pride in Him, acknowledge Him and walk in His commands. But notice that Moses says about the altar, "The Lord is my banner," and the altar symbolizes the cross. Our banner and pride is the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ. "But God forbid that I should boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world." (Galatians 6: 14). Therefore, we find that the angel in his dialogue with Mary Magdalene after the resurrection of the Lord of Glory kept the title of the crucified Christ. But the angel answered and said to the women, "Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified." (Matthew 28: 5). Here, the angel stood behind the banner of the crucified Christ.

Illustration of the Tribes around the Tabernacle



The congregation is moving eastward towards the Promised Land and Jerusalem. And so, the Church is moving towards heaven, and our eyes are directed to the East, that is, Jerusalem. And some ask in mockery, "If we turn in any direction, will God not accept our prayers?" No, beloved – God will accept your prayers, but the search for the East is to correct the directions of the heart – is the longing still directed entirely towards the heavenly Jerusalem, or has the heart lost its way behind the lusts of the world? Every time we stand to pray and look for the East to turn towards it, this is a pause to correct the directions of the heart.

(Verses 1-34): **And the Lord spoke to Moses and Aaron, saying: 2 "Everyone of the children of Israel shall camp by his own standard, beside the emblems of his father's house; they shall camp some distance from the Tabernacle of meeting. 3 On the east side, toward the rising of the sun, those of the standard of the forces with Judah shall camp according to their armies; and Nahshon the son of Amminadab shall be the leader of the children of Judah." 4 And his army was numbered at seventy-four thousand six hundred. 5 "Those who camp next to him shall be the tribe of Issachar, and Nethanel the son of Zuar shall be the leader of the children of Issachar." 6 And his army was numbered at fifty-four thousand four hundred. 7 "Then comes the tribe of Zebulun, and Eliab the son of Helon shall be the leader of the children of Zebulun." 8 And his army was numbered at fifty-seven thousand four hundred. 9 "All who were numbered according to their armies of the forces with Judah, one hundred and eighty-six thousand four hundred—these shall break camp first. 10 "On the south side shall be the standard of the forces with Reuben according to their armies, and the leader of the children of Reuben shall be Elizur the son of Shedeur." 11 And his army was numbered at forty-six thousand five hundred. 12 "Those who camp next to him shall be the tribe of Simeon, and the leader of the children of Simeon shall be Shelumiel the son of Zurishaddai." 13 And his army was numbered at fifty-nine thousand three hundred. 14 "Then comes the tribe of Gad, and the leader of the children of Gad shall be Eliasaph the son of Reuel." 15 And his army was numbered at forty-five thousand six hundred and fifty. 16 "All who were numbered according to their armies of the forces with Reuben, one hundred and fifty-one thousand four hundred and fifty—they shall be the second to break camp. 17 "And the Tabernacle of meeting shall move out with the camp of the Levites in the middle of the camps; as they camp, so they shall move out, everyone in his place, by their standards. 18 "On the west side shall be the standard of the forces with Ephraim according to their armies, and the leader of the children of Ephraim shall be Elishama the son of Ammihud." 19 And his army was numbered at forty thousand five hundred. 20 "Next to him comes the tribe of Manasseh, and the leader of the children of Manasseh shall be Gamaliel the son of Pedahzur." 21 And his army was numbered at thirty-two thousand two hundred. 22 "Then comes the tribe of Benjamin, and the leader of the children of Benjamin shall be Abidan the son of Gideoni." 23 And his army was numbered at thirty-five thousand four hundred. 24 "All who were numbered according to their armies of the forces with Ephraim, one hundred and eight thousand one hundred—they shall be the third to break camp. 25 "The standard of the forces with Dan shall be on the north side according to their armies, and the leader of the children of Dan shall be Ahiezer the son of Ammishaddai." 26 And his army was numbered at sixty-two thousand seven hundred. 27 "Those who camp next to him shall be the tribe of**

Asher, and the leader of the children of Asher shall be Pagiel the son of Ocran." 28 And his army was numbered at forty-one thousand five hundred. 29 "Then comes the tribe of Naphtali, and the leader of the children of Naphtali shall be Ahira the son of Enan." 30 And his army was numbered at fifty-three thousand four hundred. 31 "All who were numbered of the forces with Dan, one hundred and fifty-seven thousand six hundred—they shall break camp last, with their standards." 32 These are the ones who were numbered of the children of Israel by their fathers' houses. All who were numbered according to their armies of the forces were six hundred and three thousand five hundred and fifty. 33 But the Levites were not numbered among the children of Israel, just as the Lord commanded Moses. 34 Thus the children of Israel did according to all that the Lord commanded Moses; so they camped by their standards and so they broke camp, each one by his family, according to their fathers' houses.

Table showing the order of migration of the people:

First: **The forces of Judah** (in the foreground) 186400 (the largest in number for the defense) + Christ our leader.

Second: **The Gershonites and the Meraris:** They carry the dwelling for His residence.

Third: **The forces of Reuben:** 151450.

Fourth: **The Kohathites:** They carry the contents of the Holy of Holies and the Holy.

Fifth: **The forces of Ephraim:** 108100.

Sixth: - **The force of Dan** (in the back): - 157,600 (the second place in number, they are in the back to defend).

Note in verses 1: 14 and 2: 14 Deuel. Perhaps two names for the same person

Reuel = Friend of God → **Deuel** = Knowing God.

Notes on the order:

1. The Tabernacle is in the center, surrounded by the Levites in the form of a small cross and then the forces of the tribes in the form of a large cross. Christ became in us and in our midst through His cross. We see in the Book of Revelation that Christ is in the midst of His church: "To the angel of the church of Ephesus write, 'These things says He who holds the seven stars in His right hand, who walks in the midst of the seven golden lampstands:'" (Revelation 2: 1). Walks means His eye is on all His church in the whole world (this is the meaning of the number 7 churches), He sees its conditions, protects it, and defends it. The word camp means the camp or the place of tents where He resides, that is, the people reside. So God is in the midst of His people = the tent in the midst of the camp. Prayer and spiritual life are in the

midst of the people, that is, the heart of the people, and God seeks the heart. (The Levites in the middle).

2- Each neighborhood includes relatives as much as possible so that

2. Each force includes relatives as much as possible so that cooperation may be possible (the force of Ephraim has Ephraim, Manasseh, and Benjamin, Rachel's children).

3. The priests and Levites surrounded the tabernacle so that they could easily serve inside it.

4. During their journey in the wilderness, they live in tents because they are sojourners = (The body is our tent) (Psalm 107: 4).

5. All the tents look towards the Tabernacle = (Our eyes should be directed to heaven). And the whole trip is destined for Jerusalem, and our goal is the heavenly Jerusalem.

6. The cloud is what moves them = the Holy Spirit is the One who leads the church.

7. The commentators differed in interpreting the shapes on the flags that characterize each tribe. And some of them said that they are symbols inspired by the prophecies of Jacob to his sons.

8. The arrangement of the tents was wonderful, especially that God is among them and leads them. When Balaam saw them, he said, " How lovely are your tents, O Jacob!" (Numbers 24: 5), and how beautiful is the Church of Christ, the Church of the saints (Colossians 2: 5).

9. This group was like a city moving toward a goal. Note the shape of the cross. It represents the Holy Church, the body of Christ crucified, continuously moving from the land of slavery towards the heavenly Jerusalem. The gathering of the brothers in the camp is a life of fellowship and love in Christ.

10. The different banners refer to the diverse talents of each person to complement each other (all to be integrated).

11. The leader of the force of Judah is **Nahshon** because the mystery of the cross is the mystery of destroying the ancient serpent (Genesis 3: 15). This was through Christ, who took the form of the body of our sin but was without sin. The bronze serpent hung on the pole (Numbers 21: 8) was a symbol of the cross on which Christ was hung. The bronze serpent has the shape of a serpent but without poison. It was said in (2 Kings 18: 4) that king Hezekiah "He removed the high places and broke the sacred pillars, cut down the wooden image and broke in pieces the bronze serpent that Moses had made; for until those days the children of Israel burned incense to it, and called it Nehushtan." Nehushtan is driven from Nahsh, which means bronze, or from Nahsh, which means serpent. Note the similarity in the name between Nahushtan (the bronze serpent symbolizing Christ) and the name of the head of the force of Judah, Nahshon.

12. The right arm of the cross is represented by the force of Reuben under the leadership of **Elizur** = divine rock or wall. For after trampling on the serpent. God became for us to seek refuge and find our protection in Him.

13. The left arm is led by **Ahiezer** = My brother is support, for God has given us the spirit of fellowship and love for one another.

14- The force of Ephraim led by **Elishama** = God hears, because God hears us in His Son, and in His Son we heard His voice.

Commentary on the name Nahshon

*(Exodus 4: 1-4) The staff in Moses' hand was the power by which he performed all his miracles, and the Lord Christ is the power of God (1 Corinthians 1: 24). When the staff turned into a snake, this was a symbol of the words of Saint Paul the Apostle: "For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him." (2 Corinthians 5: 21). And he also said, "Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us (for it is written, "Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree")" (Galatians 3: 13). So, when the staff turned into a serpent, this was an indication that Christ on the cross had the form of sin and the curse, while He is the holy, blessed One who is without sin. This was later explained by the bronze serpent. The bronze serpent had the form of sin, that is, the form of a serpent, but without poison, and the deadly poison is deadly sin.

Chapter 3

The service of the Levites, their number and lineage:

We come here to count the Levites. Moses did not count them among the people because their work was different. They have their spiritual service. Let us note that God's choice of someone to serve Him does not intercede for him, but rather becomes more vulnerable than others to the Lord's wrath on him. The chapter begins with the punishment of Nadab and Abihu. Here, both of them died by fire because they offered strange fire, and their sin might be either:

a) They offered it while being drunk (Review the interpretation of Leviticus 10: 1-9). b) Offering a strange fire other than the fire coming down from heaven. c) They served without the will of their father. This is why the Lord commanded that the Levites stand before Aaron the priest to serve him. Christian priests do not serve except by special decree of their bishop and their patriarch, i.e., the head of the church.

The Levites were not counted among the tribes, as they were gifted to God as a gift from the Children of Israel (verse 9). Then God gives the Levites to Aaron. In His love for man, God always wants to enter into dealings with him, in which there are giving and taking. As God declares His love for us by providing, He gives us an opportunity to return love with love by taking from our hands, not because of a deficit in His capabilities, but rather to enter with man into a relationship of mutual love. Christ is God's gift to us, and His body is taken from humans. And when we, in the liturgy, we find nothing more significant to offer to the Father, except for His Son, whom He gave us. But note that what we give to God is bread and wine. God returns it to us as the Body and Blood of His Son, which is given for the forgiveness of sins and eternal life for those who partake of it. Notice what we give to God and what God gives us in return. Peter left his nets and went after Christ. Who is Peter now?! "Then Peter answered and said to Him, "See, we have left all and followed You. Therefore what shall we have?" (Matthew 19: 27).

The Levites are like deacons now. The Levites used to slay, and the priests lay on the altar. They prepare incense, and the priests offer it.

Levi himself, Jacob, his father, was unhappy with him "Let not my soul enter their council". But the sons of Levi proved that they deserved this choice because they were the ones who were jealous for the Lord. See (Exodus 32: 25-29). It suffices that among them Moses and Aaron. And refer to (Numbers 25: 7) to see the zeal of Phinehas, son of Eleazar, son of Aaron. The position of the sons of Levi represents the accepted repentance before God (Malachi 4: 2-6). We note by this that God left Reuben the firstborn and the next Simeon and took the third, who is Levite. And thus He did when He left Ishmael and took Isaac, left Esau and took Jacob. God does not care about the birthright according to the flesh but according to readiness and merit. Thus, God chose the Gentiles and left the Jews (His firstborn son), but the Church and the believers became firstborn in Christ the firstborn. But we understand from the Old Testament that the blessing is for the firstborn. (And the firstborn had a double inheritance). But it was almost never implemented! Rather, most of the firstborns were deprived of the blessing!! So why was

the idea that the firstborn has the blessing, and why was it not implemented? This was to indicate that Adam was the firstborn of creation. And the firstborn right was lost because of his sin. And the firstborn became for Christ, about whom St. Paul the Apostle said, "He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation." (Colossians 1: 15). He also said about him that "For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren." (Romans 8: 29). And the apostle also says, "But when He again brings the firstborn into the world, He says: "Let all the angels of God worship Him." (Hebrews 1: 6).

However, the Levites themselves are not pure and need purification (Numbers 8: 5-7). This was with water (baptism - repentance). And with a razor to shave the hair (removing what is naturally growing).

And the razor here represents the word of God, which is sharper than any two-edged sword and gives repentance to the soul. Washing clothes (purification from bad habits such as stubbornness and cruelty and what appears from the external characteristics that people see). Then the sacrifices [indicating that what truly purifies is blood (Hebrews 9: 22), referring to the blood of Christ].

Levites residing around the tent

East side: The head of the cross has Moses and Aaron, a symbol of Christ, the Word of God (Moses) and the High Priest (Aaron). Moses and Aaron represented Christ as a king and a high priest. Moses was like a king among his people (Deuteronomy 33: 5).

To the west: Sons of Gershon = i.e. expelled or exiled. Christ carried His cross outside the camp and was rejected. And by His cross, He reigned over us (Isaiah 9: 6).

To the south: Sons of Kohath = that is, the sons of the united. In Christ, the two became one, and God became in partnership with people. Christ came to make the two with His cross one (John 17: 20-23 + Ephesians 2: 14-16).

To the north: Sons of Merari = referring to the bitterness that Christ endured for us, and which the Church tolerated. Christ carried the cross, and the Church must and will bear it, and whoever suffers with him will also be glorified with him (Romans 8: 17). In general, the cross is called glory (John 7: 37-39).

(Verse 1): **Now these are the records of Aaron and Moses when the Lord spoke with Moses on Mount Sinai.**

Now these are the records of Aaron and Moses: Aaron was mentioned first, as the service referred to here, i.e. the priestly service, is the service of him and his children. He is responsible for this service. And his children or his descendants, that is, the priests and their children who will become priests. Note that

Moses' children were not mentioned, as they were just Levites. And Moses did not write about his children, as this is not a human history book.

(Verse 2): **And these are the names of the sons of Aaron: Nadab, the firstborn, and Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar.**

(Verse 3): **These are the names of the sons of Aaron, the anointed priests, whom he consecrated to minister as priests.**

whom he consecrated: Means dedicated

(Verse 4): **Nadab and Abihu had died before the Lord when they offered profane fire before the Lord in the Wilderness of Sinai; and they had no children. So Eleazar and Ithamar ministered as priests in the presence of Aaron their father.**

and they had no children: Death was a punishment, and the absence of children in the Old Testament was also considered a great punishment.

in the presence of Aaron their father: That is, under his authority, command and direction.

(Verse 5): **And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying:**

(Verses 6-7): **"Bring the tribe of Levi near, and present them before Aaron the priest, that they may serve him. 7 And they shall attend to his needs and the needs of the whole congregation before the tabernacle of meeting, to do the work of the tabernacle.**

that they may serve him: This is the same as "in the presence of Aaron their father" which was mentioned before and explains it.

And they shall attend to his needs: That is his commands and guidance.

and the needs of the whole congregation: That is, the implementation of all rites for all the congregation.

(Verse 8): **Also they shall attend to all the furnishings of the tabernacle of meeting, and to the needs of the children of Israel, to do the work of the tabernacle.**

(Verse 9): **And you shall give the Levites to Aaron and his sons; they are given entirely to him from among the children of Israel.**

they are given entirely to him: To Aaron (Review Numbers 8: 19).

(Verse 10): **So you shall appoint Aaron and his sons, and they shall attend to their priesthood; but the outsider who comes near shall be put to death."**

you shall appoint: That is, to appoint/employ/determine, and St. Paul the Apostle said that it is a job, "And no man takes this honour to himself, but he who is called by God, just as Aaron was." (Hebrews 5: 4). He also said of the priesthood that they are God's stewards, "Let a man so consider us, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God." (1 Corinthians 4: 1). Appoint here is similar to the term stewards used by the Apostle Paul.

(Verse 11): **Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying:**

(Verse 12): **"Now behold, I Myself have taken the Levites from among the children of Israel instead of every firstborn who opens the womb among the children of Israel. Therefore the Levites shall be Mine,**

The Levites here, instead of the firstborn, shall belong to the Lord. The firstborns in Egypt all died on the night of the Exodus, and the firstborn of all the Jews were supposed to die on the same night. But the Passover Lamb redeemed them. The firstborn became the property of God, who bought them with the blood of the Passover lamb. And God here does not seek all the firstborn, but the Levites, seeking them for Himself.

And here is a question... If God chose the Levites to serve Him, why did He ask for the firstborn? It is as if God said to Moses after the Exodus, "Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, 2"Consecrate to Me all the firstborn, whatever opens the womb among the children of Israel, both of man and beast; it is Mine." (Exodus 13: 1-2). The meaning is that when Christ (our Passover) redeemed us from death and gave us eternal life, we became firstborns whom He purchased with His blood, and He asks us to be His, dedicating ourselves to Him, praising Him and serving Him all the days of our lives on earth. For Christ, through His redemption, became a redemption for the people in Him, who became redeemed firstborns. The subject of choosing the firstborn first was to explain the truth that those whom Christ purchased with His blood became His. Therefore, Saint Paul the Apostle says about the Church that it is the Church of the firstborn, that is, the Church whose people Christ redeemed so that they would have eternal life and not die, just as the Passover Lamb redeemed the firstborn of God's people in Egypt so

that they did not die, "But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, to an innumerable company of angels, 23to the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are registered in heaven, to God the Judge of all, to the spirits of just men made perfect," (Hebrews 12: 22-23). After that, God chose Aaron and his sons and the Levites as their job (Hebrews 5: 4).

God took the Levites instead of the firstborn

So the Levites became a ransom for the firstborn of the rest of the tribes

And since the number of the Levites was 22,000 and the number of the firstborn of the people was 22,273, they paid five shekels to Aaron as a ransom for each of the 273 persons.

*Here is a special reflection on the servants. The Levite had to leave all his portion and all his work in order to serve the people. And so every servant must leave his comfort and dignity for the sake of the salvation of whom he serves.

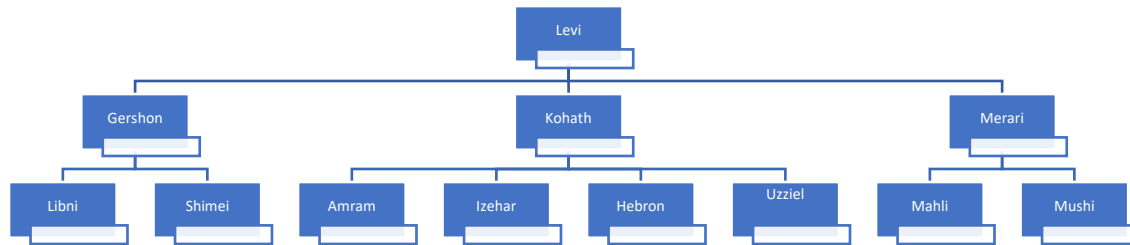
(Verses 13-14): **because all the firstborn are Mine. On the day that I struck all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, I sanctified to Myself all the firstborn in Israel, both man and beast. They shall be Mine: I am the Lord." 14 Then the Lord spoke to Moses in the Wilderness of Sinai, saying:**

(Verse 15): **"Number the children of Levi by their fathers' houses, by their families; you shall number every male from a month old and above."**

from a month old: While in the rest of the tribes, men were counted from 20 years old onwards. These are men of war, but here we are talking about the Levites who serve the Lord. And the service of praise is not tied to age, but "Out of the mouth of babes and nursing infants You have perfected praise."

"Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of heaven." (Matthew 19: 14). Rather, God sanctified Jeremiah while he was in his mother's womb (Jeremiah 1: 5). Samuel was presented to the temple as soon as he was weaned (1 Samuel 1: 24), and John the Baptist was filled with the Holy Spirit while he was in his mother's womb (Luke 1: 15) and Timothy knew the books as a child (2 Timothy 3: 15).

And because the Levites were redemption for the rest of the tribes (that is, the firstborn of the rest of the tribes), and these firstborns were present from them from every age, it was necessary for the Levites to represent all ages. In addition to this, the firstborn was redeemed if he was a month old (Numbers 18: 15, 16), and therefore The Orthodox Church baptizes and gives communion to children.



7500

The tabernacle, the tent with its covering
 the screen for the door of the tabernacle.
 the screen for the door of the court, the hangings of the court which are around the tabernacle and the altar
 their cords, according to all the work
 + They had 2 wheels, 4 oxen

8600

the ark, the table, the lampstand, the altars, the utensils of the sanctuary with which they ministered, the screen, and all the work relating to them.
 + They carry it on their shoulders during their departure, after the priests cover it, so the priests were not given both wheels and oxen.

6200

the boards of the tabernacle, its bars, its pillars, its sockets, its utensils, all the work relating to them.
 the pillars of the court all around, with their sockets, their pegs, and their cords.
 + They had 4 wheels, 8 bulls

(Verses 16 -31): **So Moses numbered them according to the word of the Lord, as he was commanded. 17 These were the sons of Levi by their names: Gershon, Kohath, and Merari. 18 And these are the names of the sons of Gershon by their families: Libni and Shimei. 19 And the sons of Kohath by their families: Amram, Izechar, Hebron, and Uzziel. 20 And the sons of Merari by their families: Mahli and Mushi. These are the families of the Levites by their fathers' houses. 21 From Gershon came the family of the Libnites and the family of the Shimites; these were the families of the Gershonites. 22 Those who were numbered, according to the number of all the males from a month old and above—of those who were numbered there were seven thousand five hundred. 23 The families of the Gershonites were to camp behind the tabernacle westward. 24 And the leader of the father's house of the Gershonites was Eliasaph the son of Lael. 25 The duties of the children of Gershon in the tabernacle of meeting included the tabernacle, the tent with its covering, the screen for the door of the tabernacle**

of meeting, 26 the screen for the door of the court, the hangings of the court which are around the tabernacle and the altar, and their cords, according to all the work relating to them. 27 From Kohath came the family of the Amramites, the family of the Izharites, the family of the Hebronites, and the family of the Uzzielites; these were the families of the Kohathites. 28 According to the number of all the males, from a month old and above, there were eight thousand six hundred keeping charge of the sanctuary. 29 The families of the children of Kohath were to camp on the south side of the tabernacle. 30 And the leader of the fathers' house of the families of the Kohathites was Elizaphan the son of Uzziel. 31 Their duty included the ark, the table, the lampstand, the altars, the utensils of the sanctuary with which they ministered, the screen, and all the work relating to them.

(Verse 32): **And Eleazar the son of Aaron the priest was to be chief over the leaders of the Levites, with oversight of those who kept charge of the sanctuary.**

with oversight of those who kept charge of the sanctuary: Meaning chief over them. The guards of the Holy place are the three chiefs of the Gershonites, the Kohathites, and the Merarites. They were heads of their clans and guards of their work. Eleazar was chief of the three chiefs. We note that working in the house of the Lord is called guard, because the worker in the Lord's vineyard is a trustee who has been entrusted with serious matters and is asked to be honest, just as He is also a guard, in whose custody are souls bought by God with His blood.

Notes on the numbers of the Levites:

1. They are the least of the tribes in number, as God's share is the small flock.
 2. With summing the clan numbers $7500 + 8600 + 6200 = 22300$, while in verse 39 the total number is 22000 and the interpretation of this is one of two possibilities:
 - A. Transcription error due to the fact mentioned by the commentators that there is a slight difference between the number 500 and the number 200 in the Hebrew language, and the scribe wrote 7500 instead of 7200.
 - B. The 300 are the firstborn of the Levites themselves who their fathers redeemed along with the firstborn of the other tribes based on the Lord's command to His servant Moses in (Exodus 13: 1-2) to sanctify all the firstborn of the children of Israel.
- This was before He commanded to take the Levites in place of the firstborn.
 - Therefore, as long as they were covered by redemption before, they were excluded from the law that was given here because their fathers had offered redemption for them, and they were no longer a substitute for the firstborn of the people.

This last opinion is the most likely one, as it is impossible, with the accuracy of the Jewish scribes, to err in transcribing with the precision that is known about them. They were counting the letters, not just the words.

We summarize the issue as follows:-

1. The number of the firstborn of the people is 22,273 (verse 43), and this number includes the firstborn of the Levites. And the firstborn was redeemed with five shekels (Numbers 18: 16).
2. God returned and designated the Levites to serve Him instead of the firstborn (Numbers 3: 12). The number of Levites was 22,300 = 7500 + 8600 + 6200 (the children of Gershon, Kohath, and Merari). Of these, 300 are counted with the firstborn of the children of Israel.
3. These 300 have already been redeemed for 5 shekels.
4. The number of Levites allotted to God becomes $22,300 - 300 = 22,000$, according to verse 39.

(Verses 33-43): **From Merari came the family of the Mahlites and the family of the Mushites; these were the families of Merari. 34 And those who were numbered, according to the number of all the males from a month old and above, were six thousand two hundred. 35 The leader of the fathers' house of the families of Merari was Zuriel the son of Abihail. These were to camp on the north side of the tabernacle. 36 And the appointed duty of the children of Merari included the boards of the tabernacle, its bars, its pillars, its sockets, its utensils, all the work relating to them, 37 and the pillars of the court all around, with their sockets, their pegs, and their cords. 38 Moreover those who were to camp before the tabernacle on the east, before the tabernacle of meeting, were Moses, Aaron, and his sons, keeping charge of the sanctuary, to meet the needs of the children of Israel; but the outsider who came near was to be put to death. 39 All who were numbered of the Levites, whom Moses and Aaron numbered at the commandment of the Lord, by their families, all the males from a month old and above, were twenty-two thousand. 40 Then the Lord said to Moses: "Number all the firstborn males of the children of Israel from a month old and above, and take the number of their names. 41 And you shall take the Levites for Me—I am the Lord—instead of all the firstborn among the children of Israel, and the livestock of the Levites instead of all the firstborn among the livestock of the children of Israel." 42 So Moses numbered all the firstborn among the children of Israel, as the Lord commanded him. 43 And all the firstborn males, according to the number of names from a month old and above, of those who were numbered of them, were twenty-two thousand two hundred and seventy-three.**

(Verses 44-45): **Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying: 45 "Take the Levites instead of all the firstborn among the children of Israel, and the livestock of the Levites instead of their livestock. The Levites shall be Mine: I am the Lord.**

Take the Levites instead of all the firstborn: See the interpretation of verse 12 in this chapter and the introduction to Leviticus on this subject.

and the livestock of the Levites instead of their livestock: All that belongs to the Levites is to the Lord. We understand from this verse that whoever dedicates himself to serving the Lord, he and all that he owns, even all his time and energies (physical and intellectual...etc.), become dedicated to the Lord. The reference here is to the beasts, not to the firstborn of the beasts, for the firstborn of the beasts are sacred to the Lord, whether those of the people or the Levites.

Moses blessing to the Levites: (Deuteronomy 33: 8-11)

It carries the concept of Christ, who does not hate his father and mother.... He is not worthy of me.

Until now, we find that the people determined their lineage and number, and had banners and priestly service. As for the Christian people of God, they belong to God, their Father rises above them, and they have a priestly service according to the rite of Melchizedek. They spend their lives praising and singing and raising their eyes to heaven. Leaving all interest in the world, God gives and blesses them according to Moses' blessing for them.

(Verses 46-51): **And for the redemption of the two hundred and seventy-three of the firstborn of the children of Israel, who are more than the number of the Levites, 47 you shall take five shekels for each one individually; you shall take them in the currency of the shekel of the sanctuary, the shekel of twenty gerahs. 48 And you shall give the money, with which the excess number of them is redeemed, to Aaron and his sons." 49 So Moses took the redemption money from those who were over and above those who were redeemed by the Levites. 50 From the firstborn of the children of Israel he took the money, one thousand three hundred and sixty-five shekels, according to the shekel of the sanctuary. 51 And Moses gave their redemption money to Aaron and his sons, according to the word of the Lord, as the Lord commanded Moses.**

Chapter 4

Organizing the service of the Levites during the journey:

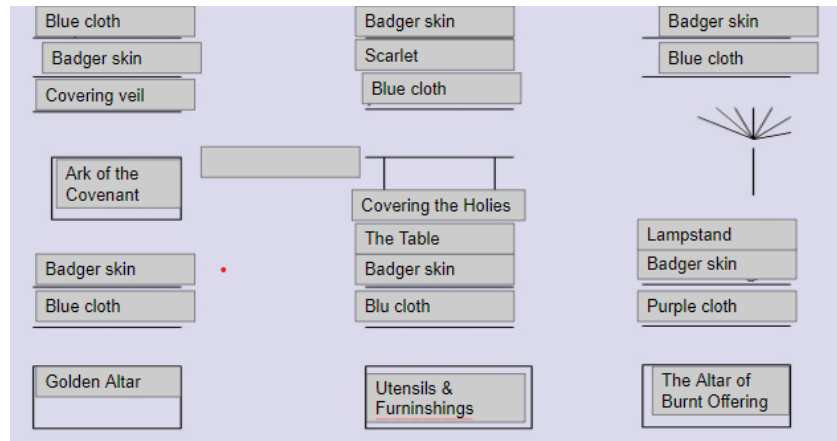
Here the age of service for the Levites is determined between 30 to 50 years old. The average soldier goes to service at the age of twenty, but the Levite, the servant of the Lord, must be more mature. The age stage (30-50) is the best stage of life in terms of maturity and health. After the age of fifty, the individual needs to rest.

The age of thirty for the Jews is the age of manhood and maturity, in which the priest and the prophet begin their work.

Priests and prophets are often brought up around the tabernacle or temple until the age of thirty and begin their ministry. In (Numbers 8: 24), the Levites are obligated to start work at the age of twenty-five to spend five years training. After that, in the days of David, they began at the age of twenty (1 Chronicles 23: 24 + Ezra 3: 8) to remain under training for ten years. Christ began at the age of thirty, and so did David the King, and Joseph stood before Pharaoh at the age of thirty.

And number 30 = 5 x 6. And the number 5 is the number of the responsible grace and the five senses, so whoever strives to preserve his five senses in purity will be filled with grace. And the number 6 refers to human weakness, so Adam was created on the sixth day and fell on the sixth day. Therefore, the number 30 refers to the weak person when God fills him with every blessing so he becomes mature and fit for service. God is ready to pour out his grace on the priest or on everyone whom He chose to serve Him, sanctify his life, and fill him with strength if this person was faithful to God. And the number 50 is also the number of the jubilee, in which the slaves are liberated and a full freedom occurs for them, the lands and the debtors. It is a year of rest. And in it, the Holy Spirit descended on the church to grant the church a new heavenly nature free from sin that has the power to set off towards heaven. Like the Lord Christ, a creditor who owed two debts, the one who owed 50 (the pardon number), and Abraham began his intercession for Sodom with 50, as if the Levites were exempted from service at this age to prepare to set out to serve the heavenly temple.

* God has specified for each clan what to carry. Some carry the ark, and some carry the pegs and the poles. And the one who carries the ark should not be proud, nor should the soul of the one who carries the pegs be underestimated, for everyone is integrated into God's work. All the servants of the church complement each other in their work. Screens are meaningless without pegs and vice versa. A servant should not envy another servant for his talents and work, but rather each one should be satisfied with what God has set for him. Rather, in (Numbers 4: 32) **and you shall assign to each man by name the items he must carry**, i.e. it is custody, handing and delivery, custody for every person who carries and delivers by name. This phrase was said about the most minor or simplest things in the tent and the least important to indicate God's concern for the most insignificant things in the service. God wants us to be faithful in little.

Coverings of the divine sanctuaries:

* We note that all the sanctuaries are covered with a blue cloth referring to Christ who comes from heaven. However, nothing appears on the outside except the badger's skin as a sign of his isolation from sin. He made His Church heavenly and protected it from all the difficult circumstances of the world and its influences (badger skin).

* We find the ark has a special status, as it is blue from the outside since the ark refers to the heavenly Christ who took a body (the covering veil), But he returned to heaven and is now in heaven at the right of His Father in His glory. As the Lord Jesus said about Himself to Nicodemus, "No one has ascended to heaven but He who came down from heaven, that is, the Son of Man who is in heaven." (John 3: 13).

* The altar of burnt offering is covered with a purple garment, as the altar of burnt offering refers to the cross and the purple garments of kings, and Christ reigned over us with His cross on earth.

* The table has the perpetual bread and the garment of scarlet on it. The bread offered to us is the body and shed blood of Christ. The scarlet refers to the blood shed for us.

* The book did not refer to any cover for the laver, as it refers to baptism and repentance for everyone to see it, so humanity hurries to it. Therefore, it is a call to all to faith, baptism and repentance.

* Covering the sanctuaries refers to the life of the believers and their relationship with God, and that it must be in secret, as prayer is in the room and fasting is not apparent.

(Verses 1-2): **Then the Lord spoke to Moses and Aaron, saying: 2 "Take a census of the sons of Kohath from among the children of Levi, by their families, by their fathers' house,**

(Verse 3): **from thirty years old and above, even to fifty years old, all who enter the service to do the work in the tabernacle of meeting.**

all who enter the service: The Levites are also in service, but they serve God.

(Verses 4-9): **"This is the service of the sons of Kohath in the tabernacle of meeting, relating to the most holy things: 5 When the camp prepares to journey, Aaron and his sons shall come, and they shall take down the covering veil and cover the ark of the Testimony with it. 6 Then they shall put on it a covering of badger skins, and spread over that a cloth entirely of blue; and they shall insert its poles. 7 "On the table of showbread they shall spread a blue cloth, and put on it the dishes, the pans, the bowls, and the pitchers for pouring; and the showbread shall be on it. 8 They shall spread over them a scarlet cloth, and cover the same with a covering of badger skins; and they shall insert its poles. 9 And they shall take a blue cloth and cover the lampstand of the light, with its lamps, its wick-trimmers, its trays, and all its oil vessels, with which they service it.**

(Verse 10): **Then they shall put it with all its utensils in a covering of badger skins, and put it on a carrying beam**

carrying beam: It is a stand on which the lampstand is placed, and it is two wooden rods attached to wooden beams, and it is used with what has no sticks.

(Verses 11-12): **"Over the golden altar they shall spread a blue cloth, and cover it with a covering of badger skins; and they shall insert its poles. 12 Then they shall take all the utensils of service with which they minister in the sanctuary, put them in a blue cloth, cover them with a covering of badger skins, and put them on a carrying beam.**

(Verse 13): **Also they shall take away the ashes from the altar, and spread a purple cloth over it**

the ashes from the altar: They take it away either to throw it or to carry what will travel with them, as it is known that the altar is empty and inside it is sand and ashes. On the journey, the altar is emptied. Note that the ashes refer to the body of Christ after His death.

(Verse 14): **They shall put on it all its implements with which they minister there—the firepans, the forks, the shovels, the basins, and all the utensils of the altar—and they shall spread on it a covering of badger skins, and insert its poles.**

(Verse 15): **And when Aaron and his sons have finished covering the sanctuary and all the furnishings of the sanctuary, when the camp is set to go, then the sons of Kohath shall come to carry them; but**

they shall not touch any holy thing, lest they die. "These are the things in the tabernacle of meeting which the sons of Kohath are to carry

Only priests were allowed to see the sanctuaries. As for the Levites, they carry it after it is covered. This is the meaning of verse 18: **Do not cut off the tribe of the families of the Kohathites from among the Levites**

That is, if you did not cover the sanctuaries and the Levites of the Kohathites carried them, they would die, and this is what happened with Uzzah when he touched the ark of the covenant (2 Samuel 6: 6,7).

Disassembling the tent and the journeying:

The tent refers to the body (2 Corinthians 5: 1). The tent's destruction in this verse refers to the death of a person, and the first thing that happens before dismantling the tent is carrying the sacred things and covering them, i.e. concealing them, which is what happens with the person at death. Then the curtains are raised, and the beams appear, which happens with death, the flesh disappears, and the bones appear. After this, the tent will be re-erected, and nothing will be lost, and thus we will take a new body in the form of the body of Christ after the resurrection. But our present body is referred to as the tent that we take off by death, but we will put on the glorified body, which will never dissolve in heaven, and this is referred to as the temple. After the tent wandered with them in the wilderness for 40 years, they built a permanent temple in Jerusalem, the promised land, the symbol of heaven (2 Corinthians 5: 1-4).

The Laver

The lack of mentioning the laver among the sanctuaries is due to two possibilities:

1. It might be in the utensils mentioned in verse 12, and they put it on the beam. This is logical because the laver is made of copper and heavy by weight, so it is carried on a carrying beam.
2. The laver is carried on the beam, but the intentional omission of its mention, as happened in (chapter 8), which begins with preparing the lampstand until it lights up, then talks about how to bring the Levites to serve and purify them. We find the talk in (chapter 8) about carrying the lampstand as an indication of the work of the Holy Spirit in the Church in everything, including the sacraments. The meaning in (chapter 8) is that the Holy Spirit is the one who prepares and purifies them.

As for here, the reason is clear that baptism and repentance, which is a second baptism, are the way to all the sacraments and the entrance to Christianity. Perhaps the inspiration omitted the mention of its coverage to say that the call to faith and repentance is clear to all and available to everyone. However, the mysteries of the sanctuaries are covered in front of those outsiders. "The royal daughter is all glorious within the palace." All parts of the tent are covered, and the tent refers to Christ, but whoever comes by faith and is baptized, or if he is a believer and returns repentant, his eyes will open, and

enlightenment occurs to him. Here we say that the man born blind was blind when he went inside the pool of Siloam, but then his eyes were opened, and he knew Christ. With the same approach, we read the Gospel born blind in the Church on the sixth Sunday of the Lent. Sin causes blindness to the eyes, but he who comes to repent, the Lord says about him, "Blessed are the pure in heart, For they shall see God."

(Verses 16-49): **"The appointed duty of Eleazar the son of Aaron the priest is the oil for the light, the sweet incense, the daily grain offering, the anointing oil, the oversight of all the tabernacle, of all that is in it, with the sanctuary and its furnishings." 17 Then the Lord spoke to Moses and Aaron, saying: 18 "Do not cut off the tribe of the families of the Kohathites from among the Levites; 19 but do this in regard to them, that they may live and not die when they approach the most holy things: Aaron and his sons shall go in and appoint each of them to his service and his task. 20 But they shall not go in to watch while the holy things are being covered, lest they die." 21 Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying: 22 "Also take a census of the sons of Gershon, by their fathers' house, by their families. 23 From thirty years old and above, even to fifty years old, you shall number them, all who enter to perform the service, to do the work in the tabernacle of meeting. 24 This is the service of the families of the Gershonites, in serving and carrying: 25 They shall carry the curtains of the tabernacle and the tabernacle of meeting with its covering, the covering of badger skins that is on it, the screen for the door of the tabernacle of meeting, 26 the screen for the door of the gate of the court, the hangings of the court which are around the tabernacle and altar, and their cords, all the furnishings for their service and all that is made for these things: so shall they serve. 27 "Aaron and his sons shall assign all the service of the sons of the Gershonites, all their tasks and all their service. And you shall appoint to them all their tasks as their duty. 28 This is the service of the families of the sons of Gershon in the tabernacle of meeting. And their duties shall be under the authority of Ithamar the son of Aaron the priest. 29 "As for the sons of Merari, you shall number them by their families and by their fathers' house. 30 From thirty years old and above, even to fifty years old, you shall number them, everyone who enters the service to do the work of the tabernacle of meeting. 31 And this is what they must carry as all their service for the tabernacle of meeting: the boards of the tabernacle, its bars, its pillars, its sockets, 32 and the pillars around the court with their sockets, pegs, and cords, with all their furnishings and all their service; and you shall assign to each man by name the items he must carry. 33 This is the service of the families of the sons of Merari, as all their service for the tabernacle of meeting, under the authority of Ithamar the son of Aaron the priest." 34 And Moses, Aaron, and the leaders of the congregation numbered the sons of the Kohathites by their families and by their fathers' house, 35 from thirty years old and above, even to fifty years old, everyone who entered the service for work in the tabernacle of meeting; 36 and those who were numbered by their families were two thousand seven hundred and fifty. 37 These were the ones who were numbered of the families of the Kohathites, all who might serve in the tabernacle of meeting, whom Moses and Aaron numbered according to the commandment of the Lord by the hand of Moses. 38 And those who were numbered of the sons of Gershon, by their families and by their fathers' house, 39 from thirty years old and above, even to fifty years old, everyone who entered the service for work in the tabernacle of**

meeting— 40 those who were numbered by their families, by their fathers' house, were two thousand six hundred and thirty. 41 These are the ones who were numbered of the families of the sons of Gershon, of all who might serve in the tabernacle of meeting, whom Moses and Aaron numbered according to the commandment of the Lord. 42 Those of the families of the sons of Merari who were numbered, by their families, by their fathers' house, 43 from thirty years old and above, even to fifty years old, everyone who entered the service for work in the tabernacle of meeting— 44 those who were numbered by their families were three thousand two hundred. 45 These are the ones who were numbered of the families of the sons of Merari, whom Moses and Aaron numbered according to the word of the Lord by the hand of Moses. 46 All who were numbered of the Levites, whom Moses, Aaron, and the leaders of Israel numbered, by their families and by their fathers' houses, 47 from thirty years old and above, even to fifty years old, everyone who came to do the work of service and the work of bearing burdens in the tabernacle of meeting— 48 those who were numbered were eight thousand five hundred and eighty. 49 According to the commandment of the Lord they were numbered by the hand of Moses, each according to his service and according to his task; thus were they numbered by him, as the Lord commanded Moses.

Chapter 5

Isolation of sin to sanctify the place

The lineage and number of God's people have been determined (Chapter 1), and they have a distinctive sign (Banners, Chapter 2), and they have a priestly service (Chapter 3), and they are journeying from the land of slavery, heading to the heavenly Jerusalem, and God with His sanctities in their midst, even that what is doubting to be a sin. The people had to continue in a state of holiness and isolate any sin from their midst, even doubting what sin is. The Christian defines his lineage and sonship by baptism, and he has a distinctive sign with the chrism as he lives praising God (general priesthood), walking on His way to heaven and striving against sin.

The presence of sin deprives us of the blessings of God's presence among us. That is why the people were defeated before Ai (Joshua 7). And they heard the words of God: "There is an accursed thing in your midst, O Israel" [And see (1 Corinthians 3: 16, 17 + 1 Corinthians 5: 13)]. In this chapter, God calls for the necessity of purifying the entire camp on the general, personal and family levels.

Referring to the Book of Leviticus, we find that leprosy symbolizes sin, so isolating the leper here is a symbol of isolating evil. The lepers had their own tents outside the camp, as the first application in history to the work of a hospital to isolate the sick, and it was not conceivable to throw the leper in the desert. Thus, the Church should isolate the sinful person who causes a stumble to others and becomes like a leaven of corruption. As St. Paul, the Apostle says, "put away from yourselves the evil person." (1 Corinthians 5: 13). As God was in the midst of His people, so God is in the midst of the church now, and light has no communion with darkness (2 Corinthians 6: 14). And in the era of the law, such diseases were a curse, but after Christ cured all kinds of diseases (leprosy, bleeding... Rather, he raised the dead), and all of this was considered uncleanness in the Old Testament, but the disease is no longer an impurity, nor death a curse.

This chapter contains three sections, each devoted to a type of evil that must be removed from the camp for God's blessing to rest upon it. The first is sanctification for the congregation, the second is sanctification for the person, and the third is sanctification for the family.

First: It pertains to unclean people, both in health and in the rites, and this refers to the apparent evil towards God and people.

Second: It is concerned with the impurity arising from causing harm to others, such as theft, which refers to an evil not seen by people but by God.

Third: It is concerned with doubting sin (marital jealousy), which indicates that God does not tolerate even that what is doubted to be evil.

We note that God asks for confession, self-judgment, the return of the seized, and the removal of evil.

(Verses 1-4): **And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying: 2 "Command the children of Israel that they put out of the camp every leper, everyone who has a discharge, and whoever becomes defiled by a corpse. 3 You shall put out both male and female; you shall put them outside the camp, that they may not defile their camps in the midst of which I dwell." 4 And the children of Israel did so, and put them outside the camp; as the Lord spoke to Moses, so the children of Israel did.**

Leprosy was called in Hebrew "sarat," which means disaster because it came from the Lord as a result of a person's sin, and there is no cure for it except through the Lord (Miriam, the sister of Moses...).

Leprosy has a health concept. The patient was isolated so that the disease would not spread in the camp. But God was concerned that people understand that what is important is that they do not come into contact with sin and isolate it. And what is said about leprosy is said about the one with discharge or contact with the dead (death is the result of sin, it is equivalent to it).

(Verses 5-10): **Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, 6 "Speak to the children of Israel: 'When a man or woman commits any sin that men commit in unfaithfulness against the Lord, and that person is guilty, 7 then he shall confess the sin which he has committed. He shall make restitution for his trespass in full, plus one-fifth of it, and give it to the one he has wronged. 8 But if the man has no relative to whom restitution may be made for the wrong, the restitution for the wrong must go to the Lord for the priest, in addition to the ram of the atonement with which atonement is made for him. 9 Every offering of all the holy things of the children of Israel, which they bring to the priest, shall be his. 10 And every man's holy things shall be his; whatever any man gives the priest shall be his.'"**

unfaithfulness against the Lord: What is meant is that he took possession of someone else's property, and the owner of the thing did not know what happened. Or he took a trust with him, and the owner of the trust died, so he seized the trust, and no one knew. Or, the fault is against a stranger, and this stranger has left the country and could not be found. This is a betrayal of God = **unfaithfulness against the Lord**. God considers what he has given to man sacred to him, and no one else has the right to transgress him, so He says, **"And every man's holy things shall be his."** This means that God has designated it for him. Note that what happened was in secret or hidden, and sin here was not seen by man but by God. But sin in general stems from the hardness of the heart, as it is directed at God. Therefore, God asked the sinner, whose conscience had awakened, to commit himself to offer sincere and practical repentance. God is the one who reigns over His people and asks that His people be pure. The conditions for this repentance are:

A. To confess = **then he shall confess the sin which he has committed** (verse 7). Confession makes the hard heart soften, and we notice that the confession is before God, the priest, and the person who sinned against him. " He who covers his sins will not prosper, But whoever confesses and forsakes them will have mercy." (Proverbs 28: 13).

B. He returns what he has committed or seized, so he does not benefit from his mistake, and the innocent person is wronged. Rather, he pays for what he stole and increases the one-fifth as a penalty

so that he knows that sin does not benefit. If the owner of the thing has died, the compensation goes to the relative or whoever inherits him.

C. If it is impossible to find the right holder, the compensation (what he stole + one-fifth) goes to the priest or the temple = **the restitution for the wrong must go to the Lord for the priest**. And it is for the priest if the offender wants that = **whatever any man gives the priest shall be his.**

D. Offering a trespass offering = **in addition to the ram of the atonement**. Because sin is directed to God Himself first, there is no solution except by offering a sacrifice.

In this legislation, there is an additional part than what was mentioned in the Book of Leviticus, that the relative can accept the restitution if the person that the guilt was done against cannot be found or in the event of his death. If it is impossible to find the relative, the compensation goes to the priest or the temple. It appears here that there is no forgiveness in the event that the fault is against strangers. A person's absence or being a stranger is not an excuse for non-payment. If God had requested that the seized thing be returned to the temple, then He can compensate the oppressed in one way or another.

In verses 9, 10: **Every offering of all the holy things of the children of Israel, which they bring to the priest, shall be his. 10 And every man's offering things shall be his; whatever any man gives the priest shall be his."**

We find the text on the rights of priests. And I think that adding it here has a meaning related to the above, that **whatever any man gives the priest shall be his** like the rest of his rights from the sacrifices they offer, which are called **offering** and **holy**. And the offering includes waving the thigh and chest. The holy is what the people sanctify to the Lord, such as vows, freewill offerings, and parts of the prescribed sacrifices.

And every man's offering things shall be his: Means the things owned by someone and he vows to give them to God are for the temple or for the priest = **whatever any man gives the priest shall be his**.

(Verses 11-31): **And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, 12 "Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: 'If any man's wife goes astray and behaves unfaithfully toward him, 13 and a man lies with her carnally, and it is hidden from the eyes of her husband, and it is concealed that she has defiled herself, and there was no witness against her, nor was she caught— 14 if the spirit of jealousy comes upon him and he becomes jealous of his wife, who has defiled herself; or if the spirit of jealousy comes upon him and he becomes jealous of his wife, although she has not defiled herself— 15 then the man shall bring his wife to the priest. He shall bring the offering required for her, one-tenth of an ephah of barley meal; he shall pour no oil on it and put no frankincense on it, because it is a grain offering of jealousy, an offering for remembering, for bringing iniquity to remembrance.16 'And the priest shall bring her near, and set her before the Lord. 17 The priest shall take holy water in an earthen vessel, and take some of the dust that is on the floor of the tabernacle and put it into the water. 18 Then the priest shall stand the woman before the Lord, uncover the woman's head, and put the offering for**

remembering in her hands, which is the grain offering of jealousy. And the priest shall have in his hand the bitter water that brings a curse. 19 And the priest shall put her under oath, and say to the woman, "If no man has lain with you, and if you have not gone astray to uncleanness while under your husband's authority, be free from this bitter water that brings a curse. 20 But if you have gone astray while under your husband's authority, and if you have defiled yourself and some man other than your husband has lain with you"— 21 then the priest shall put the woman under the oath of the curse, and he shall say to the woman—"the Lord make you a curse and an oath among your people, when the Lord makes your thigh rot and your belly swell; 22 and may this water that causes the curse go into your stomach, and make your belly swell and your thigh rot." 'Then the woman shall say, "Amen, so be it." 23 'Then the priest shall write these curses in a book, and he shall scrape them off into the bitter water. 24 And he shall make the woman drink the bitter water that brings a curse, and the water that brings the curse shall enter her to become bitter. 25 Then the priest shall take the grain offering of jealousy from the woman's hand, shall wave the offering before the Lord, and bring it to the altar; 26 and the priest shall take a handful of the offering, as its memorial portion, burn it on the altar, and afterward make the woman drink the water. 27 When he has made her drink the water, then it shall be, if she has defiled herself and behaved unfaithfully toward her husband, that the water that brings a curse will enter her and become bitter, and her belly will swell, her thigh will rot, and the woman will become a curse among her people. 28 But if the woman has not defiled herself, and is clean, then she shall be free and may conceive children. 29 'This is the law of jealousy, when a wife, while under her husband's authority, goes astray and defiles herself, 30 or when the spirit of jealousy comes upon a man, and he becomes jealous of his wife; then he shall stand the woman before the Lord, and the priest shall execute all this law upon her. 31 Then the man shall be free from iniquity, but that woman shall bear her guilt.'"

The law of jealousy:

The family is a small-scale version of the congregation. God wanted the holiness of the family and the whole community.

Adultery is the most heinous sin, during which the house is dissolved, and the man and woman lose their unity in the Lord. Family adultery may become a source of threat to the peace of the whole camp. It is a delicate and thorny subject, and a man may kill his wife or whom he suspects of cheating with her. Therefore, God placed this law, in which the hand of God appears, by a divine miracle. Just as God miraculously intervened in the issue of manna, quail, water, and victory over all obstacles (the sea - the army of Pharaoh - Amalek...). For Satan would not erase Christianity, miracles prevailed. For God to preserve the peace and sanctity of the camp, He miraculously intervened in this canon. Just as Ananias and Sapphira died when they lied to the Holy Spirit, thus the adulterous would get sick, and the unfaithful wife would die if she insisted on denying her sin.

Worldly Religious Trials:

There are two words, and both mean trial. The first is the TRIAL and the second is the ORDEAL which means religious trials. The implementers of this type of religious trial believe that there are supernatural forces that will reveal the innocence of the accused or his conviction.

The word ORDEAL is divided into OR, which in Latin means great, sacred, or greater, and DEAL is also Latin, meaning trial. Perhaps these trials spread as an imitation of the Jewish rite in the law of jealousy. However, there is a huge difference. Here, God intervenes without torture or terrifying ways, but in the pagan world rites, there were means of torture, such as the guilty walking on burning coals. If he survived and did not burn, he was innocent (probably this was done with the Egyptian Pope Demetrius AlKaram), or the sinner holds a burning iron, or walk in the fire. These customs spread among the pagan peoples. Note the difference, for the guilty woman among the Jews was injured by the hand of God, but among the pagans, where there is no god, they were compelled to such heinous practices.

The Jewish tradition mentions that the man who committed the act of adultery with the woman had the same symptoms and died on the same day as the woman, and both of them died in a painful state as a result of the curse and in a short period. The Jewish tradition also said that if a man had committed adultery, and after this, he doubted his wife and went to complain about her, she would not show any symptoms, even if she was an adulteress. And when adultery spread among the people, this law became not applied, and God Himself became ceased to punish (Hosea 4: 13, 14), and this is the most horrible thing that can be imagined, that God does not punish, For whom the Lord loves He chastens, (Hebrews 12: 6). If God does not discipline the sinner, then this means that God has wholly despaired of the person, and thus he is condemned to perdition. Tradition also mentioned that if a man went to complain about his wife before the priest, he had to give his reasons. And God will not run out of a way by which to manifest the innocent. As for him who corrupts the temple of the Son of God, God will corrupt him. If the woman confessed her sin, she was divorced and did not take her dowry, but she was not killed.

Verses 12, 13: **"Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: 'If any man's wife goes astray and behaves unfaithfully toward him, 13 and a man lies with her carnally, and it is hidden from the eyes of her husband, and it is concealed that she has defiled herself, and there was no witness against her, nor was she caught—**

nor was she caught: Means not caught in the act. And it remained hidden.

Verse 14: **if the spirit of jealousy comes upon him and he becomes jealous of his wife, who has defiled herself; or if the spirit of jealousy comes upon him and he becomes jealous of his wife, although she has not defiled herself—**

who has defiled herself: Meaning that she in fact committed adultery.

Verse 15: **then the man shall bring his wife to the priest. He shall bring the offering required for her, one-tenth of an ephah of barley meal; he shall pour no oil on it and put no frankincense on it, because it is a grain offering of jealousy, an offering for remembering, for bringing iniquity to remembrance.**

to the priest: 1. It is a trial in the presence of God. 2. And because sin in the first place is directed against God, 3. it is necessary to make an offering and not appear empty-handed before God. "Do not appear before the Lord empty-handed," (Sirach 35: 6). 4. **Placing the offering for remembering** on the altar means that all those present: the priest, the man and the woman, are asking for God's intervention to reveal the truth.

of barley meal: Barley is the food of the poor and is used in times of drought and distress. This circumstance, the circumstance of marital infidelity, is a distress circumstance and not joy. **he shall pour no oil on it:** The oil is a symbol of the Holy Spirit; from its fruits is joy, and the oil heals the wounds. We are now in front of a woman who does not want to confess, and she is coming to a rite that exposes her, so there is no oil for healing her wounds. **and put no frankincense on it:** Frankincense or incense is a symbol of pure prayers, and without confession, there is no intercession prayer. This is the share of one who conceals his sins; he will not succeed.

Verse 17: **The priest shall take holy water in an earthen vessel, and take some of the dust that is on the floor of the tabernacle and put it into the water.**

holy water: Possibly from the laver, or water containing some of the ashes of a red heifer (Number 19).

the dust that is on the floor of the tabernacle: It is sacred because it is from the floor of the tabernacle. And dust is a reference to the curse, as one of the results of sin is that the serpent goes on its belly and eats dust (Genesis 3: 14). As one of the fathers said, "Do you want the serpent not to eat you (Satan), then do not sin, and you will not become dust, and the serpent will eat you." Thus we understand the wisdom of putting dust here, that if a woman was really an adulteress, she would be subjected to hard plagues from Satan in her body because God has forsaken her. These plagues may lead her to repentance. Thus, what happened with the fornicator of Corinth, when the Apostle Paul delivered him into the hand of Satan to chastise him, so that the soul would be saved on the day of the Lord (1 Corinthians 5: 5). The meaning of his handing over into the hands of Satan means that he no longer enjoys divine protection.

Dust is a sign of the contrition felt by the sinner and the insignificance of sin. **earthen vessel** = it is the cheapest thing, and it refers to the body. Note that all work is sacred; water is holy, and dust is as well.

Verse 18: **Then the priest shall stand the woman before the Lord, uncover the woman's head, and put the offering for remembering in her hands, which is the grain offering of jealousy. And the priest shall have in his hand the bitter water that brings a curse.**

uncover the woman's head: This is a time of mourning, sadness and regret. In the Eastern culture, uncovering the head is a sign of contempt. **the bitter water that brings a curse:** For it will turn into bitterness in the womb of the sinner, and this is the penalty for sin.

Verse 19: **And the priest shall put her under oath, and say to the woman, "If no man has lain with you, and if you have not gone astray to uncleanness while under your husband's authority, be free from this bitter water that brings a curse.**

while under your husband's authority: Meaning you made a mistake against the man who has authority over you.

Verse 21: **then the priest shall put the woman under the oath of the curse, and he shall say to the woman—"the Lord make you a curse and an oath among your people, when the Lord makes your thigh rot and your belly swell;**

the Lord make you a curse and an oath: Means women say oaths like this, the Lord will make me a so-and-so if I have done such and such...

thigh rot: It is a kind of paralysis or fall of the uterus, and it is a disgrace in front of all.

Verse 22: **and may this water that causes the curse go into your stomach, and make your belly swell and your thigh rot." 'Then the woman shall say, "Amen, so be it."**

Amen, so be it: Repetition is a kind of affirmation. Or one of them for blessings and the other for curses.

A spiritual reflection on this rite:

* The husband is God, and the wife is me. We must examine ourselves and confess if there is doubt before the curse comes. Our God is a jealous God.

* Man is the earthen vessel, for man is taken from the dust of the ground (Genesis 2: 7 + Genesis 3: 19). "But we have this treasure in earthen vessels" (2 Corinthians 4: 7), and the treasure is the Holy Spirit who dwells in us. And water refers to the Holy Spirit and His work in our hearts. The word of God that exposes and reveals thoughts in the depths (= uncovering the head of the woman). The Holy Spirit reminds us of the word of God and rebukes us. If we refuse to repent, it becomes bitter in us. Note that the rite is performed in the presence of a priest, which is a sign of confession (the sacrament of confession). The sacrament of confession is a confession to God in the presence of a priest and is preceded by repentance, that is, standing before God and letting the Spirit of God strengthen me to repent. And spiritual adultery is to love someone other than God or more than God. The woman

presents an offering, a symbol of Christ, who offered Himself on behalf of sinners and adulterers, even to those who betrayed Him. It is meant that she invites God to judgment by placing the offering to be eaten by fire on the altar. And the sacrifice is without oil or frankincense because Christ has become without appearance or beauty. Dust is a symbol of death, and this is the work of the Holy Spirit in us. It makes us die to the world. It is death to the world and sin. We voluntarily die with Christ (since we died and were buried with Christ in Baptism), but we have to remain to put ourselves to death willingly, crucifying our flesh, with all passions and desires (Romans 6: 11; 12:1+ Galatians 5: 24 + Colossians 3: 5). And whoever refuses will be bitter inwardly and becomes dust, licked by the (serpent) demons.

your belly swell: swells from pride. **your thigh rot:** It is a kind of paralysis; that is, he cannot walk in the path of God. Therefore, the word of God by the work of the Holy Spirit exposes man; whether he is arrogant or pure, he will have the fruits of the Spirit.

Chapter 6

The Nazirite:

After revealing the truth of our sonship to God, and that each one has a special feature (the banner), and that God's people are a people with a priestly service, and they are a people in sojourn, travelling towards the heavenly Jerusalem, with God in their midst. And this people has removed sin from its midst. We come here to see that we must devote ourselves entirely to God.

The word "Nazirite" is taken from the Hebrew verb "NAZR," which means devotion or dedication. Jacob gave the title of Nazirite to Joseph (Genesis 26: 49) because his heart was devoted to the Lord, and he did not accept to betray the Lord. And note that whoever dedicated his heart to the Lord like Joseph, blessings would be showered upon him.

This chapter comes directly after the law of exposing the sinner, so we find here those who dedicate themselves to God. And whoever is sanctified and devoted to God, God blesses him, and he shines among his brothers like Joseph. On the contrary, sin causes shame to the sinner. Review the Lamentations of Jeremiah (Lamentations 4: 7,8) to see the image of the true Nazirite and that he is "brighter than snow..." Then if he surrenders himself to sin, their appearance is blacker than soot. "Their nazirite was purer than snow and whiter than milk, and their bodies were redder than coral. Their skin was like the bluest sapphire. Their appearance was darker than black. They were not recognized in the streets. Their skin clung to their bones; it became dry like wood."

Just as the leprosy was a symbol of sin and its consequences, and the leper was a symbol of man after the fall. Thus, the Nazirite is a symbol of Adam before the fall. There is no real Nazirite in this world but Christ who said, " My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me." And also said "Which of you convicts Me of sin?"

Note that Adam was forbidden from a tree, and thus the Nazirite was forbidden from the grapevine, which is a tree.

Just as the Nazirites had specific characteristics such as long hair, thus the Christian must have the characteristics of the Lord Jesus. Christ bought us with His blood, "For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's" (1 Corinthians 6: 20). We are completely His with our bodies and our spirits. This is the meaning of consecration, we are completely His. This is the meaning of "My son, give me your heart, And let your eyes observe my ways." (Proverbs 23: 26).

The dedication of people to the Lord was in three ways:

a. The Lord chooses a person to serve Him, like Samson and John the Baptist (they were chosen while they were in the womb).

b. Parents dedicate their children to the Lord, like Samuel's mother (1 Samuel 1: 10, 11).

c. A person dedicates himself to the Lord for a period of his life, and this is the subject of this chapter.

In the Old Testament, the Nazirite dedicated himself for a certain period, but the Christian is dedicated to God all his life.

Perhaps the Nazirite law was the basis for monastic movements in Christianity, in which the monk abandons every fleshly bond that binds him to the world (father, mother, wife...) and abandons all the joys of the world.

When the bride of the Song of Songs discovered what her Groom had done for her, she said, "My beloved is mine, and I am his. He feeds his flock among the lilies." (Song of Solomon 2: 16). This is the meaning of true consecration, for Christ gave himself to me, so it is no less than that I give myself completely to him.

(Verse 1): **Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying,**

(Verse 2): **"Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: 'When either a man or woman consecrates an offering to take the vow of a Nazirite, to separate himself to the Lord,**

consecrates an offering: It is an optional invitation for whoever wants, and the Nazirite used to spend his time studying the law and practicing worship and acts of love for others.

(Verses 3-4): **he shall separate himself from wine and similar drink; he shall drink neither vinegar made from wine nor vinegar made from similar drink; neither shall he drink any grape juice, nor eat fresh grapes or raisins. 4 All the days of his separation he shall eat nothing that is produced by the grapevine, from seed to skin.**

Wine refers to worldly joy, and here, it prevents the Nazirite from rejoicing in the joys of the world, so he abstains from wine and everything related to it. For the sake of the Lord, he leaves even what is permitted by his own free will, not as something unclean but because he is not interested in food, drink, or even **seeds**, saying with Christ: "My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me, and to finish His work." Perhaps God wanted the Nazirite not to get drunk and forget the commandments of God "It is not for kings, O Lemuel, It is not for kings to drink wine, Nor for princes intoxicating drink; 5Lest they drink and forget the law, And pervert the justice of all the afflicted." (Proverbs 31: 4-5). When the Christian abandons the joys and pleasures of the world, it is because his eye is on heaven and its joys (this is what we practice during fasting). The apostle Paul says, "And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit" (Ephesians 5: 18). This means that as Christians, we do not search for joy through the world, but rather we know the way of true joy that the Spirit gives, so we

strive to be filled with the Spirit. We see the Nazirite refraining from everything related to grapes, even its skin and seeds, and the spiritual meaning is that we do not search for any source of worldly joy, no matter what it is, asking for one source of joy, which is to be filled with the Spirit.

(Verse 5): **'All the days of the vow of his separation no razor shall come upon his head; until the days are fulfilled for which he separated himself to the Lord, he shall be holy. Then he shall let the locks of the hair of his head grow.**

First: Growing hair is a disgrace to a man (1 Corinthians 11: 14), so whoever grows his hair is an example of one who abandons world glory and temporal dignity to be occupied with honour and heavenly glory (Christ rejected the kingdom of the world). Not cutting hair is a sign of neglecting the adornment of the body and separation from the world.

Second: The Nazirite and shaving the head:

Hair is the point of contact with the outside world or a point of separation from it. For this reason, the Nazirite used to grow his hair as if he had separated from all impurity and would be holy. And if he had become defiled, he would have had to shave his hair to symbolize that he had lost this separation. Therefore, this was what distinguished the prophets of the Old Testament and the Nazirites:

1. Their withdrawal from the evil society.
2. Wearing a hair garment to express their separation from the surrounding evil.
3. Not to shave the head (1 Samuel 1: 11).

Examples:

1. This is how John the Baptist clothed, " Now John himself was clothed in camel's hair" (Matthew 3: 4).
2. Samson let loose his hair as a secret to his strength. Samson's mistake was that he was content with the letter and released his hair as a Nazirite of the Lord, but he did not abstain from sin.
3. The prophet's separation from the world (Jeremiah 15: 17 + Zechariah 13: 4).

(Verses 6-8): **All the days that he separates himself to the Lord he shall not go near a dead body. 7 He shall not make himself unclean even for his father or his mother, for his brother or his sister, when they die, because his separation to God is on his head. 8 All the days of his separation he shall be holy to the Lord.**

Death equals sin, meaning that the one who devoted himself to God does not come into contact with sin. It is also required of the Nazirite not to be preoccupied with physical relations, as he is now preoccupied with God only, and this is the meaning of the words of the Lord Christ: " He who loves

father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me." Note that God does not reject family relations but rather wants us to raise our thoughts that we are members of the heavenly family, and that who died for us is in heaven and that we are going to him "Jesus said to him, "Let the dead bury their own dead, but you go and preach the kingdom of God." (Luke 9: 60) + "Then one said to Him, "Look, Your mother and Your brothers are standing outside, seeking to speak with You." But He answered and said to the one who told Him, "Who is My mother and who are My brothers?" And He stretched out His hand toward His disciples and said, "Here are My mother and My brothers!" (Matthew 12: 47-49).

Here we see that spiritual communion supersedes and elevates every physical relationship.

because his separation to God is on his head: Grown hair was a sign that this person was a Nazirite of God, and people see long hair and know this. The uncut hair of the nazirite indicates that this person has separated himself from the world and its evils and has devoted himself to God, in honor of God. If a Nazirite comes into contact with a dead person, this will be an insult to God in the eyes of the people, for during the period of his consecration, he has been completely devoted to God. For us Christians, it means that people should see in us that we are the people of Christ. People should not see us sinning. Rather, people should see your good deeds and glorify your Father who is in the heavens: "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven." (Matthew 5: 16).

Note that more was required of the Nazirite than the priest in the Old Testament. For the priest was allowed to drink wine but away from the tent. And for touching the dead, the law was similar for the Nazirite and the high priest.

(Verses 9-12): '**And if anyone dies very suddenly beside him, and he defiles his consecrated head, then he shall shave his head on the day of his cleansing; on the seventh day he shall shave it. 10 Then on the eighth day he shall bring two turtledoves or two young pigeons to the priest, to the door of the tabernacle of meeting; 11 and the priest shall offer one as a sin offering and the other as a burnt offering, and make atonement for him, because he sinned in regard to the corpse; and he shall sanctify his head that same day. 12 He shall consecrate to the Lord the days of his separation, and bring a male lamb in its first year as a trespass offering; but the former days shall be lost, because his separation was defiled.**

his consecrated head: This means the hair on his head in the days of his consecration.

How can a Nazirite purify himself if he comes into contact with a dead person who died suddenly and touches him without intending to? Although what happened was not his fault, but to this extent, God wants to explain His hatred of sin and His love for purity. If he comes into contact with a dead person, an ordinary person remains unclean for seven days (Numbers 19: 11-14). In this case, the Nazirite **shall shave his head on the day of his cleansing**, i.e. after seven days. On the eighth day, sacrifices are offered. Since the sacrifices refer to Christ, there is no purification except by the blood of Christ. Shaving the head and starting over with the sacrifice. This is what happened with Christ when he died and rose;

we rose with Him, and we had a new beginning. Because if we say that the Nazirite resembles Adam before the fall, then contact with a dead person is like falling. In the new beginning with the sacrifice and on the eighth day (the Day of Resurrection), we see a picture of what happened with Christ and His church. Note that sin makes us lose a lot, as the Nazirite lost his first dedication period and has to start over. And the Nazirite must offer a trespass offering after deciding to start again, as he has sinned against the Lord (verse 12). Here rigour in holiness is evident.

If contact with a dead person = contact with sin, then offering sacrifices means = there is no forgiveness of sin except by the blood of Christ. This is the meaning of this rite.

(Verses 13-24): **'Now this is the law of the Nazirite: When the days of his separation are fulfilled, he shall be brought to the door of the tabernacle of meeting. 14 And he shall present his offering to the Lord: one male lamb in its first year without blemish as a burnt offering, one ewe lamb in its first year without blemish as a sin offering, one ram without blemish as a peace offering, 15 a basket of unleavened bread, cakes of fine flour mixed with oil, unleavened wafers anointed with oil, and their grain offering with their drink offerings. 16 'Then the priest shall bring them before the Lord and offer his sin offering and his burnt offering; 17 and he shall offer the ram as a sacrifice of a peace offering to the Lord, with the basket of unleavened bread; the priest shall also offer its grain offering and its drink offering. 18 Then the Nazirite shall shave his consecrated head at the door of the tabernacle of meeting, and shall take the hair from his consecrated head and put it on the fire which is under the sacrifice of the peace offering. 19 'And the priest shall take the boiled shoulder of the ram, one unleavened cake from the basket, and one unleavened wafer, and put them upon the hands of the Nazirite after he has shaved his consecrated hair, 20 and the priest shall wave them as a wave offering before the Lord; they are holy for the priest, together with the breast of the wave offering and the thigh of the heave offering. After that the Nazirite may drink wine.' 21 "This is the law of the Nazirite who vows to the Lord the offering for his separation, and besides that, whatever else his hand is able to provide; according to the vow which he takes, so he must do according to the law of his separation." 22 And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying: 23 "Speak to Aaron and his sons, saying, 'This is the way you shall bless the children of Israel. Say to them: 24 "The Lord bless you and keep you;**

When the days of the vows made by the Nazirite were completed (the Talmud said that the minimum period is thirty days), he had to adhere to a particular rite that we see in these verses.

If the Christian is a Nazirite of God for the whole life, then the period of the end of the days of vow is a sign of his death. The Christian anointed with the chrism is dedicated to God the whole life.

1. The Nazirite offers sacrifices as if all our striving on earth is accepted only in the sacrifice of Christ. And Christ, who gave us His life, was without sin, and the offering of unleavened bread expresses this.

2. He offers sacrifices (a symbol of Christ offering Himself as a sacrifice) and presents unleavened bread as a symbol of Christ's life, which was without sin. Christ gave us His life.

3. **Then the Nazirite shall shave his consecrated head:** This means the hair on his head that was uncut in the days of his dedication. And he burns his hair in the fire of the peace offering. * If growing the hair is a shame and a disgrace, he shaves it here as a symbol of the return of his dignity, not on a worldly basis, but rather the dignity of the eternal fellowship of glories. Hair is now burned and eaten by the divine fire on the altar. * And the hair is burnt with the peace offering. The peace offering refers to the communion of the whole church, priests and people with God (represented here by the altar's fire). The meaning for this is that the Nazirite offered his dignity as a sacrifice to God, and God accepted it on His altar, as a symbol of the Christian who accepts the fellowship of the cross with Christ. * The hair of the Nazirite was shaved off at the beginning of his vow, so the new hair became a sign of his vow, and by presenting it on the altar, it is as if he was saying to God, "I gave my life to you, O Lord, during the period of my vow." * There is another meaning that the Nazirite in the Old Testament is that he is a Nazirite who wants to offer himself as a sacrifice, and since he will not be able to, he presents his hair on the altar. A vow is generally a kind of person offering himself as a sacrifice. * Presenting the hair on the altar is a sign of God's acceptance of this sacrifice, as fire is a divine holy fire. Presenting it with the peace offering indicates that everything we offer is accepted only by sacrifice and waving before the Lord, as a sign of presenting the Nazirite with his work, consecration and offerings before the Lord (everything is from you and to you). The priest takes his portion as a sign of the Nazirite's acceptance of his vow by sharing with the priest (the priest here is also a steward of God, and his eating of the sacrifice is a sign of God's acceptance of his vow). * In (1 Corinthians 11: 15), we find that the Apostle Paul sees that the woman who loosens the hair of her head is glory for her. Suppose we understand that the woman refers to the human soul whose bridegroom is Christ. In that case, the Nazirite's hair is a sign of his devotion to God, so his devotion to God is glory for him "and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together." (Romans 8: 17). It is a disgrace in front of people to the man, but he is a bride to Christ, so this is glory to him = and isn't this exactly the definition of the cross, for the cross is a disgrace before people, but it is the glory before God. The shame here is the communion of the cross with Christ bearing the cross of shame. This is the meaning of burning hair over the fire of the altar and the fire of the peace offering. The meaning is that the Peace felt by the person offering the sacrifice results from accepting everyone who accepts to dedicate himself to God. For us, Peace and communion with Christ are in the fellowship of the cross between Christ and the Church. (* This sign indicated all the meanings of growing the hair).

4. He drinks wine, symbolizing the enjoyment of joy, and this is similar to the saying of the Book of Revelation, "And God will wipe away every tear from their eye" There is a true joy in heaven, where we forget all the sorrows and pains of the world. It is similar to the saying of the Lord Jesus Christ, "But I say to you, I will not drink of this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it new with you in My Father's kingdom." new in my Father's kingdom" (Matthew 26: 29). Christ ended the days of His consecration on earth with his death, resurrection and ascension to heaven. And after the end of our consecration period, Christ will drink the cup of true joy with His people.

5. The Nazirite offers other optional advances as much as he can afford. The sacrifice of Christ inflamed the hearts of His people with His love, for they wanted to give him everything. And there is another meaning, as the law here obliges the Nazirite to offer other sacrifices so that he does not feel that by his vow, he has become indebted to God but rather remains in debt to Him.

Notes:

1. A person could have been a Nazirite on behalf of others, such as bearing the expenses of others' vow. Hence we understand how Paul participated with others in vowing themselves (Acts 21: 23-26).
2. God also put the law of the Nazirite in the Old Testament and asked Abraham to leave his family and his country to isolate himself from evil. Thus, in the New Testament, our teacher John says: "Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him." (1 John 2: 15).
3. We also see in the hair a symbol of strength (Samson). During the time of vows, man is strong in God. And shaving the hair is a symbol of weakness, as happened with Samson. On this subject, Paul the apostle said: "And He said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness." Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in needs, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ's sake. For when I am weak, then I am strong. "(2 Corinthians 12: 9-10)

The Christian is a Nazirite to God

- Nazirite means that a person is dedicated or devoted to the Lord. Thus, every Christian who believes, is baptized, and has the Holy Spirit dwell in him in the sacrament of Chrism, is dedicated to the Lord.
- The true Nazirite is whiter than snow. The true Nazirite symbolizes Adam before the fall, as he was incorruptible. But after the fall, the image of man was distorted, as the prophet Jeremiah says: "Her Nazirites were brighter than snow And whiter than milk; (white is a symbol of righteousness and purity), They were more ruddy in body than rubies, (red is a symbol of life, so white alone may symbolize death). Like sapphire in their appearance (they had the heavenly characteristic). Now their appearance is blacker than soot. They go unrecognized in the streets; Their skin clings to their bones, It has become as dry as wood." (Lamentations 4: 7-8). After the fall, we see that the image was distorted. As for the true Nazirite as a man is Christ Jesus.
- The Nazirite was not to come into contact with a dead person, indicating his abstention from any evil.
- The Nazirite was not to seek any worldly joys and pleasures. This indicated that the Nazirite was to abstain from everything related to grapes (grapes are the source of wine, a symbol of worldly joys). He was to devote himself entirely to God. And God is responsible for giving him joy. Therefore, we notice

that the inspiration at the end of the Nazirite rite says, "After that the Nazirite may drink wine." (Numbers 6: 20), indicating the joy that God gives to those who dedicate their lives to Him. This is what St. Paul the Apostle said, "And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit," (Ephesians 5: 18).

- The Nazirite was not to shave his hair = as a symbol of 1) his separation and renunciation of the world's evils. 2) his abandonment of worldly glory, looking to the glories of eternity. 3) the Church as the bride of Christ, and the bride's glory lies in leaving her hair. A man lets his hair down before the world as a sign of his abandonment of worldly honour: But whoever slaps you on your right cheek, turn the other to him also. 4) If anyone wants to sue you and take away your tunic, let him have your cloak also." (Matthew 5: 39-41).

- As a bride of Christ, a man letting his hair down is a disgrace before people, but seeking honour before God is glory for him.

- At the end of the vow period, the Nazirite shaves his hair and burns it with the peace offering. Shaving the hair indicates the return of the Nazirite's honour. But the fact that the hair is burned with the peace offering (which symbolizes the Eucharist) means the return of his dignity, but based on his participation in the body of Christ and the heavenly glory that awaits him.

- After the vow period is over, sacrifices and offerings are offered. Abstaining from sin and worldly pleasures is not enough to enter the heavenly glories. Rather, it is the blood of Christ that the sacrifices point to (the burnt offering points to Christ's obedience), and therefore, we are considered completely obedient in Him "that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus." (Colossians 1: 28). (And the sin offering is for the forgiveness of our sins) "in whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins." (Colossians 1: 14). (And the flour offerings, and the flour points to life and Christ gave us His life "For to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain." (Philippians 1: 21).

- We have seen the believer's striving to stay away from any sin and any worldly joys. We have seen that without the blood of Christ there is no benefit in returning to a state of incorruption. But the inspiration also adds, "This is the law of the Nazirite who vows to the Lord the offering for his separation, and besides that, whatever else his hand is able to provide; according to the vow which he takes, so he must do according to the law of his separation." This refers to the righteous deeds that the Christian must perform to glorify the Father in heaven (Matthew 5: 16). The Lord of Glory said about this, "For I say to you, that unless your righteousness exceeds the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven." (Matthew 5: 20).

- Now this chapter is for us as Christians: Adam was the image of the pure Nazirite. And by sin our image was changed to this corrupt image.

- So, how do we regain the image of incorruption again? A) To turn away from sins and avoid them. B) To turn away from worldly, sinful pleasures. And the two points (A, B) are what we call the negative striving. C) To have righteous works by the life of Christ who is in us. This is what we call the positive

struggle. D) But all of this without the blood of Christ is useless. Therefore, the Nazirite offered sacrifices, burnt offerings, and offerings as a sign of the sacrifice of Christ.

- This chapter comes directly after the law of exposing the sinner (chapter 5), so we find here someone who dedicates himself willingly to God. And whoever is sanctified and dedicated to God, God blesses him, so he shines among his brothers like Joseph. Conversely, sin brings shame to the one who commits it, and his life becomes bitter. This is what we will see in the rest of the book, severe pains and trials that befall the people because of their sins and their grumbling.

It is beautiful that this chapter ends with a blessing

As we said, Joseph, because he was a Nazirite to the Lord, was a blessing.

And everyone who dedicates himself to God finds a blessing.

(Verses 22-23): **And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying: 23“Speak to Aaron and his sons, saying, ‘This is the way you shall bless the children of Israel. Say to them:**

(Verse 24): **The Lord bless you and keep you**

bless you: Spiritual and materialistic blessings, and in all that he reaches for, and the blessing is all that is good, excellent, and beneficial. As Christians, we now understand that the most important blessing is the spiritual blessing.

keep you: God will protect you from the enemies of the body and spirit and from danger (Psalm 121: 5-8).

(Verse 25): **The Lord make His face shine upon you, And be gracious to you;**

The Lord make His face shine upon you: That is, He shines His light upon you, filling you with understanding, illuminating your insight, and guiding you.

And be gracious to you: He looks at your weakness and your need for Him, and you find grace in His eyes and treat you with mercy.

(Verse 26): **The Lord lift up His countenance upon you, And give you Peace.**

The Lord lift up His countenance upon you: He looks at you with a distinct look and looks at you throughout the year, but for the whole life. That is, He shows His pleasure, establishes His peace for you, and gives encouragement and support. Such a person is the one about whom the psalmist said, "Those who trust in the Lord Are like Mount Zion, Which cannot be moved, but abides forever." (Psalm 125: 1). This phrase is similar to the Lord Jesus' saying, "Therefore you now have sorrow; but I will see you again and your heart will rejoice, and your joy no one will take from you" (John 16: 22). It means that God, who sees us in our troubles, will turn our troubles into the joy that nothing in the world can take away from us. This phrase is like a father looking at his son who is upset for some reason with a smile of satisfaction and love to encourage him.

And give you Peace: Peace of mind, soul, material and body. Peace with God, people and self. This peace that surpasses all understanding fills the heart as a fruit of the Holy Spirit when the Lord declares His pleasure with man = **The Lord lift up His countenance upon you.**

Notes on this Priestly Blessing:

1. The Jews marvelled at the mention of the name of the Lord in this blessing three times and considered it a divine mystery that transcends minds, which we as Christians understand, as it is a reference to the mystery of the Holy Trinity. As the Seraphim say in (Isaiah: 6, Holy, Holy, Holy + Revelation 4: 8).
2. **First Blessing: The Lord bless you and keep you =** It is specific to the Father, which is blessing, protection, and guarding, as He protects His followers, for He is capable of everything. "My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of My Father's hand." (John 10: 29)
3. **Second Blessing: The Lord make His face shine upon you, And be gracious to you =** is specific to the Son, the true light that shines, whom the Father sent as a light to the world, and with His cross, were the divine mercies. The words of light and mercy in the second blessing are specific to the Son. And the phrase **make His face shine upon you** refers to the appearance of Christ in the body in which we saw the image of God " He who has seen Me has seen the Father + who being the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person + He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation" (John 14: 9 + Hebrews 1: 3 + Colossians 1: 15). Christ was incarnated to have mercy on us with His cross, and His light shone upon us.
4. The Lord Jesus said about Himself, "I am the light of the world." Let us contemplate this meaning: Through Him, we know the Father and see the heavenly things. "No one has seen God at any time. The only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him." (John 1: 18). Christ is the one who reveals and explains God to us in His love. This is the meaning of Christ's saying, "I am the Alpha and the Omega." See the interpretation in (Revelation 1: 8). He opens our eyes to the fact that there is a life of glory and joy that God wants for us in heaven. Here on earth, we take the pledge of this life. The path to this life is holiness. People used to imagine that God is the God of punishment and

cruelty, and Christ came to introduce us to the Father and that He is a loving Father to His children. We saw in Christ the image of the Father, so the Lord Jesus said, "He who has seen Me has seen the Father" (John 14: 9). Whoever understands and knows the love of Christ will see that the Father has the same love, meekness, and humility as Christ.

- He is the one who leads us in the wilderness of this world to eternity with His teachings and life as a model for us to follow.
- Christ is the light that dispels the darkness of the heart. The nature of the evil darkness is within us, we were born in sin "And in sin my mother conceived me." (Psalm 51) + "sin that dwells in me." (Romans 7: 17). Whoever follows the commandments of Christ leaves the path of sin and darkness. Light refers to knowledge and holiness, and this leads man to joy. Darkness symbolizes ignorance and sin. Sin may give a sensual pleasure, but it is accompanied by sadness, grief and fear.
- We notice that the Jews used to say that the law is the light, and Christ declares that he is the perfection of the law.
- He said the light of the world, meaning not only for the Jews.
- He is a light for those who are confused. He gives awareness, knowledge, revelation and realization of the truth of things. An atheist philosopher said (We go from the darkness of the womb to the darkness of the grave, passing through the darkness of life), but Christ is the one who gives meaning to life and an explanation for its events. And Christ sent us the Holy Spirit, "For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind." (2 Timothy 1: 7), who guides us to the right decision so that we are no longer confused. "Likewise the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses." (Romans 8: 26).
- In Christ we understand the purpose of our creation, "For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them." (Ephesians 2: 10). And that God uses the sufferings of this world to complete and make us fit for heaven. As we pray in the Gregorian Mass, "You, O my Master, have turned for me the punishment into salvation."
- Christ revealed to us the truth that in Him we have become children of God, children of the King of kings. "The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God," (Romans 8: 16). And does the Son of God despair, bewilder, or fail? And if we sin, the Holy Spirit testifies within us, saying... And is it right that the Son of God would do this? And if a trial comes upon us and Satan fights us that God has abandoned us, the Holy Spirit testifies within us, saying... And does God abandon His Son?
- And Christ sheds light on the end of our life in glory. He reveals to us the glories of eternity and lights the way for us with His commandments to lead us to this glory. Whoever follows Christ will be in the light and will be saved from the darkness, and whoever rejects Him will remain in the darkness, without guidance and without discerning the truth.
- And each of us is free to walk in the light of Christ and enjoy the help of the Holy Spirit, so that he may live in joy and the end will be eternal glory. Rather, the light of Christ will be reflected upon him, and he will become a light to the world (Matthew 5: 14). Or he follows the desires of his body (and these are

the weapons of the enemy of good against man), so he loses his peace and joy and walks in the path of darkness. And in the end, he loses his eternity.

- Since Christ says about us that we are the light of the world, this defines our role and the work for which we were created. We live to preach Christ through our lives, good deeds, love, joy, and peace that people see in us amidst the world’s troubles and thus glorify our heavenly Father. See the interpretation of the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5: 10-16).

5. **Third Blessing: The Lord lift up His countenance upon you, And give you Peace** = is specific to the Holy Spirit and His work, and from its fruits is Peace, which surpasses all understanding (Galatians 5: 22 + Philippians 4: 7), and **The Lord lift up His countenance upon you**, indicating God's consent to us after the Peace that Christ made with the blood of His cross. The result is sending the Holy Spirit to dwell in us, taking from the things that belong to Christ and revealing them to us.

6. Note the sequence:

- **The first blessing** is the protection: Thus, the Father continued to guard us while we were under the slavery of Satan, that is, the period that God allowed for us to be disciplined. But God was with us guarding us during this period, and Satan was not completely free. Rather, his temptations were within the limits of what God allowed him (see the story of Job). Thus, God said to Jacob when he went down to Egypt, and this was a symbol of the slavery of mankind to Satan, “So He said, “I am God, the God of your father; do not fear to go down to Egypt, for I will make of you a great nation there. I will go down with you to Egypt, and I will also surely bring you up again; and Joseph will put his hand on your eyes.” (Genesis 46: 3-4). **The second blessing** is the incarnation of Christ, the Light of the world, who made peace between the Father and mankind. **The third blessing** is the sending of the Holy Spirit as a result of the reconciliation that was made. This is how Saint Paul the Apostle understood it when he blessed the people of Corinth, saying: “The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. Amen.” (2 Corinthians 13: 14).

The love of God the Father	The Lord bless you and keep you
The Grace of our saviour Jesus Christ	The Lord make His face shine upon you, And be gracious to you
The communion of the Holy Spirit	The Lord lift up His countenance upon you, And give you Peace

7. The second request in the three blessings is the result of the first: **The Lord bless you and keep you** = guarding is the result of He blesses. **The Lord make His face shine upon you, And be gracious to you** = He had mercy on us after the light of Christ shone, that is, after His incarnation. **The Lord lift up His countenance upon you, And give you Peace.** = Peace is a fruit of the Holy Spirit.

8. Christ, before His ascension, blessed the disciples, and the priest's blessing is a model of Christ's work on earth. The priest's blessing is by using the name of the Lord.

9. Based on this Trinity blessing, we understand why Christ commanded the disciples when baptizing to baptize in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. (See 2 Corinthians 13: 14). The blessing is always the blessing of the Trinity. Every work in which the three hypostases participate.

10. Thus, the church always does: the priest prays, "Peace be with you all," and the congregation replies: "and with your spirit."

11. The priest does not bless from himself, but rather he derives it from God, the Grantor of blessing.

12. We see in this Trinity Blessing it's a kind of gradualness. **The first blessing** that the Lord guards protects and prevents harm is the preliminary stage. **The second blessing** we find in it a deeper expression indicating the beginning of forming a personal relationship with God, and this happened after Christ, the light of the world, became incarnate and illuminated the path for us and we knew the love of the Father, and that God illuminates the mind and guides and leads man, and this happened to all Christians. Then we come to **the third blessing**, the Lord raises His face to a person, shows His contentment and confirms His Peace (this is the word's original meaning). Here, we reach the perfection of God's work with man, and we see in Him how special the relationship is. Rather, the Hebrew word for Peace is shalom, which does not mean merely the cessation of enmity but rather denotes completeness, perfection and safety.

This is the work of the Holy Spirit:

*"He will glorify Me, for He will take of what is Mine and declare it to you." (John 16: 14). The Spirit gives us knowledge of Christ and of Christ's amazing love for us. He places the love of Christ in us "Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us." (Romans 5: 5). And with this mutual love: 1) We abide in Christ (John 15: 9). 2) And with this mutual love also: We are filled with joy [This was the case in the Garden of Eden = mutual love between God and Adam, for God is love, and Adam was created in the image of God: therefore, Adam loved God. The result: joy filled Adam's heart because the word Eden is a Hebrew word meaning joy and gladness.]

*"For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. 6For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace." (Romans 8: 15,16). When temptations come, and Satan makes us doubt God's love, we hear the voice of the Holy Spirit: You are the Son of God, and God loves you, so how can He be harsh with you? What is happening is preparing you for heaven. The Holy Spirit will not leave you until you call out to God in love and say to Him, "Our Father."

*"And because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying out, "Abba, Father!" So, you are no longer a slave but a son, and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ." This is a heart-warming testimony from the Holy Spirit that we will inherit glory. No matter how hardships are

around us, the Holy Spirit's announcement to us that glory is prepared for us gives us joy and gladness: "Therefore you now have sorrow; but I will see you again and your heart will rejoice, and your joy no one will take from you." (John 16: 22).

(Verse 27): **"So they shall put My name on the children of Israel, and I will bless them."**

Indeed, the priest was reciting the blessing with his mouth, but it is God who blesses. God wants to give a blessing to His people, but the people are human beings who cannot perceive except what they perceive through their senses. God uses the priest as an agent for him. He speaks, so the people hear and rejoice, and the people go on confident that the blessing will come.

The Coptic priest does the same thing when he prays in the Liturgy, saying, "Peace be with you all." Then peace will come to the worshipers, and this what we understand from what the Lord said to his disciples: " And when you go into a household, greet it. If the household is worthy, let your peace come upon it. But if it is not worthy, let your peace return to you." (Matthew 10: 12,13). Therefore, there is a blessing that comes to the worshipers when the priest says, "Peace be with you," as evidenced by the Lord's saying to His disciples that if whoever hears does not deserve the blessing, it will be returned to them, thus, there is something that returns, which is the blessing. But the priest also needs this blessing and receives it when the people answer by saying, "And for your spirit."

they shall put My name: The name in Hebrew expresses the capabilities, competencies, and personality of a person. The words of the inspiration in saying **My name** refers to the endless blessings that God can bestow upon his people.

Chapter 7

The offerings and gifts of the people:

In a very long chapter, we find a repetition of the gifts of the chiefs of the people to God, repeated in the exact same words, and it ends with a general account of all their gifts. Some see a lengthening of the speech, but this has another beautiful meaning. We see God here rejoicing in His children's gifts, not because He needs them, but because it signifies their love and sonship. And God, who does not forget a cup of cold water, does not forget the gifts and love of His people, but rather records them in the Holy Bible to be read by every generation, as He recorded the names of His people in the book of eternal life. This chapter is the same as (2 Samuel 23), which contains a recording of the names of the companions of David and their deeds, and (Romans 16) which contains the names of the companions of the Apostle Paul. We notice that God rejoices in the gifts of His people, although abstaining from them is not a sin (and this is like fasting).

And let us be confident that God does not remain in debt, as He is overflowing us with many blessings.

This is a lesson of faith

As when they give to God, God repays abundantly.

They see God's generous hand and thus their faith grows

We find in this chapter two offerings: (verses 1-9) that include a general offering or a general gift and (verses 10 - end) which includes the offering of each tribe individually.

(Verses 1-9): **Now it came to pass, when Moses had finished setting up the tabernacle, that he anointed it and consecrated it and all its furnishings, and the altar and all its utensils; so he anointed them and consecrated them. 2 Then the leaders of Israel, the heads of their fathers' houses, who were the leaders of the tribes and over those who were numbered, made an offering. 3 And they brought their offering before the Lord, six covered carts and twelve oxen, a cart for every two of the leaders, and for each one an ox; and they presented them before the tabernacle. 4 Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, 5 "Accept these from them, that they may be used in doing the work of the tabernacle of meeting; and you shall give them to the Levites, to every man according to his service." 6 So Moses took the carts and the oxen, and gave them to the Levites. 7 Two carts and four oxen he gave to the sons of Gershon, according to their service; 8 and four carts and eight oxen he gave to the sons of Merari, according to their service, under the authority of Ithamar the son of Aaron the priest. 9 But to the sons of Kohath he gave none, because theirs was the service of the holy things, which they carried on their shoulders.**

The General Offering:

The leaders of all tribes came with one spirit to offer a gift. This gift was from all tribes and preceded the special offerings of each tribe. God wants a personal relationship between Himself and each member. Still, it should not be an isolated individual relationship but rather stems from the communal spirit, the spirit of communion that binds the Church as one body.

1. The sons of Gershon and the sons of Merari shall receive carts and oxen to carry the goods of the tent, as their loads are heavy. The Kohathites do not receive oxen because they carry the sanctities on their shoulders. The Kohathites themselves became a vehicle to carry the sanctities. Thus we became of the Holy Spirit.

2. God did not recommend the shape or number of the chariots, and He left this to the human wisdom that guides them in the Holy Spirit.

Verse 1: **when Moses had finished:** Clearly, this chapter is not in its chronological position, but God is not concerned with the chronology but rather the logical order. After speaking about devoting the heart to God, He talks to us about personal gifts. God rejoices in the gifts of those who dedicate their hearts to God. The day here may be like the days of Genesis, meaning unlimited, and its meaning is after Moses finished setting up the tabernacle, especially since the offerings of the tribes lasted 12 days.

Verse 3: **And they brought their offering:** In the general offering, they divided the price equally. Note that they provided what the service needed. Whoever offers must see what the Church needs.

and they presented them before the tabernacle: They gave their offerings to the Lord.

Verse 5: **Accept these from them, that they may be used in doing the work of the tabernacle of meeting; and you shall give them to the Levites:** So that the Levites do not feel that they took it from the tribes, or that the leaders of the tribes feel that they provided something to the Levites. Rather, the Levites took it from God.

(Verses 10-89): **Now the leaders offered the dedication offering for the altar when it was anointed; so the leaders offered their offering before the altar. 11 For the Lord said to Moses, "They shall offer their offering, one leader each day, for the dedication of the altar." 12 And the one who offered his offering on the first day was Nahshon the son of Amminadab, from the tribe of Judah. 13 His offering was one silver platter, the weight of which was one hundred and thirty shekels, and one silver bowl of seventy shekels, according to the shekel of the sanctuary, both of them full of fine flour mixed with oil as a grain offering; 14 one gold pan of ten shekels, full of incense; 15 one young bull, one ram, and one male lamb in its first year, as a burnt offering; 16 one kid of the goats as a sin offering; 17 and for**

the sacrifice of peace offerings: two oxen, five rams, five male goats, and five male lambs in their first year. This was the offering of Nahshon the son of Amminadab. 18 On the second day Nethanel the son of Zuar, leader of Issachar, presented an offering. 19 For his offering he offered one silver platter, the weight of which was one hundred and thirty shekels, and one silver bowl of seventy shekels, according to the shekel of the sanctuary, both of them full of fine flour mixed with oil as a grain offering; 20 one gold pan of ten shekels, full of incense; 21 one young bull, one ram, and one male lamb in its first year, as a burnt offering; 22 one kid of the goats as a sin offering; 23 and as the sacrifice of peace offerings: two oxen, five rams, five male goats, and five male lambs in their first year. This was the offering of Nethanel the son of Zuar. 24 On the third day Eliab the son of Helon, leader of the children of Zebulun, presented an offering. 25 His offering was one silver platter, the weight of which was one hundred and thirty shekels, and one silver bowl of seventy shekels, according to the shekel of the sanctuary, both of them full of fine flour mixed with oil as a grain offering; 26 one gold pan of ten shekels, full of incense; 27 one young bull, one ram, and one male lamb in its first year, as a burnt offering; 28 one kid of the goats as a sin offering; 29 and for the sacrifice of peace offerings: two oxen, five rams, five male goats, and five male lambs in their first year. This was the offering of Eliab the son of Helon. 30 On the fourth day Elizur the son of Shedeur, leader of the children of Reuben, presented an offering. 31 His offering was one silver platter, the weight of which was one hundred and thirty shekels, and one silver bowl of seventy shekels, according to the shekel of the sanctuary, both of them full of fine flour mixed with oil as a grain offering; 32 one gold pan of ten shekels, full of incense; 33 one young bull, one ram, and one male lamb in its first year, as a burnt offering; 34 one kid of the goats as a sin offering; 35 and as the sacrifice of peace offerings: two oxen, five rams, five male goats, and five male lambs in their first year. This was the offering of Elizur the son of Shedeur. 36 On the fifth day Shelumiel the son of Zurishaddai, leader of the children of Simeon, presented an offering. 37 His offering was one silver platter, the weight of which was one hundred and thirty shekels, and one silver bowl of seventy shekels, according to the shekel of the sanctuary, both of them full of fine flour mixed with oil as a grain offering; 38 one gold pan of ten shekels, full of incense; 39 one young bull, one ram, and one male lamb in its first year, as a burnt offering; 40 one kid of the goats as a sin offering; 41 and as the sacrifice of peace offerings: two oxen, five rams, five male goats, and five male lambs in their first year. This was the offering of Shelumiel the son of Zurishaddai. 42 On the sixth day Eliasaph the son of Deuel, leader of the children of Gad, presented an offering. 43 His offering was one silver platter, the weight of which was one hundred and thirty shekels, and one silver bowl of seventy shekels, according to the shekel of the sanctuary, both of them full of fine flour mixed with oil as a grain offering; 44 one gold pan of ten shekels, full of incense; 45 one young bull, one ram, and one male lamb in its first year, as a burnt offering; 46 one kid of the goats as a sin offering; 47 and as the sacrifice of peace offerings: two oxen, five rams, five male goats, and five male lambs in their first year. This was the offering of Eliasaph the son of Deuel. 48 On the seventh day Elishama the son of Ammihud, leader of the children of Ephraim, presented an offering. 49 His offering was one silver platter, the weight of which was one hundred and thirty shekels, and one silver bowl of seventy shekels, according to the shekel of the sanctuary, both of them full of fine flour mixed with oil as a grain offering; 50 one gold pan of ten shekels, full of incense; 51 one young bull, one ram, and one male lamb in its first year, as a burnt offering; 52 one kid of the goats as a sin offering; 53 and as the

sacrifice of peace offerings: two oxen, five rams, five male goats, and five male lambs in their first year. This was the offering of Elishama the son of Ammihud. 54 On the eighth day Gamaliel the son of Pedahzur, leader of the children of Manasseh, presented an offering. 55 His offering was one silver platter, the weight of which was one hundred and thirty shekels, and one silver bowl of seventy shekels, according to the shekel of the sanctuary, both of them full of fine flour mixed with oil as a grain offering; 56 one gold pan of ten shekels, full of incense; 57 one young bull, one ram, and one male lamb in its first year, as a burnt offering; 58 one kid of the goats as a sin offering; 59 and as the sacrifice of peace offerings: two oxen, five rams, five male goats, and five male lambs in their first year. This was the offering of Gamaliel the son of Pedahzur. 60 On the ninth day Abidan the son of Gideoni, leader of the children of Benjamin, presented an offering. 61 His offering was one silver platter, the weight of which was one hundred and thirty shekels, and one silver bowl of seventy shekels, according to the shekel of the sanctuary, both of them full of fine flour mixed with oil as a grain offering; 62 one gold pan of ten shekels, full of incense; 63 one young bull, one ram, and one male lamb in its first year, as a burnt offering; 64 one kid of the goats as a sin offering; 65 and as the sacrifice of peace offerings: two oxen, five rams, five male goats, and five male lambs in their first year. This was the offering of Abidan the son of Gideoni. 66 On the tenth day Ahiezer the son of Ammishaddai, leader of the children of Dan, presented an offering. 67 His offering was one silver platter, the weight of which was one hundred and thirty shekels, and one silver bowl of seventy shekels, according to the shekel of the sanctuary, both of them full of fine flour mixed with oil as a grain offering; 68 one gold pan of ten shekels, full of incense; 69 one young bull, one ram, and one male lamb in its first year, as a burnt offering; 70 one kid of the goats as a sin offering; 71 and as the sacrifice of peace offerings: two oxen, five rams, five male goats, and five male lambs in their first year. This was the offering of Ahiezer the son of Ammishaddai. 72 On the eleventh day Pagiel the son of Ocran, leader of the children of Asher, presented an offering. 73 His offering was one silver platter, the weight of which was one hundred and thirty shekels, and one silver bowl of seventy shekels, according to the shekel of the sanctuary, both of them full of fine flour mixed with oil as a grain offering; 74 one gold pan of ten shekels, full of incense; 75 one young bull, one ram, and one male lamb in its first year, as a burnt offering; 76 one kid of the goats as a sin offering; 77 and as the sacrifice of peace offerings: two oxen, five rams, five male goats, and five male lambs in their first year. This was the offering of Pagiel the son of Ocran. 78 On the twelfth day Ahira the son of Enan, leader of the children of Naphtali, presented an offering. 79 His offering was one silver platter, the weight of which was one hundred and thirty shekels, and one silver bowl of seventy shekels, according to the shekel of the sanctuary, both of them full of fine flour mixed with oil as a grain offering; 80 one gold pan of ten shekels, full of incense; 81 one young bull, one ram, and one male lamb in its first year, as a burnt offering; 82 one kid of the goats as a sin offering; 83 and as the sacrifice of peace offerings: two oxen, five rams, five male goats, and five male lambs in their first year. This was the offering of Ahira the son of Enan. 84 This was the dedication offering for the altar from the leaders of Israel, when it was anointed: twelve silver platters, twelve silver bowls, and twelve gold pans. 85 Each silver platter weighed one hundred and thirty shekels and each bowl seventy shekels. All the silver of the vessels weighed two thousand four hundred shekels, according to the shekel of the sanctuary. 86 The twelve gold pans full of incense weighed ten shekels apiece, according to the shekel of the sanctuary; all the gold of the pans weighed one hundred and twenty

shekels. 87 All the oxen for the burnt offering were twelve young bulls, the rams twelve, the male lambs in their first year twelve, with their grain offering, and the kids of the goats as a sin offering twelve. 88 And all the oxen for the sacrifice of peace offerings were twenty-four bulls, the rams sixty, the male goats sixty, and the lambs in their first year sixty. This was the dedication offering for the altar after it was anointed. 89 Now when Moses went into the tabernacle of meeting to speak with Him, he heard the voice of One speaking to him from above the mercy seat that was on the ark of the Testimony, from between the two cherubim; thus He spoke to him.

The offering of every tribe:

Verse 10: **Now the leaders offered the dedication offering for the altar when it was anointed; so the leaders offered their offering before the altar.**

the dedication offering: Perhaps it is from the Persian word "Dashn" which means new dress. So it is a word that means to put a new dress on something for an occasion. We use it in the sense of dedicating something new to the service of God.

so the leaders offered their offering before the altar: They are the gifts of the people, which God did not command them, but they offered from their own will. They were called offerings because they were brought to God and to get closer to God.

Verse 11: **For the Lord said to Moses, "They shall offer their offering, one leader each day, for the dedication of the altar."**

Every day a leader offers his gifts, and God rejoices in them. Let us note that the gifts of all the tribes are equal so that no one is puffed up, no one is diminished in his own eyes, and so that no one imagines that he has a greater share in the holies.

Verse 12: **And the one who offered his offering on the first day was Nahshon the son of Amminadab, from the tribe of Judah.**

The tribe of Judah began to advance, and from this tribe, the Messiah would come. And so that Nahshon would not be puffed up, he was the only one who did not add the title of ruler to his name. There is an even more important reason: Christ is the real head of Judah. He is the spiritual head, as He is the lion out of the tribe of Judah.

We note that the order of mentioning the tribes was according to their location in the camp, starting with the east where the tribe of Judah was, then the south, then the west, then the north.

Verse 13: **His offering was one silver platter, the weight of which was one hundred and thirty shekels, and one silver bowl of seventy shekels, according to the shekel of the sanctuary, both of them full of fine flour mixed with oil as a grain offering;**

Silver offerings were used with the altar of burnt offerings outside. The golden one is used to carry the incense to the altar inside the tabernacle. **one silver bowl** = to receive the blood of the sacrifice.

Verse 14: **one gold pan of ten shekels, full of incense;**

Pan: To knead the flour. And dishes to put meat.

Verses 15-17: **one young bull, one ram, and one male lamb in its first year, as a burnt offering; 16 one kid of the goats as a sin offering; 17 and for the sacrifice of peace offerings: two oxen, five rams, five male goats, and five male lambs in their first year. This was the offering of Nahshon the son of Amminadab.**

Offering sacrifices indicates that our gifts are not accepted except through the crucified Christ. Note the repetition of the number (5), as the sacrifice of Christ, is the reason for the grace in which we are.

Note: In the books of interpretation it is often repeated: Do the days of offerings, which are 12 days, one day for each tribe, include the days of the Sabbaths? This is an irrelevant question. Offering sacrifices to the temple is a sacred act, and the Sabbath is sacred to the Lord.

Verse 89: **Now when Moses went into the tabernacle of meeting to speak with Him, he heard the voice of One speaking to him from above the mercy seat that was on the ark of the Testimony, from between the two cherubim; thus He spoke to him.**

God's word with Moses, declares that He accepted the offerings of His people and rejoiced in them. Here God speaks to all the people through Moses. There are those who say that God was speaking to Moses from the cover while the people were eating from the meat of the peace offering. Here, God speaks to Moses, and in the Old Testament, God was speaking to the prophets, but in the last days, He spoke to us through His Son (Hebrews 1: 1, 2).

Chapter 8

The ordination of the Levites:

Before the Divine Revelation tells us about the rite of the Levitical ordination. It tells us about the golden lampstand, as the lampstand refers to the Holy Spirit and His work in the Church. There is no church service or sacraments without the work of the Holy Spirit. Therefore, talking about the lampstand must have preceded the rite of ordination for the Levites. And the talk here is about lighting the lamp, that is, the work of the Holy Spirit through the Levites. It is understood from this that the Levites are the living lampstands, and they must be filled with the Holy Spirit to be luminous and have fruit for their service. Whoever comes forward for service, his lamp must be lit, and the priest lights the lampstand from the altar's fire. The meaning is that enlightenment in the lives of God's children is achieved through Christ Jesus, our high priest who ignites our hearts with the fire of His Holy Spirit through the fire of the cross (= the altar of burnt offering), and this fire ignites love in our hearts and burns the thorns of sin.

(Verses 1-4): **And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying: 2 "Speak to Aaron, and say to him, 'When you arrange the lamps, the seven lamps shall give light in front of the lampstand.'" 3 And Aaron did so; he arranged the lamps to face toward the front of the lampstand, as the Lord commanded Moses. 4 Now this workmanship of the lampstand was hammered gold; from its shaft to its flowers it was hammered work. According to the pattern which the Lord had shown Moses, so he made the lampstand.**

Speak to Aaron: Aaron is the high priest. The work here is a priestly work, which is to ensure that the lamps remain lit, so the message is directed to **Aaron**. This is the work of Christian priests through the seven church sacraments. The lamps refer to the believers who are cared for by the priests. Christian priests perform the sacraments and serve the people, and this is similar to the Jewish priests' care for the lamps (cutting the wicks and filling them with oil). As for lighting, this is the work of the Holy Spirit, that is, the oil in the lampstand. Christ is our true High Priest who sent His Holy Spirit to us. The Christian priest's priesthood is in Christ, our true High Priest. Therefore, his saying "**Speak**" refers to Christ, the Word of God, our true High Priest, in whom, that is, in His priesthood, the Christian priesthood is established.

When you arrange the lamps: It means clean, lit and fill them with oil.

the lamps: The lamp is what contains the oil. It has two openings: the first is used as an opening into which the priest pours the oil to fill the lamp. The second is where the wick comes out that lights it, and this wick opening is in the direction of the stem, so the lighting is in the direction of the stem when the wick is lit.

the seven lamps shall give light in front of the lampstand: The lampstand here means the middle shaft, as it is considered the body of the lampstand, and it is required that the lamps be lit so that its wicks are towards the shaft. The spiritual meaning is that any service must be for the glory of Christ's name. That is why the two disciples said, " So when Peter saw it, he responded to the people: "The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the God of our fathers, glorified His Servant Jesus, whom you delivered up and denied in the presence of Pilate, when he was determined to let Him go. 14 But you denied the Holy One and the Just, and asked for a murderer to be granted to you, 15 and killed the Prince of life, whom God raised from the dead, of which we are witnesses. 16 And His name, through faith in His name, has made this man strong, whom you see and know. Yes, the faith which comes through Him has given him this perfect soundness in the presence of you all." (Acts 3: 13-16). Here the disciples were burning lamps towards the shaft.

Hammered: Means carved by the hammer (or smothered with file in other translation). And they do not cast it, so they resemble the pagans, as they previously cast the golden calf. And note that by trials and some pains, God would hammer His people and servants so that they would shine like lampstands in the middle of the world.

from its shaft to its flowers: We said that the shaft refers to Christ, who also endured dreadful pains. **Thus the flowers** = His people, and they are the fruits of His work.

(Verses 5-19): **Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying: 6 "Take the Levites from among the children of Israel and cleanse them ceremonially. 7 Thus you shall do to them to cleanse them: Sprinkle water of purification on them, and let them shave all their body, and let them wash their clothes, and so make themselves clean. 8 Then let them take a young bull with its grain offering of fine flour mixed with oil, and you shall take another young bull as a sin offering. 9 And you shall bring the Levites before the tabernacle of meeting, and you shall gather together the whole congregation of the children of Israel. 10 So you shall bring the Levites before the Lord, and the children of Israel shall lay their hands on the Levites; 11 and Aaron shall offer the Levites before the Lord like a wave offering from the children of Israel, that they may perform the work of the Lord. 12 Then the Levites shall lay their hands on the heads of the young bulls, and you shall offer one as a sin offering and the other as a burnt offering to the Lord, to make atonement for the Levites. 13 "And you shall stand the Levites before Aaron and his sons, and then offer them like a wave offering to the Lord. 14 Thus you shall separate the Levites from among the children of Israel, and the Levites shall be Mine. 15 After that the Levites shall go in to service the tabernacle of meeting. So you shall cleanse them and offer them like a wave offering. 16 For they are wholly given to Me from among the children of Israel; I have taken them for Myself instead of all who open the womb, the firstborn of all the children of Israel. 17 For all the firstborn among the children of Israel are Mine, both man and beast; on the day that I struck all the firstborn in the land of Egypt I sanctified them to Myself. 18 I have taken the Levites instead of all the firstborn of the children of Israel. 19 And I have given the Levites as a gift to Aaron and his sons from among the children of Israel, to do the work for the children of Israel in the tabernacle of meeting, and to make**

atonement for the children of Israel, that there be no plague among the children of Israel when the children of Israel come near the sanctuary."

In (Leviticus 8), the rite of ordination of the priests is mentioned, and here we find the rite of ordination of the Levites, and here we find God Himself sanctifying these souls to qualify for His service. Therefore, they offer sin offerings and burnt sacrifices on their behalf to make atonement for them.

(Verse 7): **Thus you shall do to them to cleanse them: Sprinkle water of purification on them, and let them shave all their body, and let them wash their clothes, and so make themselves clean.**

water of purification: That is water for purification from sin, and probably it is taken either from the laver or from the water that contains some of the ashes of the red heifer. Why did he not mention that the water was taken from the laver or the ashes of the red heifer? This is because he previously spoke of the lampstand as the work of the Holy Spirit in purification, whether what the laver symbolizes or what the impurity water symbolizes.

and let them shave all their body: This means shaving all their body hair. Hair is a natural growth of the body, and shaving refers to the removal of all impurity related to the body, for sin resides in the body (Romans 7). Thus, in the ritual of his purification, the leper shaved all his hair as a sign of removing all sin from his life. This now corresponds to repentance. **and let them wash their clothes** = a sign of their commitment to the holy and pure life. The priests used to wash all of them, but the Levites were satisfied with washing their clothes.

Commentary on the ritual of cleansing the Levites:

1) The ritual of removing hair: St. Paul the Apostle says, "For the good that I will to do, I do not do; but the evil I will not to do, that I practice. 20 Now if I do what I will not to do, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells in me. 21 I find then a law, that evil is present with me, the one who wills to do good. 22 For I delight in the law of God according to the inward man. 23 But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members." (Romans 7: 19-23). This is how the apostle expressed the state of man, that sin dwells in our members. Thus, the prophet David said, "Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, And in sin my mother conceived me." (Psalm 51: 5). Now imagine a tank with a tap at the bottom. If you fill this tank with water, if you open the tap, water will come out of the tank. If you fill the tank with oil and open the tap, oil will come out, and so on. What will come out is exactly what is inside. Now, as we have seen, what is inside us is the sin that resides in our members, and therefore, everything that comes out of our bodies expresses what is inside us. The Levitical purification ritual and other rituals explain this idea that any secretion or flow or anything that comes out of the body, such as hair, even if it is natural, is unclean, not because it is unclean in itself. Rather, it is to remind us of the uncleanness of sin that resides in our members. This is to remind us always to be humble before God, and whoever does so, God will dwell in him. "For thus says the High and Lofty One Who inhabits eternity, whose name is Holy: "I dwell in the high and holy place, With him who has a contrite and humble spirit, To revive the spirit of the humble,

And to revive the heart of the contrite ones.” (Isaiah 57: 15). Therefore, removing hair in the Levitical purification ritual indicates repentance and turning away from all sin, and also a reminder of inner corruption, so that man is humbled before God, and thus God dwells in him, and he becomes a shining lamp before people, for God is the true light.

2) **Purification by water:** Water symbolizes the Holy Spirit and His work in purification, so the pure Levite will have fruit in his service: “For I will pour water on him who is thirsty, And floods on the dry ground; I will pour My Spirit on your descendants, And My blessing on your offspring; 4 They will spring up among the grass Like willows by the watercourses.” (Isaiah 44: 3-4). + “He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.” 39But this He spoke concerning the Spirit, whom those believing in Him would receive; for the Holy Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.” (John 7: 38-39).

3) The lampstand with its lamps hammered that is, shaped with a hammer and a file, that is, is a reference to the trials that God allows for man to be perfected, “for he who has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin,” (1 Peter 4: 1).

4) Now, if the Levite repents, turns away from sin, and endures the pains of temptation with thanksgiving, the Holy Spirit will purify him, and his service will bear fruit that pleases God, and he will shine like a shining lamp. Now we understand why the revelation does not focus on the source of the water used for purification. Because purification will be done by the Holy Spirit, which the lampstand symbolizes.

(Verse 9): **And you shall bring the Levites before the tabernacle of meeting, and you shall gather together the whole congregation of the children of Israel.**

the whole congregation: or elders of the congregation (Exodus 4: 29; 40: 12; Leviticus 8: 3).

(Verse 10): **So you shall bring the Levites before the Lord, and the children of Israel shall lay their hands on the Levites**

and the children of Israel shall lay their hands on the Levites: They are the gift of the people to God, or they are like the sacrifices offered by the people, and this ritual is similar to the recommendation of the new priest or the people's nomination of a bishop. And if we understand that the Levites were instead of the firstborn, then it is really as if they were offering them as sacrifices.

Why is the offering of the Levites instead of the firstborn considered as sacrifices?

1*Although God chose the Levites instead of the firstborn,

2*the firstborn remained for God, did not God redeem them with the blood of the Passover lamb on the night of the Exodus? “Everything that first opens the womb of all flesh, which they bring to the Lord,

whether man or beast, shall be yours; nevertheless the firstborn of man you shall surely redeem, and the firstborn of unclean animals you shall redeem. 16 And those redeemed of the devoted things you shall redeem when one month old, according to your valuation, for five shekels of silver, according to the shekel of the sanctuary, which is twenty gerahs.” (Numbers 18: 15,16).

3* We see the Lord’s concern with the issue that all firstborn are His, whether the firstborn of a human or the firstborn of animals, even unclean animals. We see this in the Book of Exodus: ““And it shall be, when the Lord brings you into the land of the Canaanites, as He swore to you and your fathers, and gives it to you, 12that you shall set apart to the Lord all that open the womb, that is, every firstborn that comes from an animal which you have; the males shall be the Lord’s. 13But every firstborn of a donkey you shall redeem with a lamb; and if you will not redeem it, then you shall break its neck. And all the firstborn of man among your sons you shall redeem.” (Exodus 13: 11-13). The firstborn of a donkey, which is an unclean animal, must either be offered by its owner as a ransom, such as a lamb, or this donkey must be killed.

4* The idea is that God redeemed all the firstborn with the blood of the Passover lamb on the night of the Exodus. So, all the firstborn became His.

5*And it came to pass that God had chosen the Levites to serve him, and they were as if they were a ransom for the firstborn.

6*But there was a ransom for the firstborn of five shekels, that they might not perish (Numbers 18: 15,16).

7*The spiritual meaning: Christ bought us with His blood. “Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? 20 For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God’s.” (1 Corinthians 6 :19,20).

Whoever refuses to be dedicated to God - but rather gives himself to the world - exposes himself to destruction.

(Verse 11): **and Aaron shall offer the Levites before the Lord like a wave offering from the children of Israel, that they may perform the work of the Lord.**

and Aaron shall offer the Levites: This is what Aaron does with the sacrifices, and the meaning (they are from You and to You), and here the people offer the Levites to God, and God gives them to Aaron. Note that God is the one who created them, so they are His, but the people give them to God to serve Him (verse 10). They will be a cause of blessing by serving the tabernacle and the temple with their praises, guarding the tabernacle, teaching the people, and helping to offer sacrifices so that God may be pleased with the people. We see that everything is from God. God gave it to us, and what we offer to him will return it to us again many times many folds, as we offer to the Lord a bread offering and wine in the sacrament of the Eucharist and see what God will return to us.

(Verse 19): **And I have given the Levites as a gift to Aaron and his sons from among the children of Israel, to do the work for the children of Israel in the tabernacle of meeting, and to make atonement for the children of Israel, that there be no plague among the children of Israel when the children of Israel come near the sanctuary."**

And I have given the Levites as a gift: Why are the Levites a gift from God to His people? And why is the priestly service a gift from God to His people? The priestly service (priests and Levites) is so **that there be no plague among the children of Israel** = This means that the priestly service is intercession for the people so that they will not perish because of their sins. So, the fact that God finds a way for there to be intercession for the people so that they will not perish if they sin is undoubtedly a great gift and gives the people comfort and reassurance, for there will be no perishing if someone sins. Rather, there will be intercession for the sinner. And certainly, this intercession symbolizes the atoning intercession of Christ. Therefore, He said here **and to make atonement for the children of Israel** = This is the role and work of the Eucharist in the Church now. We sin, but the Eucharist is given as "forgiveness of sins and eternal life to those who partake of Him." That is why the Prophet David said about it, "You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; You anoint my head with oil; My cup runs over." (Psalm 23: 5). The table here is the Eucharist table, because it is given for the forgiveness of sins. When the accuser - who harasses us - seeks our destruction when we sin, he finds that God has forgiven us.

and to make atonement for the children of Israel: 1)The children of Israel sin and fall short of serving the Lord, and the Levites serve in their place. 2) While they are in their guard, they prevent the people from approaching the tabernacle and its utensils so that the people will not die.

This image depicts to us the image of Christ, the faithful servant, who is the Father's gift to humanity for its salvation. At the same time, it is a sacrifice of love offered to the Father in the name of humanity, and He accepts it as a sign of satisfaction with us. In the Eucharist, God accepts the offerings of His people through the cross. And the people receive from the Father the body and blood of His Son, the sacrament of communion with Him and sanctification for them. It signifies a mutual love in which the Father unites with humanity. And it is the offering of each party to the other.

(Verses 20-24): **Thus Moses and Aaron and all the congregation of the children of Israel did to the Levites; according to all that the Lord commanded Moses concerning the Levites, so the children of Israel did to them. 21 And the Levites purified themselves and washed their clothes; then Aaron presented them like a wave offering before the Lord, and Aaron made atonement for them to cleanse them. 22 After that the Levites went in to do their work in the tabernacle of meeting before Aaron and his sons; as the Lord commanded Moses concerning the Levites, so they did to them. 23 Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, 24 "This is what pertains to the Levites: From twenty-five years old and above one may enter to perform service in the work of the tabernacle of meeting;**

(Verse 25): **and at the age of fifty years they must cease performing this work, and shall work no more.**

and shall work no more: Intending heavy physical services.

(Verse 26): **They may minister with their brethren in the tabernacle of meeting, to attend to needs, but they themselves shall do no work. Thus you shall do to the Levites regarding their duties."**

but they themselves shall do no work: Same meaning of verse 25.

Chapter 9

Divine Worship:

God set up Moses, Aaron and the Levites to serve the people, but the real care is in the hands of God, who works in His servants, and through them. He takes care of His people, and we find here in this chapter.

1- A problem appears to Moses, and he turns to God. He seeks God's advice, not people's. God tells him what to do.

2- The cloud leads the people. God does not leave his people in confusion but rather takes charge of their leadership.

And the Holy Spirit is the One who leads the church; so that many interpreters called the book of Acts of the Apostles the book of the works of the Holy Spirit. Through prayer, God guides the servants of the church, for the Holy Spirit "teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you." (John 14: 26), and the Holy Spirit is the cloud that leads the church, and the Passover mentioned here is the body and blood of Christ continually in our midst, accompanying us on our journey of estrangement.

(Verses 1-5): **Now the Lord spoke to Moses in the Wilderness of Sinai, in the first month of the second year after they had come out of the land of Egypt, saying: 2 "Let the children of Israel keep the Passover at its appointed time. 3 On the fourteenth day of this month, at twilight, you shall keep it at its appointed time. According to all its rites and ceremonies you shall keep it." 4 So Moses told the children of Israel that they should keep the Passover. 5 And they kept the Passover on the fourteenth day of the first month, at twilight, in the Wilderness of Sinai; according to all that the Lord commanded Moses, so the children of Israel did.**

God's concern for the Passover lamb and its rituals is for the people to know that everything they had is due to the sacrifice of redemption (the Passover lamb). God commanded Moses to make the Passover before the census, as the Passover was in the first month of the Exodus: **"And they kept the Passover on the fourteenth day of the first month, at twilight."** As for the census, it was in the second month "Now the Lord spoke to Moses in the Wilderness of Sinai, in the tabernacle of meeting, on the first day of the second month, in the second year after they had come out of the land of Egypt, saying: 2 "Take a census of all the congregation of the children of Israel, by their families, by their fathers' houses, according to the number of names, every male individually," (Numbers 1: 1-2). This was to show His focus on the Passover memorial so that they would always remember that their salvation was based on the sacrifice of the Passover lamb, and to make sure the significance of Passover was not lost amid the travel events. Also, these divine guidelines were before they journeyed, " Now it came to pass on the twentieth day of

the second month, in the second year, that the cloud was taken up from above the tabernacle of the Testimony." (Numbers 10: 11) in order to remain in their minds during their journey. The census shows the divine miracle in their safe exit from the hand of Pharaoh, and they were about three million people. And God shows them that this miracle is due to the blood of the Passover lamb. This reminds us that those who are saved in heaven by the blood of Christ are said to have been "After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could number, of all nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, with palm branches in their hands," (Revelation 7: 9).

Here, we find that God repeats these divine instructions before their departure. We see the beginning of the journey in verse (Numbers 10: 11): "Now it came to pass on the twentieth day of the second month, in the second year, that the cloud was taken up from above the tabernacle of the Testimony." This was so that the events of salvation by the blood of the Passover lamb would remain fresh in their minds amidst the events of the journey.

God wanted the events of the redemption by the blood of the Passover lamb to remain before their eyes for the rest of their lives so that they would continue to remember God's grace upon them and that He redeemed and freed them by the blood of the Passover lamb. So God commanded them to perform an annual rite of worship on the same date of their exodus from Egypt, in which they would repeat the ritual of the Passover lamb by which they were saved from the hand of Pharaoh and also saved their firstborn from death. Rather, the Lord also asked them to perform a daily ritual of worship in which they would offer a burnt offering in the morning and a burnt offering in the evening = "Command the children of Israel, and say to them, 'My offering, My food for My offerings made by fire as a sweet aroma to Me, you shall be careful to offer to Me at their appointed time.' 3 "And you shall say to them, 'This is the offering made by fire which you shall offer to the Lord: two male lambs in their first year without blemish, day by day, as a regular burnt offering. 4 The one lamb you shall offer in the morning, the other lamb you shall offer in the evening, 5 and one-tenth of an ephah of fine flour as a grain offering mixed with one-fourth of a hin of pressed oil. 6 It is a regular burnt offering which was ordained at Mount Sinai for a sweet aroma, an offering made by fire to the Lord. 7 And its drink offering shall be one-fourth of a hin for each lamb; in a holy place you shall pour out the drink to the Lord as an offering. 8 The other lamb you shall offer in the evening; as the morning grain offering and its drink offering, you shall offer it as an offering made by fire, a sweet aroma to the Lord." (Numbers 28: 2-8). The blood of the slain, saving lamb will remain before their minds throughout their lives, not only in remembering the annual Passover but daily. This is the rite of worship among God's people in the Old Testament. Review the meaning of this ritual and what it symbolizes in its place (Numbers 28).

This was a shadow of what was to happen in the future through the cross, by which our Lord Jesus Christ redeemed us, saved us and set us free. The Lord Jesus asked the church for a rite of worship so that we would continue to remember His amazing work filled with love: "Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends." (John 15: 13). This rite is the Divine Liturgy, in which we offer the sacrament of the Eucharist. This Liturgy is the Christian rite of worship.

Now we can clearly understand the words of the Lord of Glory at the Lord's Supper on Maundy Thursday night: "And He took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, "This is My body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of Me." (Luke 22: 19). The Lord Christ wants His love to remain before our minds all day long.

What happens in the Eucharist? In our Orthodox faith, we believe there is a real transformation that occurs; transformation from bread to Real Body, it is not merely a symbol and a memorial of the Lord's Supper. Rather, just as the Passover lamb was a real lamb that they ate in the practice of the Passover rite, so in the Eucharist God places before our eyes on the altar the body of Christ, our Passover (1 Corinthians 5: 7), separate from His blood (the body in the paten and the blood in the cup). This is a wonderful picture of the divine love that was manifested in the death of Christ on the cross, the outpouring of His blood, and its separation from His body. This love remains before our eyes all day and all life. Rather, we see this in the angel who appeared to the Marys on the Day of Resurrection, "But the angel answered and said to the women, "Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified." (Matthew 28: 5). Although Christ had risen, the angel says about Him, "Jesus who was crucified." The cross is the clearest image of divine love our Lord wants us to remember. Remembrance or commemoration does not mean there is no transformation of bread and wine. Rather, the Lord Jesus wants us to continue to remember His act of love. In this regard, St. Paul the Apostle says, "For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's." (1 Corinthians 6: 20). We remember the love of Christ and what He has given us, so we work for the glory of His name, and in this way, we achieve the purpose of our creation, "Everyone who is called by My name, Whom I have created for My glory; I have formed him, yes, I have made him." (Isaiah 43: 7), and in this way we are saved. In addition, whoever realizes and understands the love of Christ, Satan will not be able to deceive him that God does not love him. This is the devil's constant game: with every trial, the devil convinces us of the severity of God who decreed such a difficult trial, so we quarrel with God, and love is lost, and love is the way we unite with God (John 15: 9). Consequently, we lose union with God, life. The result is death. This is what the devil wants.

at twilight: Or in the evening, and what is meant by this time is the evening time, which falls between the first supper that begins at the evening and the second supper that takes place at sunset. This is the time that the Lord Jesus Christ died on the cross.

According to all its rites: This shows God's concern for the rites.

(Verses 6-8): **Now there were certain men who were defiled by a human corpse, so that they could not keep the Passover on that day; and they came before Moses and Aaron that day. 7 And those men said to him, "We became defiled by a human corpse. Why are we kept from presenting the offering of the Lord at its appointed time among the children of Israel?" 8 And Moses said to them, "Stand still, that I may hear what the Lord will command concerning you."**

We see here the people's interest in the Passover sacrifice, and whoever was deprived of it for a reason beyond his control is concerned not to be deprived of it!! Do we care the same about communion? It is

the greatness of Moses that he said I do not know. And went to pray and ask God. This is divine worship where God teaches the ways of worship and delivers them to His men (Moses here). And His men ask Him, and the Spirit guides and leads them, and they lead His people. There is no one who knows everything, and we should not start any work until we ask God first.

(Verses 9-14): **Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, 10 "Speak to the children of Israel, saying: 'If anyone of you or your posterity is unclean because of a corpse, or is far away on a journey, he may still keep the Lord's Passover. 11 On the fourteenth day of the second month, at twilight, they may keep it. They shall eat it with unleavened bread and bitter herbs. 12 They shall leave none of it until morning, nor break one of its bones. According to all the ordinances of the Passover they shall keep it. 13 But the man who is clean and is not on a journey, and ceases to keep the Passover, that same person shall be cut off from among his people, because he did not bring the offering of the Lord at its appointed time; that man shall bear his sin. 14 'And if a stranger dwells among you, and would keep the Lord's Passover, he must do so according to the rite of the Passover and according to its ceremony; you shall have one ordinance, both for the stranger and the native of the land.'"**

God did not forbid someone who was defiled by a dead person against his will, or who was on a journey far from the place where the Passover was held, but He allowed them to practice it in the second month instead of the first. As for those who abstain from practicing the Passover ritual without reason, that soul is cut off from God's people:

- a. It was necessary that God would not allow the one who defiled himself to eat the Passover, as whoever partakes in communion unworthily would become guilty in the body and blood of the Lord (1 Corinthians 11: 27). God allows repenting and then partaking in Eucharist.
- b. The strangers could offer the Passover after being circumcised and converted to Judaism (Exodus 12: 19), symbolizing the gentiles' salvation and acceptance.
- c. God allows a second Passover for those who could not celebrate the first. Do we care the same about partaking in the Eucharist?
- d. They were supposed to celebrate the next Passover in the Promised Land, and their sin resulted in 40 years of wandering.
- e. This Passover celebration (referred to here) is ahead of time from the census of the Children of Israel mentioned in the first chapter, but it is mentioned here in the logic that the Book of Numbers follows. After the preparation of the servants for the altar has been completed, the word comes about the communion.
- f. Notice that when he mentions the second Passover, he mentions some of its rites to take care of it, as it has the same holiness.

g. Hezekiah held the Passover in the second month because the priests were not sanctified yet. And in this, he took advantage of this commandment (2 Chronicles 30: 2,20).

h. God's concern for the Passover subject was for not forgetting over time their liberation from Egypt, their crossing of the sea, and the Passover lamb on this night. But would rather remain alive in their memory, "Do this in remembrance of me," to remember God's love for them and His benevolent works of love, so they would not believe the demons who questioned them in God's love.

i. **They shall eat it with unleavened bread and bitter herbs:** Passover has two conditions:- 1) Belief that blood saves (and this corresponds to belief in the redemption of Christ). 2) Eating the sacrifice of the Passover lamb (this corresponds to the Eucharist). Therefore, whoever 1) does not believe and anoints his doors with blood, or 2) neglects to eat the Passover lamb = **and ceases to keep the Passover, that same person shall be cut off from among his people.** Therefore, whoever proclaims now that faith in the blood of Christ is sufficient without eating from the sacrifice of the Eucharist exposes himself to great danger.

(Verses 15-23): **Now on the day that the tabernacle was raised up, the cloud covered the tabernacle, the tent of the Testimony; from evening until morning it was above the tabernacle like the appearance of fire. 16 So it was always: the cloud covered it by day, and the appearance of fire by night. 17 Whenever the cloud was taken up from above the tabernacle, after that the children of Israel would journey; and in the place where the cloud settled, there the children of Israel would pitch their tents. 18 At the command of the Lord the children of Israel would journey, and at the command of the Lord they would camp; as long as the cloud stayed above the tabernacle they remained encamped. 19 Even when the cloud continued long, many days above the tabernacle, the children of Israel kept the charge of the Lord and did not journey. 20 So it was, when the cloud was above the tabernacle a few days: according to the command of the Lord they would remain encamped, and according to the command of the Lord they would journey. 21 So it was, when the cloud remained only from evening until morning: when the cloud was taken up in the morning, then they would journey; whether by day or by night, whenever the cloud was taken up, they would journey. 22 Whether it was two days, a month, or a year that the cloud remained above the tabernacle, the children of Israel would remain encamped and not journey; but when it was taken up, they would journey. 23 At the command of the Lord they remained encamped, and at the command of the Lord they journeyed; they kept the charge of the Lord, at the command of the Lord by the hand of Moses.**

They were looking to the cloud to know when they would leave. We should look to heaven and not to earth like animals. We must always look to heaven, waiting for the Redeemer to come or for the order to dismantle the tent and go to heaven. The cloud means for the people, "Thy will be done."

Chapter 10

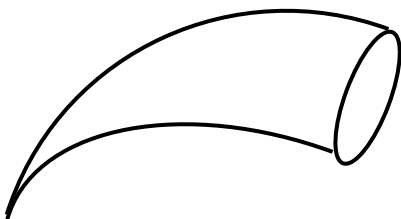
Trumpets and the Beginning of the Journey

God commanded the Prophet Moses to make two silver trumpets to be used in calling the congregation, in departure, in war and in feasts, and for each purpose there is a specific tone (either one trumpet or two trumpets or a shout...)

Silver refers to the Word of God "The words of the Lord are pure words, Like silver tried in a furnace of earth, Purified seven times." (Psalm 12: 6). This Word of God is the language of the priests, and their job is to always use the Word of God to teach, rebuke and warn the people, and urge them to strive while they are walking in the wilderness of this world. It is the secret of their victory in their spiritual war and the secret of their joy and jubilation.

The sound of the trumpet instills in man alertness and awe, and so does the word of God. That is why Felix the governor trembled at the words of the Apostle Paul (Acts 24: 25). That is why when the people saw fire on the mountain, they heard the sound of trumpets (Exodus 19: 16) and there they trembled. Then the law was given to them to keep. Notice the coupling of the commandments with the sound of the trumpet here. Refer to the words of the prophet Isaiah: "'Cry aloud, spare not; Lift up your voice like a trumpet; Tell My people their transgression, And the house of Jacob their sins.'" (Isaiah 58: 1). God here demands that the rebuke be like a trumpet. If the trumpet expresses the work of the word of God in the soul, and that it is the one that leads, then the cloud and the trumpet say the same thing, God is the one who leads. How shameful it is for Israel to wander after that.

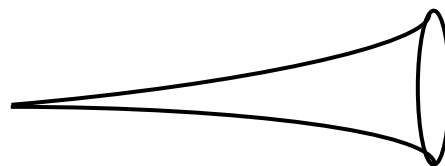
They were probably two trumpets, because there were only two priests, but in the days of Solomon there were 120 priests blowing the trumpets (2 Chronicles 5: 12). The trumpets were hammered, that is, one piece of silver that they would file with a file. There were trumpets, and they were straight, but the horns were curved.



Joshua 6: 5

Horn = Shophir in Hebrew

A word close to a whistle



Trumpet = Hasawsura in Hebrew (Numbers 10)

Its length is approximately a cubit

(Verses 1-4): **And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying: 2 "Make two silver trumpets for yourself; you shall make them of hammered work; you shall use them for calling the congregation and for directing the movement of the camps. 3 When they blow both of them, all the congregation shall gather before you**

at the door of the tabernacle of meeting. 4 But if they blow only one, then the leaders, the heads of the divisions of Israel, shall gather to you.

hammered work: That is, carved with a file. And they do not smelt it, resembling the pagans, as they previously smelted the golden calf. And note that through trials, God files His people and His servants (these are the trials that God allows to purify us), so they shine like beacons in the midst of the world. Here we see the relationship between the work with the file, that is, the pain of the trials that God allows as a warning to His people so that they repent, and the work of the word of God, which is like a trumpet, that is, which has a frightening effect, and a person hears it and trembles and repents. Here we understand the words of the inspiration after Adam was expelled from Paradise: "So He drove out the man; and He placed cherubim at the east of the garden of Eden, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to guard the way to the tree of life." (Genesis 3: 24). The sword in the hand of the cherubim is the Word of God, as St. Paul the Apostle says: "For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart." (Hebrews 4: 12). The words of inspiration are flaming swords that turn every way because the Word of God has two parts: 1) Promises of eternal life and glory. 2) Threats of destruction.

The promises of eternal life mean returning to eat from the tree of life, that is, whoever obeys the word of God (i.e. the commandment) will live eternally. But whoever is obstinate will not get his share from the tree of life. Note that eating from the Tree of Life is union with Christ, and Christ is life (John 11: 25).

Application:

Blowing the trumpets around the walls of Jericho:

Jericho is within the borders of the land of Canaan that God gave to his people (see the interpretation of verse 9). The people heard the sound of the trumpets, and the majority trembled and decided not to disobey God's commandment, so the walls fell down, and they were victorious. The sin of Achan, son of Carmi, was the reason for the defeat of the people in Ai and the destruction of Achan, who did not tremble when he heard the trumpets; that is, he did not tremble before God and decided to submit to God's word and commandments.

(Verse 5): **When you sound the advance, the camps that lie on the east side shall then begin their journey.**

Meaning loud and continuous sound which is a call to leave. "For if the trumpet makes an uncertain sound, who will prepare for battle?" (1 Corinthians 14: 8).

The purpose of blowing the trumpet or trumpets:

1. To organize the group's journeying as they prepare to leave.
2. Two trumpets are used here to gather the congregation of Israel at the door of the tabernacle of meeting.
3. If only one trumpet is used, the heads of the thousands will gather. (intermittent sounding in cases 2 & 3).
4. The chant sounds, indicating to leave, and they have the arrangement of the first time for the camp of Judah, the second for Reuben, and adding the Septuagint, the third for Ephraim, and the fourth for Dan.
5. Sometimes, they blew trumpets at the coronation of the King.
6. When they go to war, they blow the trumpet: a. To motivate the soldiers; b. To remind them with the commandments of the Lord, and their chant here is to resort to Him to keep His promises, and God sees their obedience, so He keeps His covenant with them and helps them.
- 7- In their joys, as happened at the inauguration of Solomon's Temple.
- 8- On their feasts. In all our joys, we do not forget to pray and do not get caught up in joy for God.

Wilderness of Paran = It is the beginning of the wandering. it is south of Canaan, west of Al-Arish plain (Shur wilderness), east of the wilderness of sin, and south of the Sinai Peninsula and the Gulf of Aqaba.

And we see in the Book of Revelation that John heard the sound of a trumpet before he heard the voice of the Lord Jesus speaking to him (Revelation 1: 10), and in light of the preceding, we understand why he heard the sound of the trumpet:

1. The Book of Revelation tells us about the end of days and that we will go to the heavenly Jerusalem to dwell there with God forever, and the trumpet was blowing at the journey (points 1-4 above). And the sound of the trumpet that John heard meant for us to prepare to depart to heaven.
2. They blew trumpets at the coronation of kings (point 5). And Christ is the King of kings, and He is the One who gives the kings their authority. As for us, we have him reigning on our hearts out of love for Him, and we tell (the trumpet blowing) every person to rejoice in Christ the King. After the second coming, Christ will reign on all, and everyone will submit to Him either out of love or under His foot stool (Satan and who follows satan) (Psalm 110: 1 + Hebrews 2: 8)
3. They would blow trumpets when they went to war (point 6), and the church is in a spiritual war until the second coming of Christ. And war is to prepare to leave.
4. They used to blow trumpets in their joys and feasts (points 7, 8), and are there more joys and feasts than the joy of the second coming of Christ to take us on the clouds, where we live with Him in eternal joy?

(Verses 6-10): **When you sound the advance the second time, then the camps that lie on the south side shall begin their journey; they shall sound the call for them to begin their journeys. 7 And when the assembly is to be gathered together, you shall blow, but not sound the advance. 8 The sons of Aaron, the priests, shall blow the trumpets; and these shall be to you as an ordinance forever throughout your generations. 9 "When you go to war in your land against the enemy who oppresses you, then you shall sound an alarm with the trumpets, and you will be remembered before the Lord your God, and you will be saved from your enemies. 10 Also in the day of your gladness, in your appointed feasts, and at the beginning of your months, you shall blow the trumpets over your burnt offerings and over the sacrifices of your peace offerings; and they shall be a memorial for you before your God: I am the Lord your God."**

"When you go to war in your land against the enemy who oppresses you, then you shall sound an alarm with the trumpets, and you will be remembered before the Lord your God, and you will be saved from your enemies: The blowing of the trumpets will not be the reason that God remembers them and saves them from their enemies. Rather, it is what the trumpets indicate, which is the trembling of the word of God. When they hear the sound of the trumpets that causes trembling in their hearts, they remember God's threat to those who disobey His word, and they tremble and repent, and God is pleased with them. If they tremble and submit to the word of God, God will stand by them and grant them victory.

Note the words of the inspiration, **"When you go to war in your land against the enemy who oppresses you"** for God did not allow His people to fight other peoples in their lands, but only to defend themselves if someone attacks them in their land = **in your land**. See the commentary on chapter 20 of the Book of Deuteronomy.

(Verses 11-28): **Now it came to pass on the twentieth day of the second month, in the second year, that the cloud was taken up from above the tabernacle of the Testimony. 12 And the children of Israel set out from the Wilderness of Sinai on their journeys; then the cloud settled down in the Wilderness of Paran. 13 So they started out for the first time according to the command of the Lord by the hand of Moses. 14 The standard of the camp of the children of Judah set out first according to their armies; over their army was Nahshon the son of Amminadab. 15 Over the army of the tribe of the children of Issachar was Nethanel the son of Zuar. 16 And over the army of the tribe of the children of Zebulun was Eliab the son of Helon. 17 Then the tabernacle was taken down; and the sons of Gershon and the sons of Merari set out, carrying the tabernacle. 18 And the standard of the camp of Reuben set out according to their armies; over their army was Elizur the son of Shedeur. 19 Over the army of the tribe of the children of Simeon was Shelumiel the son of Zurishaddai. 20 And over the army of the tribe of the children of Gad was Eliasaph the son of Deuel. 21 Then the Kohathites set out, carrying the holy things. (The tabernacle would be prepared for their arrival.) 22 And the standard of the camp of the children of Ephraim set out according to their armies; over their army was Elishama the son of**

Ammihud. 23 Over the army of the tribe of the children of Manasseh was Gamaliel the son of Pedahzur. 24 And over the army of the tribe of the children of Benjamin was Abidan the son of Gideoni. 25 Then the standard of the camp of the children of Dan (the rear guard of all the camps) set out according to their armies; over their army was Ahiezer the son of Ammishaddai. 26 Over the army of the tribe of the children of Asher was Pagiel the son of Ocran. 27 And over the army of the tribe of the children of Naphtali was Ahira the son of Enan. 28 Thus was the order of march of the children of Israel, according to their armies, when they began their journey.

Here begins the journey of 38 years and 9 months, the journey of wandering. The system of migration is explained here and drawn up in the second chapter (the journey continued until Numbers 22: 1).

(Verse 12): **12 And the children of Israel set out from the Wilderness of Sinai on their journeys; then the cloud settled down in the Wilderness of Paran.**

They moved from the wilderness of Sinai to the wilderness of Paran. This is the nature of our lives; we go from wilderness to wilderness.

(Verse 13): **So they started out for the first time according to the command of the Lord by the hand of Moses.**

That is, according to the order God showed Moses in the second chapter.

(Verse 21): **Then the Kohathites set out, carrying the holy things. (The tabernacle would be prepared for their arrival.)**

The tabernacle would be prepared for their arrival: The Levites of the Gershonites and the Merarites would begin to leave first and would reach before the Kohathites, who are the bearers of the sanctuaries. The Gershonites and the Merarites, upon their arrival, would begin to set up the tabernacle until the Kohathites arrived.

(Verse 25): **Then the standard of the camp of the children of Dan (the rear guard of all the camps) set out according to their armies; over their army was Ahiezer the son of Ammishaddai.**

the rear guard of all the camps: Back of all camps.

(Verses 29-32): **Now Moses said to Hobab the son of Reuel the Midianite, Moses' father-in-law, "We are setting out for the place of which the Lord said, 'I will give it to you.' Come with us, and we will**

treat you well; for the Lord has promised good things to Israel." 30 And he said to him, "I will not go, but I will depart to my own land and to my relatives." 31 So Moses said, "Please do not leave, inasmuch as you know how we are to camp in the wilderness, and you can be our eyes. 32 And it shall be, if you go with us—indeed it shall be—that whatever good the Lord will do to us, the same we will do to you."

In the joy of Moses to move towards the Promised Land, he called Hobab to go with them. And this Hobab may be the father-in-law of Moses, that is, Jethro himself or his son. The word in law in Hebrew means everyone who belongs to a woman's family, such as her father or uncle. And Moses' call to his in-law is full of faith in God's promise. Here he did not mention whether he responded to Moses or not, but what proves his agreeing (see Judges 1: 16, 4: 11, 1 Samuel 15: 6). And the call of Moses is the call of the Church for each one. Hobab first refused to go with Moses, representing the one who is hindered by human physical relations from following Christ. Some think that Moses' call to Hobab has some weakness, as why should Hobab be their eyes while the cloud is leading them?

But what is more logical is that Moses wanted to repay their favour and love to them, as they walked with him for a while, accompanied him, and showed all their love to his people. He is here inviting them in a nice way to enjoy themselves together in the promised land. Does God's leadership of His people prevent them from benefiting from talent and experience of others, as they know the locations of water and fuel...etc. Here, they provide services to God's people, and the people lead them to the path of salvation. Moses did not tell Hobab to guide him where to go, but rather gave him a reasonable reason to follow him in dignity. Moses' call to Hobab is our call to every human being to enjoy eternal life.

(Verses 33-34): **So they departed from the mountain of the Lord on a journey of three days; and the ark of the covenant of the Lord went before them for the three days' journey, to search out a resting place for them. 34 And the cloud of the Lord was above them by day when they went out from the camp.**

a journey of three days: At the beginning of the journey, they walked 3 days in a row, as we cannot set out towards the promised land unless we carry the power of the resurrection of Christ in us (the number 3 symbolizes the resurrection).

the ark of the covenant of the Lord went before them: Its place was in the middle of the group carried by the Kehath, but He is the hidden leader of the group and the secret of the strength and sanctification of the march. Perhaps the cloud was above the ark and, at the same time, shaded this army, protecting them from the heat and lighting them up at night. And at the same time, lead them. There is another opinion that in the first movement of the group, there was an exception, and the ark led the people to encourage them. Still, the first opinion is more likely.

His saying departing before them has a spiritual, symbolic, and metaphorical meaning: God is passing before them and with them and among them to lead and guide them. This represents David's saying: "I have set the LORD always before me; Because He is at my right hand I shall not be moved." How can the

Lord be before him and at the same time at his right if the meaning is not figurative? It means that He is leaving in front of them, that their minds and eyes are fixed on him. Before him means that David's eyes are always fixed on God. And to his right means that God is his strength and helper.

Thus, the saying = **the ark of the covenant of the Lord went before them** = means that the ark is in the middle of the congregation. But their minds and eyes are fixed on it.

The people's journey is the same as the journey of the Church now:

1- The cloud leads the way = the Holy Spirit leads the church

2- The ark of the covenant among the people = Christ in the middle of his church, "and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Amen." (Matthew 28: 20) + "For where two or three are gathered together in My name, I am there in the midst of them." (Matthew 18: 20) + "and in the midst of the seven lampstands One like the Son of Man, clothed with a garment down to the feet and girded about the chest with a golden band." (Revelation 1: 13).

(Verses 35-36): **So it was, whenever the ark set out, that Moses said: "Rise up, O Lord! Let Your enemies be scattered, And let those who hate You flee before You." 36 And when it rested, he said: "Return, O Lord, To the many thousands of Israel."**

The blessing of Moses and his prayer are similar to, but rather same as the words of the litany of the meetings in our church. The enemies are both physical and spiritual enemies. This prayer teaches us to begin and end everything with prayer

the many thousands of Israel: Tens of thousands of thousands of Israel.

Words of the Litany of the Congregation in the Church Now

"Remember, O Lord, our congregations, bless them"

"Grant that they may be unto us without obstacle or hindrance, that we may hold them according to Your holy and blessed will. Houses of prayer, houses of purity, houses of blessing, grant them unto us, O Lord, and unto Your servants who shall come after us forever. Arise, O Lord God, let all Your enemies be scattered, and let all that hate Your Holy Name flee before Your face. But let Your people be in blessing thousands of thousands and ten thousands times ten thousands doing Your will. "

Chapter 11

People's Grumbling:

It is the same story continually repeated, as God created Adam in Paradise, and Adam sinned and fell. Thus, we see the people here. We repeat what God gave to His people, or rather what God gave us:

1. We are affiliated with God, and we belong to Him (Chapter 1)
2. His banner over me was love. (Chapter 2).
3. We have a priestly service, and Christ is our High Priest (Chapter 3).
4. God is in our midst during the journey (Chapter 4).
5. Let us isolate sin (leprosy...) (Chapter 5)
6. We belong to God, "I am my beloved's, And my beloved is mine." (Chapter 6).
7. Let me present to God from what He provided me (Chapter 7)
8. The Holy Spirit enlightens and purifies (Chapter 8).
9. God leads the church and the procession (Chapter 9)
10. God's word warns and rebukes (Chapter 10).

Therefore, everything was prepared so that the march to the Promised Land would be completed in peace, but there was grumbling!!

God has prepared the camp to dwell in, but we find them here concerned with the lust of their stomachs. Thus, Noah got drunk and became naked. Thus, the people got drunk and played in front of the golden calf. And so the priests got drunk, and they offered strange fire. Let us note that the apostasy of old lusts is fatal. Adam and his descendants died, the curse entered the house of Noah (in the person of Canaan), many people perished because of the golden calf, and the fire burned the priests. Thus, we see lust as deadly and destructive, and it is sad to see God turned into an enemy that strikes His people. This book reveals human weaknesses. God is holy and cannot tolerate sin. Sin still exists, but it is he who lusts it destroys himself. We have meditated before on God's benevolence, and here we are getting to know the crooked path of man. We will notice that there is a gradation in the punishments and a gradation in the sin. The sin began on the inside with internal grumbling and reached the declared grumbling and rebellion.

(Verses 1-3): **Now when the people complained, it displeased the Lord; for the Lord heard it, and His anger was aroused. So the fire of the Lord burned among them, and consumed some in the outskirts of the camp. 2 Then the people cried out to Moses, and when Moses prayed to the Lord, the fire was**

quenched. 3 So he called the name of the place Taberah, because the fire of the Lord had burned among them.

Now when the people complained: As if their exodus from Egypt and everything that happened to them is evil. Perhaps the complaint was walking the journey and the hot weather or because they had left the Nile Valley. This is the nature of the old man in us, constantly complaining and grumbling without a real reason, but the real reason is the emptiness of the heart, as sin has made him lose his inner peace, so he feels for any reason to complain and worry. And the people had previously complained several times, but God did not punish them, and that was for two reasons:

1. They are coming out of the land of slavery, and their soul is bitter, so God will prolong His patience for those who have bitter excuses.
2. They have not obtained the law yet.

And now that they have received it and seen God's good deeds, but rather they have seen God Himself:

*They saw ten plagues against the Egyptians, but they were under divine protection and were not harmed. Then they saw the sea split.

*"The sight of the glory of the Lord was like a consuming fire on the top of the mountain in the eyes of the children of Israel." (Exodus 24: 17).

*"And Moses and Aaron went into the tabernacle of meeting, and came out and blessed the people. Then the glory of the Lord appeared to all the people, and fire came out from before the Lord and consumed the burnt offering and the fat on the altar. When all the people saw it, they shouted and fell on their faces." (Leviticus 9: 23,24).

After all this, their complaining was considered a transgression, and this required discipline, especially after all the goodness that God had showered upon them.

Let us note that there was grumbling after every gift, as God gives us a lot, but we forget after we rejoice and get used to God's blessing, so we begin to complain. Therefore, the Church teaches us to give thanks at all times, always remember God's favours upon us, and not allow the complaining devil to make us complain.

So the fire of the Lord burned among them: They had experienced the revelations of God's love so far, but they had to know that there is such a thing as God's wrath. And God's wrath has painful consequences. And God, in His love, allows these painful consequences to discipline His people so that they may be saved. The grumbling was internal in the heart, but God wanted to expose it to give a chance for repentance and not leave the corruption inside lurking without healing. So, when we complain about something, it is only right that God gives us something to cry out about, and that is why they **cried out to Moses**. They cried because they failed to put out the fire, feeling that it was a supernatural force and perhaps it was lightning. And the fire ignited in **the outskirts of the camp** =

probably where there were those who complained, and let us notice that they were at the outskirts of the camp, as wherever we moved away from God, our hearts would open to evil. And let us note the intercession of Moses, his care, and his prayer. **Taberah** = a kindling fire (refer to Psalm 106 to see the result of lust).

Why does God strike down for murmuring?

God strikes down His people to protect them from the hand of Satan (which we will explain here). Satan tempts people with sins and worldly lusts. One of Satan's deceptions is murmuring.

Why is murmuring considered a sin?

1. Murmuring is an objection to the all-wise God. Can the all-wise God make mistakes?
2. Murmuring is an objection to the benevolent God. Can the benevolent God allow any harm to His children?
3. The trial may be difficult. But God, the true physician of our souls, bodies, and spirits, knows the proper way to heal our nature so that we may be saved, "For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision avails anything, but a new creation." (Galatians 6: 15). So why grumble about what God allows, while what God allows is for the salvation of our souls?
4. Therefore, Saint James the Apostle says, "My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials," (James 1: 2). And why do we rejoice when a trial comes upon us? Simply: 1) Because God allowed it because it is the way to save our souls. 2) It is a sign of love from God, "For whom the Lord loves He chastens, And scourges every son whom He receives." (Hebrews 12: 6). 3) All the events that happen in our lives and that God allows, we see God's hand and our faith increases.
5. **Therefore, murmuring is doubting God, His wisdom, His love, and His goodness.** Saint Paul the Apostle says, "But without faith it is impossible to please Him" (Hebrews 11: 6). "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." (Hebrews 11: 1). What is the importance of faith? The Lord says, "Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live." (John 11: 25). Faith is trust in God. Satan's goal is for us to lose trust in God and for there to be no love for God in our hearts. That is, we lose faith in Him, and there is no love for Him in our hearts. The result is that whoever responds to Satan is like Satan, who hates God and goes with him to hell.
6. The people of God in Egypt did not know God, and God revealed Himself to them in great ways. So, they believed in Almighty God.
7. Now, while they were in the wilderness, God began to move them from the stage of seeing to faith, that is, "the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." This was done through

some trials (bitter water/no water at all/no food...etc.) and they were supposed to ask God, whom they knew to be Almighty, and that "nothing is impossible for Him." God would answer, and their faith would grow, the faith by which they would be saved. But Satan stirred up murmuring in them. Instead of crying out to God, and God answering, and seeing the hand of God, they murmured against God and against Moses. So the discipline came.

We notice that whoever responds to Satan and falls:

1. First: We must know that when Satan presents sin to us, he does not intend for us to enjoy sin. He hates us and wants evil for us. But as he said to the Lord of Glory, "And he said to Him, "All these things I will give You if You will fall down and worship me." (Matthew 4: 9). And in worshipping Satan, Satan enjoys the humiliation and torment of man. Look at what he did to Job of pain. But: with the children of God: when God allows Satan to test them with pain, it is within the limits that God allows. This is to purify them, as Saint Gregory says in his Liturgy, "You turned punishment into salvation for me." And this is what happened to Job. We note: 1) The words of Saint Peter the Apostle, "for he who has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin" (1 Peter 4: 1). 2) We note the judgment of Saint Paul the Apostle on the adulterer of Corinth, "deliver such a one to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus." (1 Corinthians 5: 5).
2. Second: The sinner falls under the hand of Satan, who humiliates him, and woe to him who falls under the hand of Satan.
3. Third: Satan hastens to complain about the one who has sinned to God, seeking his destruction.

**And God, who knows how much suffering and bitterness of slavery to Satan,
wants to save his children from the humiliation, disgrace and bitter torment of Satan.**

Therefore, he disciplines his children so that they are not exposed to this torment.

And it is better to fall into the hand of God during discipline than to fall into the hand of Satan.

This is what the Prophet David said:

"Please let us fall into the hand of the Lord , for His mercies are great; but do not let me fall into the hand of man."

About the people of the Lord in Sinai

God brought them out of slavery, and they have hours ahead of them on a land flowing with milk and honey. And God is in their midst. And in unbelief they murmur, not keeping before their eyes that the

cloud is leading them to wonderful joy and a land full of good things. In their complaining, God was as if rebuking them, saying, "Were you not able to be patient with me for a few days?" This reminds us of the rebuke of the Lord Christ to his disciples, "What! Could you not watch with Me one hour?" (Matthew 26: 40).

What about us now?

- We are in distress and Christ our God acknowledges this, "In the world you will have tribulation" (John 16: 33).
- But do we have faith that this distress is for a temporary period and that its end is the glory of which it was said, "whom having not seen you love. Though now you do not see Him, yet believing, you rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory," (1 Peter 1: 8) + "They shall neither hunger anymore nor thirst anymore; the sun shall not strike them, nor any heat; 17 for the Lamb who is in the midst of the throne will shepherd them and lead them to living fountains of waters. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes." (Revelation 7: 16-17).
- In the midst of this distress there are comforts, for God does not leave us alone. "These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." (John 16: 33) + "Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. 29 Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. 30 For My yoke is easy and My burden is light." (Matthew 11: 28,29).
- 1* And whoever has this faith in the prepared glory, sets his eyes on the place that Christ has prepared for us in glory. 2* And whoever has adherence to Christ = Take my yoke upon you (i.e. commit to carrying out my commandments). And whoever does, experiences his consolations. And whoever has faith, i.e. trust in God's promises and lives attached to Christ, does not complain.
- As for the one who still complains, Christ Jesus reproaches him, saying: I have prepared for you a portion in glory and promised you, saying, "In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. 3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also. " (John 14: 2-3). Your distress on earth is: 1* for a short period. It is 2* to purify you and prepare you for heavenly glory. 3* And I give you My consolations and peace in the midst of your distress..... Were you "What! Could you not watch with Me one hour?" (Matthew 26: 40)

(Verses 4-9): **Now the mixed multitude who were among them yielded to intense craving; so the children of Israel also wept again and said: "Who will give us meat to eat? 5 We remember the fish which we ate freely in Egypt, the cucumbers, the melons, the leeks, the onions, and the garlic; 6 but now our whole being is dried up; there is nothing at all except this manna before our eyes!" 7 Now the manna was like coriander seed, and its color like the color of bdellium. 8 The people went about**

and gathered it, ground it on millstones or beat it in the mortar, cooked it in pans, and made cakes of it; and its taste was like the taste of pastry prepared with oil. 9 And when the dew fell on the camp in the night, the manna fell on it.

We find here the following grumbling, which is due to the lack of meat, and most likely they had their livestock, but because of their greed, they did not slaughter them to eat, but instead they wanted a miracle. **the mixed multitude who were among them** = this is the game of Satan to gather a corrupt few among the people of God and lead them to corruption. This group of people are the ones who went out with them from Egypt, and they are mostly Egyptians (Exodus 12: 38). These represent strange ideas that enter the soul and spoil its depths. Therefore, the Lord was asking His people that when they entered a city of Canaan that God had given them, they should completely destroy it. Therefore, they would not be affected by the impurities in it, because of which God had given it into their hands to destroy it as punishment for these impurities. This group of Egyptians may have admired the God of the Jews when they saw His power and followed them, or they were the children of the Hebrews from Egyptian women and influenced by their mothers, but they were not spiritually matured yet. They have a form of godliness but denying its power (2 Timothy 3: 5). Let us note that there was no danger from the people from outside (Amalek...) but the danger from those from within. Therefore, the important thing is to purify the heart and not complain about the attackers' strength. This group was able to return the hearts of many of the people to the land of slavery.

(Verse 5): **We remember the fish which we ate freely in Egypt, the cucumbers, the melons, the leeks, the onions, and the garlic;**

Freely: They want to eat for free without slaughtering their livestock. And note that the fish was not for free but with humiliation, servitude, and slavery. But this is how Satan always reminds us of sin without reminding us of the days of misery in it.

(Verse 6): **but now our whole being is dried up; there is nothing at all except this manna before our eyes!"**

there is nothing at all except this manna before our eyes: That is, we are fed up and bored of this manna. This is like someone saying, "There is nothing but Christ and spiritual things. Tell us about something more amusing and funny." Manna is a sign of Christ, the bread of life, but the body asks for its temporary pleasure."

(Verse 7): **Now the manna was like coriander seed, and its color like the color of bdellium.**

like coriander seed: It was small spherical seeds of yellowish color. **Bdellium:** A kind of gum that is also yellow, infused with white, smells good (mostly frankincense) and is used as incense.

The word "Bdellium" is also translated as pearl or jewel, and Christ is the most expensive pearl.

(Verse 8): **The people went about and gathered it, ground it on millstones or beat it in the mortar, cooked it in pans, and made cakes of it; and its taste was like the taste of pastry prepared with oil.**

Cakes: (Genesis 18: 6) It is unleavened bread that is leavened on a heated stone or in heated ashes.

The inspiration described its sweetness to shame those who complained and grumbled about it. The fault was not in asking for meat because eating meat is not a sin, otherwise, God would not have given them meat, but the sin here is their contempt for God's gift and grumbling against Him.

(Verse 10-15): **Then Moses heard the people weeping throughout their families, everyone at the door of his tent; and the anger of the Lord was greatly aroused; Moses also was displeased. 11 So Moses said to the Lord, "Why have You afflicted Your servant? And why have I not found favor in Your sight, that You have laid the burden of all these people on me? 12 Did I conceive all these people? Did I beget them, that You should say to me, 'Carry them in your bosom, as a guardian carries a nursing child,' to the land which You swore to their fathers? 13 Where am I to get meat to give to all these people? For they weep all over me, saying, 'Give us meat, that we may eat.' 14 I am not able to bear all these people alone, because the burden is too heavy for me. 15 If You treat me like this, please kill me here and now—if I have found favor in Your sight—and do not let me see my wretchedness!"**

We see the great Moses going through moments of weakness, as he accused God of having afflicted him, burdened him with these people, and even desired that God would kill him. Rather, he thought that he was the one who conceived these people and his son, so he is committed to them, supports them and bears their burden... As if God does not look after His people!!

Moses here forgot that he accepted fatherhood as a gift from God, who alone is the father of all mankind. Despite this, God was not angry with Moses, for God looked at Moses' whole good life, and was not angry over a single weakness, but rather gave him a solution that would comfort him = " You are all fair, my love, And there is no spot in you." (Song of Solomon 4: 7).

weeping throughout their families: It is a despicable and disgraceful conspiracy against God. These represent the one who cries over the loss of something in this world, does not care to weep over his sins, and does not grieve over the blessing he has lost. Indeed, Moses could not feed all of these people, but he had to look to God the Almighty. But it is mentioned that Moses was angry and displeased after the Lord was angry because of the people's murmuring. It is, therefore, holy wrath and zeal for the glory of God.

(Verses 16-30): **So the Lord said to Moses: "Gather to Me seventy men of the elders of Israel, whom you know to be the elders of the people and officers over them; bring them to the tabernacle of meeting, that they may stand there with you. 17 Then I will come down and talk with you there. I will**

take of the Spirit that is upon you and will put the same upon them; and they shall bear the burden of the people with you, that you may not bear it yourself alone. 18 Then you shall say to the people, 'Consecrate yourselves for tomorrow, and you shall eat meat; for you have wept in the hearing of the Lord, saying, "Who will give us meat to eat? For it was well with us in Egypt." Therefore the Lord will give you meat, and you shall eat. 19 You shall eat, not one day, nor two days, nor five days, nor ten days, nor twenty days, 20 but for a whole month, until it comes out of your nostrils and becomes loathsome to you, because you have despised the Lord who is among you, and have wept before Him, saying, "Why did we ever come up out of Egypt?"' 21 And Moses said, "The people whom I am among are six hundred thousand men on foot; yet You have said, 'I will give them meat, that they may eat for a whole month.' 22 Shall flocks and herds be slaughtered for them, to provide enough for them? Or shall all the fish of the sea be gathered together for them, to provide enough for them?" 23 And the Lord said to Moses, "Has the Lord's arm been shortened? Now you shall see whether what I say will happen to you or not." 24 So Moses went out and told the people the words of the Lord, and he gathered the seventy men of the elders of the people and placed them around the tabernacle. 25 Then the Lord came down in the cloud, and spoke to him, and took of the Spirit that was upon him, and placed the same upon the seventy elders; and it happened, when the Spirit rested upon them, that they prophesied, although they never did so again. 26 But two men had remained in the camp: the name of one was Eldad, and the name of the other Medad. And the Spirit rested upon them. Now they were among those listed, but who had not gone out to the tabernacle; yet they prophesied in the camp. 27 And a young man ran and told Moses, and said, "Eldad and Medad are prophesying in the camp." 28 So Joshua the son of Nun, Moses' assistant, one of his choice men, answered and said, "Moses my lord, forbid them!" 29 Then Moses said to him, "Are you zealous for my sake? Oh, that all the Lord's people were prophets and that the Lord would put His Spirit upon them!" 30 And Moses returned to the camp, he and the elders of Israel.

God took advantage of this incident to build the community and set up 70 elders to complete the ecclesiastical organization (prophet / high priest / priests / Levites / rulers of tribes / 70 elders participating in the economy), and here we find the participation of the congregation in the management with the clergy.

seventy men: 70 is a complete number, and we find the years of exile 70 years, and the vision of Daniel of 70 weeks, and we find in Elim 70 palm trees, and Christ sent 70 apostles. They are the elders of the people and **officers over them** = they are not only old, but they have a share of knowledge and are known for their wisdom.

(Verse 17): **Then I will come down and talk with you there. I will take of the Spirit that is upon you and will put the same upon them; and they shall bear the burden of the people with you, that you may not bear it yourself alone.**

Some see in this that Moses has lost a part of the Spirit which was on him and lost the splendour of his crown, as its splendour was less than what it was before. But this isn't very meaningful. Ordination in

the church takes place in the same way. So, when a bishop ordains a priest, does the Spirit on him decrease? Certainly, this does not happen. But the meaning is that these elders feel the fatherhood of Moses and the unity of the Spirit among them. This is like illuminating a lamp; we light several lamps from it, so the first lamp will not be affected. Or if we illuminate candles from one candle, the first candle will not be affected. Here, God gives them from the Holy Spirit, which He previously gave to Moses, and, incredibly, God does this through Moses. Hence, the elders feel their discipleship and sonship to Moses, imitate and reverence him.

I will come down: This is a human expression, and the people may have seen the cloud resting on Moses' tent. But when the book says about God that He descended, it means God's grief over these people who grumble about Him, as if condescending to see this mistake.

(Verse 18): **Then you shall say to the people, 'Consecrate yourselves for tomorrow, and you shall eat meat; for you have wept in the hearing of the Lord, saying, "Who will give us meat to eat? For it was well with us in Egypt." Therefore the Lord will give you meat, and you shall eat.**

Consecrate yourselves for tomorrow: They repent, confess their sins, and wash their clothes and bodies, as God will miraculously give them meat tomorrow. And Moses saw it as a complicated solution, but nothing is impossible for God.

(Verse 19): **You shall eat, not one day, nor two days, nor five days, nor ten days, nor twenty days,**

not one day: This indicates that when the quails came to them before, it was for a short period of one or two days (Exodus 16: 13), but this time it will be for a whole month.

(Verse 25): **Then the Lord came down in the cloud, and spoke to him, and took of the Spirit that was upon him, and placed the same upon the seventy elders; and it happened, when the Spirit rested upon them, that they prophesied, although they never did so again.**

although they never did so again: This means that they did nothing but prophesy. And the word "Naba" in Hebrew means to pray or to supplicate, and from it is a prophet, because the prophet prays and intercedes for his people. Perhaps the word prophesy means that they did their job in leading the people and began to pray and praise. And the word "they never did so again" has been translated as "they continued. And the meaning is that they are still prophesying. And may mean that they did not perform miracles like Moses. Let us note that the 70 elders were the basis of the Sanhedrin, which they later formed to serve as the Supreme Court, the Supreme Council, or Parliament.

(Verse 26): **But two men had remained in the camp: the name of one was Eldad, and the name of the other Medad. And the Spirit rested upon them. Now they were among those listed, but who had not gone out to the tabernacle; yet they prophesied in the camp.**

We do not know why these two elders remained in the camp, perhaps due to their humility and their feeling that they were not worthy. But the descending of the Holy Spirit on them was a sign of the descending of the Holy Spirit on all nations when God included those who were outside before. This was a prophecy of what happened to the church on the day of Pentecost.

(Verse 28): **So Joshua the son of Nun, Moses' assistant, one of his choice men, answered and said, "Moses my lord, forbid them!"**

This happened with John's disciples when they were jealous of Christ and spoke with John the Baptist.

(Verse 29): **Then Moses said to him, "Are you zealous for my sake? Oh, that all the Lord's people were prophets and that the Lord would put His Spirit upon them!" 30 And Moses returned to the camp, he and the elders of Israel.**

This is the greatness of Moses. He was not jealous of the elders. Compare with the servant who is jealous of his fellow servant

(Verses 31-35): **Now a wind went out from the Lord, and it brought quail from the sea and left them fluttering near the camp, about a day's journey on this side and about a day's journey on the other side, all around the camp, and about two cubits above the surface of the ground. 32 And the people stayed up all that day, all night, and all the next day, and gathered the quail (he who gathered least gathered ten homers); and they spread them out for themselves all around the camp. 33 But while the meat was still between their teeth, before it was chewed, the wrath of the Lord was aroused against the people, and the Lord struck the people with a very great plague. 34 So he called the name of that place [j]Kibroth Hattaavah, because there they buried the people who had yielded to craving. 35 From Kibroth Hattaavah the people moved to Hazeroth, and camped at Hazeroth.**

Quail: They are quail birds. Note that God uses natural laws that He previously laid down to carry out His will, as the wind drives huge quantities of birds and makes them fall in front of the people. God solves our problems in ways that we do not imagine, and here they are eating meat that is not fish or livestock, as Moses said and noticed the large number of birds **about two cubits above the surface of the ground**= it may mean that when the people slaughtered the birds and piled them up, they were two cubits. **homers** = It is the weight of a donkey, 10 homers = 250 kg. Although God told them to eat for a month, they did not believe and collected very much. Perhaps they would salt these birds to keep them from spoiling; then, **they spread them out for themselves all around the camp** to dry them out.

(Verse 33): **But while the meat was still between their teeth, before it was chewed, the wrath of the Lord was aroused against the people, and the Lord struck the people with a very great plague.**

God gave them a lot of meat, but they ate with greed and lust, so the Lord became angry with them and struck them with a very great strike because lust possessed them, not because they ate meat. Moses did not mention how they died, but there is a possibility that they died from the glut after they got used to the manna. And in (Psalm 106) we find that lust causes wasting of the soul when it is fulfilled. And in (Psalm 20:4): "May He grant you according to your heart's desire." Sometimes the Lord gives us the requests and desires of our hearts when we insist on them, but this is not in our interest and harms us, so we have to say, "Thy will be done."

(Verse 35): **From Kibroth Hattaavah the people moved to Hazeroth, and camped at Hazeroth.**

Kibroth Hattaavah: The graves of lust. Therefore, lust causes death if it is wrong.

Chapter 12

Complain of the leaders; Miriam and Aaron

If the people complained against God, then it is not surprising that there was complaining against God's servant Moses. Moses married an Ethiopian woman, and she may have been from the Ethiopians who went out with the Children of Israel from Egypt. This may have happened after the death of Zipporah. There is another opinion that she is the same Arabian Zipporah, and she was from the Cush tribes that lived among the Arabs. There was Cush land in Iraq, in the paradise of Eden (Genesis 2: 13).

And in (Habakkuk 3: 7): " I saw the tents of Cushan in affliction; The curtains of the land of Midian trembled." It combines Cush and Midian. Probably the reason for the grumbling is not the reason mentioned, which is the marriage of Moses with the Cushite, but because Moses, in his choice of the seventy elders, did not consult them. Hence, jealousy and envy arose in their hearts. They found a reason for attacking Moses, that his wife was a Cushite (from the land of Iraq) and was not a Hebrew, i.e. foreign to them (There is Cush, which starts from Nubia in the south of Egypt to Ethiopia, and these people are distinguished by the black colour of skin) (Jeremiah 13: 23). But there is another Cush in the south of the land of Iraq (Genesis 2: 13), which is next to the land of Midian, where Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, used to reside. And from this Cush that is in the land of Iraq, Moses took his wife, the daughter of Jethro.

We find here that jealousy and envy are the reason for many mistakes, for they despised the gift of Moses and glorified their gift to cover the greatness of Moses, but was there someone like Moses whose face shined, so he covered it to hide his glory? But here, Mary hides her face also, but to her shame (He who envies does not rejoice for the good of others and is pleased in their affliction).

(Verse 1): **Then Miriam and Aaron spoke against Moses because of the Ethiopian woman whom he had married; for he had married an Ethiopian woman.**

Miriam and Aaron: Mary was mentioned first. Perhaps she was the one who started, and therefore she was the one who was punished.

The origin of the word Ethiopian was Cushite. There are two locations called Cush; one in Iraq and the other in Ethiopia. Moses likely married from the Cush in Iraq, as it is closer to where Moses was. From the Spiritual perspective, this resembles God, who united with us while we were in the darkness of our sins. That is because Cushite of Ethiopia are black as Jeremiah said (Jeremiah 13: 23).

(Verse 2): **So they said, "Has the Lord indeed spoken only through Moses? Has He not spoken through us also?" And the Lord heard it.**

Here they are exalting themselves and puffing up with what God has given them. This is the beginning of falling. These words prove that the grumbling was for his leadership and not because of his wife.

(Verse 3): **(Now the man Moses was very humble, more than all men who were on the face of the earth.)**

Humble: In Hebrew, it means humble, who does not think about his personal interest and does not think about his importance, and the evidence for this is his saying **the man Moses**: He did not say the leader Moses who saved his people. The meaning is that he endured the attack patiently without responding, leaving God to judge for him. Moses wrote this under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, not to show His attributes but it's for us to understand the lesson of this chapter. Thus, it happened with Paul, who had to mention his lineage, his pain, God's gifts to him and God's choice of him many times to prove the sincerity of his mission and, accordingly, the truth of his teachings so that faith would not collapse.

We also see the humility of Moses in his intercession on behalf of Mary, as he quickly forgot her insult to him.

(Verse 4): **Suddenly the Lord said to Moses, Aaron, and Miriam, "Come out, you three, to the tabernacle of meeting!" So the three came out.**

Often God keeps silent about the injustice against a person and does not defend it for a while for his spiritual benefit. But here, he defends Moses immediately so that the attack on Moses from his brothers does not cause any defect in leadership.

(Verse 5): **Then the Lord came down in the pillar of cloud and stood in the door of the tabernacle, and called Aaron and Miriam. And they both went forward.**

(Verses 6-8): **Then He said, "Hear now My words: If there is a prophet among you, I, the Lord, make Myself known to him in a vision; I speak to him in a dream. 7 Not so with My servant Moses; He is faithful in all My house. 8 I speak with him face to face, Even plainly, and not in dark sayings; And he sees the form of the Lord. Why then were you not afraid To speak against My servant Moses?"**

Because of Moses' humility, meekness and all his attributes, he attained what no one else had. Here, God announced what Moses had hidden from his humility. God declared here that there is no one like Moses (it is good that we remain silent and do not defend ourselves, then God declares our righteousness). Note the reason for God's love, "His meekness, humility, and patience."

Note:

In Moses' marriage to the Cushite (Cushite means black) as in (Jeremiah 13: 23), a reference to Christ's uniting with His Church, while she is still in her sin as dark as Cush (Song of Solomon 1: 5). As for the rejection of Aaron and Mary of this marriage symbolizes the rejection of the Jews to the Lord Jesus Christ, and their refusal of the Gentiles to enter the faith. This is in terms of symbolism, but the wife of Moses was certainly not wrong. As whoever associates with this great saint cannot be a sinner. And God, as He was preparing him for his great mission, would not allow a marriage that may hinder him from his mission. Secondly, she was not black. Indeed, there is Cush, whose people are black, and this is what Jeremiah the Prophet refers to, but there was another Cush in the region of Iraq (Genesis 2: 13), and from them, the tribe of Moses' wife came out. If there is a dispute between them and Moses' wife, this is probably due to their jealousy of her.

(Verse 9): **So the anger of the Lord was aroused against them, and He departed.**

How dangerous it is to talk about the servants of God. They have those who hold them accountable, so we do not need to lose the heavenly kingdom because of them. **and He departed:** It is explained in the following verse that the cloud departed.

(Verse 10): **And when the cloud departed from above the tabernacle, suddenly Miriam became leprous, as white as snow. Then Aaron turned toward Miriam, and there she was, a leper.**

Leprosy fell on her when the cloud rose, so the leprosy is a sign of God's turning away because of sin. When God's grace leaves us, the leprosy of sin appears.

(Verse 11): **So Aaron said to Moses, "Oh, my lord! Please do not lay this sin on us, in which we have done foolishly and in which we have sinned.**

do not lay this sin on us: That is, do not make its punishment come upon us. It is clear here that Aaron was humbled and contrite. Perhaps God did not punish Aaron so that the priesthood would not be blamed as a whole and perhaps for his humble behaviour.

In pursuit of the above reflection. The Jews, by rejecting Christ, had leprosy from sin and leprosy from unbelief, and the Spirit of the Lord departed from them. The return of Mary after a week is a sign of their return at the end of times (Romans 11: 25).

(Verse 12): **Please do not let her be as one dead, whose flesh is half consumed when he comes out of his mother's womb!"**

Leprosy is like death, as the leper is forbidden from associating with people, and whoever touches him is defiled. His organs die in succession and fall off.

(Verses 13-15): **So Moses cried out to the Lord, saying, "Please heal her, O God, I pray!" 14 Then the Lord said to Moses, "If her father had but spit in her face, would she not be shamed seven days? Let her be shut out of the camp seven days, and afterward she may be received again." 15 So Miriam was shut out of the camp seven days, and the people did not journey till Miriam was brought in again.**

Note that Moses did not reproach her with a word but rather prayed for her and interceded for her to be healed. God knows when disciplining will bear fruit.

Seven days = The week is scheduled for every leper. During the week, she repents and regrets, then submits to the law like the rest of the people. Spitting here indicates giving up. And the Jews nowadays are without a temple.

(Verse 16): **And afterward the people moved from Hazeroth and camped in the Wilderness of Paran.**

Notice how sin hindered the walk for a week. Let us understand from this that sin hinders our growth in the heavenly places.

Chapter 13

Spying on Canaan:

After the people fell into the temptation of lust and longing for the land of slavery (leek and onion). And after God promised that He would give them a land flowing with milk and honey (Exodus 3: 8, 17). It was God who led them in a cloud to that land. They had to believe in God's promise and word, and that God would lead them to a good land. But they doubted, and wanted to make sure by sending spies to this land, so they asked Moses to send spies, Moses said after that: ""And every one of you came near to me and said, 'Let us send men before us, and let them search out the land for us, and bring back word to us of the way by which we should go up, and of the cities into which we shall come.' 23 "The plan pleased me well; so I took twelve of your men, one man from each tribe." (Deuteronomy 1: 22,23), and Moses asked the Lord. And here we see that God agreed to send spies. So Moses did not doubt to send spies, but they were the ones who asked him and God agreed to increase their faith.

We also have spies who spied for us what is in the heavenly Jerusalem, like Paul: "Eye has not seen, nor ear heard," and John in his visions, Isaiah and Ezekiel. Let's believe that there are joys. The spies returned bringing vines, and the vines were a symbol of joy. As for the Land, it symbolizes the Heavenly Jerusalem. Note that God allowed them to spy to choose, for God wants us to choose Him with our freedom and conviction. Strangely, they ask to spy on a land that God had previously spied for them, but God allowed this to increase their faith, as He did with Thomas when he allowed him to put his hand into the wound on His side. As for Moses, when he sent them, he was confident, just as John the Baptist was confident in Christ when he sent his disciples to him.

(Verses 1-16): **And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, 2 "Send men to spy out the land of Canaan, which I am giving to the children of Israel; from each tribe of their fathers you shall send a man, every one a leader among them." 3 So Moses sent them from the Wilderness of Paran according to the command of the Lord, all of them men who were heads of the children of Israel. 4 Now these were their names: from the tribe of Reuben, Shammua the son of Zaccur; 5 from the tribe of Simeon, Shaphat the son of Hori; 6 from the tribe of Judah, Caleb the son of Jephunneh; 7 from the tribe of Issachar, Igal the son of Joseph; 8 from the tribe of Ephraim, Hoshea the son of Nun; 9 from the tribe of Benjamin, Palti the son of Raphu; 10 from the tribe of Zebulun, Gaddiel the son of Sodi; 11 from the tribe of Joseph, that is, from the tribe of Manasseh, Gaddi the son of Susi; 12 from the tribe of Dan, Ammiel the son of Gemalli; 13 from the tribe of Asher, Sethur the son of Michael; 14 from the tribe of Naphtali, Nahbi the son of Vophsi; 15 from the tribe of Gad, Geuel the son of Machi. 16 These are the names of the men whom Moses sent to spy out the land. And Moses called Hoshea the son of Nun, Joshua.**

It turns out that God told Moses to send spies as requested to increase their faith, but God would have preferred that they believed without seeing with their own eyes. We note that the spies were not the

heads of the tribes. We note that Moses changed the name of Hosea to Joshua to resemble the name of Jesus (the name of Jesus is the same as the name of Joshua, except that the letter S is pronounced as Sh in Hebrew). There is no entrance to heaven except through Jesus. The entry of the spies here into the Promised Land is the first entry into the Promised Land for the people of God. If the Promised Land is a symbol of heaven, then what Moses did by changing the name of Hosea to Joshua is a prophecy that the one who will bring people into heaven is Jesus. Let us note that the two excellent spies are Joshua and Caleb. Joshua means Savior, so he is a symbol of Christ the Savior, and Joshua is the one who brought them into the Promised Land (we enter heaven by the grace we obtained through the redemption of Christ, not by the law represented by Moses), "For the law was given through Moses, but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ." (John 1: 17).

The meaning of the names Joshua and Caleb, the warrior zealous for the glory of God, and the fighter until the last day of his life, is that we are saved by faith in the blood of Jesus the Savior (Joshua) if we struggle with a heart zealous for the glory of God (Caleb). Caleb does the work with all his heart, in sincerity and without fear until the last day of his life, trusting in God's promises. And notice Caleb's words to Joshua after they entered the Promised Land: "And now, behold, the Lord has kept me alive, as He said, these forty-five years, ever since the Lord spoke this word to Moses while Israel wandered in the wilderness; and now, here I am this day, eighty-five years old. 11 As yet I am as strong this day as on the day that Moses sent me; just as my strength was then, so now is my strength for war, both for going out and for coming in. 12 Now therefore, give me this mountain of which the Lord spoke in that day; for you heard in that day how the Anakim were there, and that the cities were great and fortified. It may be that the Lord will be with me, and I shall be able to drive them out as the Lord said." 13 And Joshua blessed him, and gave Hebron to Caleb the son of Jephunneh as an inheritance. ." (Joshua 14: 10-13)

(Verses 17-20): **Then Moses sent them to spy out the land of Canaan, and said to them, "Go up this way into the South, and go up to the mountains, 18 and see what the land is like: whether the people who dwell in it are strong or weak, few or many; 19 whether the land they dwell in is good or bad; whether the cities they inhabit are like camps or strongholds; 20 whether the land is rich or poor; and whether there are forests there or not. Be of good courage. And bring some of the fruit of the land." Now the time was the season of the first ripe grapes.**

The orders issued to them are summed up to go up, **Be of good courage. And bring some of the fruit of the land.** And every teacher should do the same thing to bear witness to the truth. He must taste it by ascending with his heart, rising on the mountain of commandment, and soaring in the heavenly places, and strengthening his faith, confident that God will fulfill his promises. After tasting the fruit, he must present to his servants his experiences and how to reach this fruit.

Go up this way into the South: They are now in the south, south of Canaan, and Canaan is to their north. And his saying, "**Go up this way into the South,**" means, "Go north to the south of the land of Canaan, and spy out the whole land, then come back to us." But what Moses said was a statement of faith: God promised them that the land would be theirs, and Moses believed this and considered the

land as if it had become theirs. And it is as if his saying, “**Go up this way into the South,**” means, “Go up to the south of our land.” Most likely, the congregation was divided into small groups. Each group went somewhere.

Now the time was the season of the first ripe grapes: It can be interpreted literally. And it can be interpreted spiritually in the sense that they were about to rejoice by entering into spiritual and physical joy. We are now in the first fruits of joy and have come close to reaching the joys of heaven. They were at the gates of the Promised Land, and we are now at the gates of heaven. We have heard the Lord of Glory say to Saint John in his vision, “He who bears witness to these things says, “He who testifies to these things says, “Surely I am coming quickly.” Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus!” (Revelation 22: 20). Let us repeat with Saint John in longing, “Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus!” With a striving of faith in the support of God’s grace for us.

(Verses 21-24): **So they went up and spied out the land from the Wilderness of Zin as far as Rehob, near the entrance of Hamath. 22 And they went up through the South and came to Hebron; Ahiman, Sheshai, and Talmi, the descendants of Anak, were there. (Now Hebron was built seven years before Zoan in Egypt.) 23 Then they came to the Valley of Eshcol, and there cut down a branch with one cluster of grapes; they carried it between two of them on a pole. They also brought some of the pomegranates and figs. 24 The place was called the Valley of Eshcol, because of the cluster which the men of Israel cut down there.**

Rehob: It means a spacious or wide place, and it is an Aramaic city on the northern borders of Canaan.

the entrance of Hamath = Hamath is 130 miles northeast of Damascus, and the entrance of Hamath means the road leading to Hamath. Hamath means protection, castle, or fortress.

Hebron = means companionship or bond, and it was the first chair of David, and he reigned there for 7½ years. It is currently called El Khaleel (it means the friend) after Abraham.

Eshcol = It means cluster or bunch. It is not known whether this name was before Moses or it was called Eshcol after this incident. It is a valley north of Hebron near it, and Hebron, southwest of Jerusalem, 19 miles away from it.

And this stage for the spies from the wilderness of **Zin** (which means an experiment) until they obtain the bunch is the journey of every soul that wants to cross to the kingdom to obtain the Lord Christ Himself as a bunch of grapes that gives life. It crosses the wilderness of Zin, where trials and tribulations are, and it goes to the Rehob; that is, it does not live in gloom and grumbling but rather the trials turn into consolations. And then goes to the entrance of Hamath, which means he enjoys divine protection, and he is in Hebron enjoying the company of Christ. And even **the descendants of Anak** representing demons cannot defeat him. And this soul arrives and crosses to Eshkol and carries the cluster of life, and it is amazing that they carried the cluster on a tree. The word **pole** = stick and **branch** = a branch of the grape tree, and the tree is the symbol of the cross on which was hung the true vine, whose blood was

poured out as a drink that gives salvation to the believers. And **the descendants of Anak** = tall, mighty giants. **Now Hebron was built seven years before Zoan in Egypt.** Egypt is the oldest civilization, but Hebron is older. God's gifts to His people are the best gifts.

(Verses 25-29): **And they returned from spying out the land after forty days. 26 Now they departed and came back to Moses and Aaron and all the congregation of the children of Israel in the Wilderness of Paran, at Kadesh; they brought back word to them and to all the congregation, and showed them the fruit of the land. 27 Then they told him, and said: "We went to the land where you sent us. It truly flows with milk and honey, and this is its fruit. 28 Nevertheless the people who dwell in the land are strong; the cities are fortified and very large; moreover we saw the descendants of Anak there. 29 The Amalekites dwell in the land of the South; the Hittites, the Jebusites, and the Amorites dwell in the mountains; and the Canaanites dwell by the sea and along the banks of the Jordan."**

Note the saying, **Nevertheless** in (verse 28). This is always the problem. Since the land is good and God promised it to them, what is the excuse but lack of faith? especially after they saw God's work in splitting the sea and defeating the Amalekites. And it is still our problem, making excuses for ourselves. They were assured of the truth of God's promises but how weak their faith was. This is the constant deception of Satan - Satan tries to convince us that we are weak and that we have no power to resist the sin and lusts that tempt us - but he is "for he is a liar and the father of it" as the Lord Jesus said about him (John 8: 44). But the power by which we overcome is not our power. It is the power of Christ who leads our battle: "And I looked, and behold, a white horse. He who sat on it had a bow; and a crown was given to him, and he went out conquering and to conquer." (Revelation 6: 2). We are the white horse led by the ever-victorious Lord Jesus. Therefore, we will surely overcome sin and Satan. Therefore, the Lord Jesus reassures us that we will overcome in Him: "These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." (John 16: 33).

(Verse 30): **Then Caleb quieted the people before Moses, and said, "Let us go up at once and take possession, for we are well able to overcome it."**

Then Caleb quieted the people: Here, we find a focus on Caleb alone without Joshua, and this was repeated after that because it was known among the people that Joshua was linked to Moses. We are now facing a revolution against Moses, and Joshua's defence of him before the people will not succeed because of his connection with him. Moses was reproaching them before the people, so it was not appropriate for his friend Joshua to defend him. And the word "quieted the people" means calmed them down so that they can hear Moses, as they were in a state of revolution. Note Caleb's faith = **Let us go up at once and take possession.** Among the blessings of faith: 1) It gives the heart confidence and courage 2) The person becomes a witness to the truth 3) Then he inherits the earth. This is what happened with Caleb.

(Verse 31): **But the men who had gone up with him said, "We are not able to go up against the people, for they are stronger than we."**

We are not able to go up against the people: Here we see the consequences of unbelief: 1) fear and terror; 2) loss and defeat; 3) discipline; 4) death; 5) The Lord is not with them, so there is no inheritance. So St. Paul the apostle said "So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief." And that is what we will see, that because of their unbelief, they didn't go into the promised land (symbol of heaven).

(Verse 32): **And they gave the children of Israel a bad report of the land which they had spied out, saying, "The land through which we have gone as spies is a land that devours its inhabitants, and all the people whom we saw in it are men of great stature."**

a land that devours its inhabitants: This may be because of pestilence or because of the many wars between them. But in either case, not because the land is bad, but because of the sin that is rampant among them. This news about their weakness was supposed to encourage them, as God reduces the number of their enemies.

(Verse 33): **There we saw the giants (the descendants of Anak came from the giants); and we were like grasshoppers in our own sight, and so we were in their sight."**

we were like grasshoppers in our own sight: When we saw their strength, we despised ourselves as if we were grasshoppers. One of the results of unbelief is the soul's smallness. Because of their weak faith, they were terrified and terrified the whole community, as the entire community's faith is also weak. Everyone despairs. As for the believers, even if they are weak, they do not look at themselves or their strength as it is nothing. But they look to God who lives in them, advances them, and defends them.

Chapter 14

The desire to return to slavery:

(Verses 1-10): **So all the congregation lifted up their voices and cried, and the people wept that night. 2 And all the children of Israel complained against Moses and Aaron, and the whole congregation said to them, "If only we had died in the land of Egypt! Or if only we had died in this wilderness! 3 Why has the Lord brought us to this land to fall by the sword, that our wives and children should become victims? Would it not be better for us to return to Egypt?" 4 So they said to one another, "Let us select a leader and return to Egypt." 5 Then Moses and Aaron fell on their faces before all the assembly of the congregation of the children of Israel. 6 But Joshua the son of Nun and Caleb the son of Jephunneh, who were among those who had spied out the land, tore their clothes; 7 and they spoke to all the congregation of the children of Israel, saying: "The land we passed through to spy out is an exceedingly good land. 8 If the Lord delights in us, then He will bring us into this land and give it to us, 'a land which flows with milk and honey.' 9 Only do not rebel against the Lord, nor fear the people of the land, for they are our bread; their protection has departed from them, and the Lord is with us. Do not fear them." 10 And all the congregation said to stone them with stones. Now the glory of the Lord appeared in the tabernacle of meeting before all the children of Israel.**

After the men submitted their reports, they split up. A believing group believed God's promises; they were only Joshua and Caleb and an unbelieving group. The people believed the second group because their hearts were also unbelieving. So grumbling and crying occurred = **So all the congregation lifted up their voices and cried**. Rather, they desired if they were in Egypt under slavery = **If only we had died in the land of Egypt**. And they doubted God's love for them. **Why has the Lord brought us to this land?** Rather, they resolved to choose a new leader other than Moses to get them back to the land of Egypt. **Let us select a leader and return to Egypt**. Rather, they decided to stone Moses, Aaron, Joshua and Caleb = **And all the congregation said to stone them with stones**. Here we find a turning point in which the unwillingness of the people to enter the Promised Land appeared. The men of God tried to guide this rebellious group, for Moses and Aaron fell in front of them, and Joshua and Caleb tore their clothes in front of them. And the attempts of these servants of the Lord were attempts by God through His servants to make peace with them. They began to explain that God would not abandon them and that these enemies could not harm them as long as God was with them. It appears from (Nehemiah 9: 17) that they indeed chose a ruler other than Moses.

(Verse 1): **So all the congregation lifted up their voices and cried, and the people wept that night.**

and the people wept: The grief of the world begets death. What happened to this group was not due to an outside enemy but rather from their lack of faith. No one can harm a person unless he harms himself. Note that the secret of their bitterness is due to an internal heart disease and not due to the surrounding circumstances.

(Verse 2): **And all the children of Israel complained against Moses and Aaron, and the whole congregation said to them, "If only we had died in the land of Egypt! Or if only we had died in this wilderness!**

Instead of thanking God for everything He did for them, they complained about Him and hardened their hearts against Him.

(Verse 5): **Then Moses and Aaron fell on their faces before all the assembly of the congregation of the children of Israel.**

The fall of Moses and Aaron was to calm the congregation and to divert the spirit of anger from God so that He would not destroy them.

(Verses 6-9): **But Joshua the son of Nun and Caleb the son of Jephunneh, who were among those who had spied out the land, tore their clothes; 7 and they spoke to all the congregation of the children of Israel, saying: "The land we passed through to spy out is an exceedingly good land. 8 If the Lord delights in us, then He will bring us into this land and give it to us, 'a land which flows with milk and honey.' 9 Only do not rebel against the Lord, nor fear the people of the land, for they are our bread; their protection has departed from them, and the Lord is with us. Do not fear them." 10 And all the congregation said to stone them with stones. Now the glory of the Lord appeared in the tabernacle of meeting before all the children of Israel.**

The greatness of Joshua and Caleb is that they did not act like the rest of the spies, nor were they afraid of stoning, but testified to the truth. **their protection has departed from them** = it is an eastern expression that expresses protection which means they are now without protection, God has forsaken them because of their sins, and they have matured to ruin. On the contrary, God was a cloud that shaded His people, as He was protecting them. Refer to (Psalm 91: 1 + 121: 5 + Genesis 15: 16 + Leviticus 18: 25 + Leviticus 20: 23).

Contemplation (the current application of these verses):

1. **God chose the good Promised Land for His people** = Christ prepared a place for us in heaven "In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. 3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also." (John 14: 2-3).

2. **God leads and protects His people, and the cloud leads them** = God supports us with the grace that gives us a mighty power to defeat sin, "For sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under

law but under grace.” (Romans 6: 14), and the Holy Spirit renews us (Titus 3: 5) and leads us to heaven. See the Book of Acts, which is called the Book of the Acts of the Holy Spirit.

3. **God removed the shadow from the people of Canaan, that is, He made them defenceless** = God gave us authority against Satan: “Behold, I give you the authority to trample on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall by any means hurt you.” (Luke 10: 19).

4. **The unbelievers were terrified by the power of the Canaanites** = and now the unbelievers still believe the lying devil (John 8: 44). That he and the lusts he presents to us are the strongest. And that we are too weak to resist sin. And there are those who despair and surrender to sin.

5. **He who believes has experienced the power of God and entered and possessed the Promised Land** = and so are we, for everyone who believes that grace supports him and rejects sin overcomes Satan and is saved.

(Verse 10): **And all the congregation said to stone them with stones. Now the glory of the Lord appeared in the tabernacle of meeting before all the children of Israel.**

The stoning of Caleb and Joshua here is equivalent to killing the two witnesses of the Book of Revelation (Revelation 11). And the people's rejection of their words is the people's rejection of God's words through His servants' words. Rejecting the call to repentance may be the last opportunity for man before God declares His wrath. Rejecting the words of God's servants, these people wandered in the wilderness for 40 years, after they were a few days' walk from the Promised Land.

Now the glory of the Lord appeared = when they insulted God, God was silent (Refer to their statement in verse 3 = as if God had brought them out of the land of Egypt to lead them to a bad fate. Indeed, death is better than this choice of God). But when they tried to kill and stone the men of God, they were as if he touched the pupils of His eye (The eye here is the eye of the evil one who tried to harm God's children, and God allowed the harm to return to the evil one himself). Here, God surrounds His faithful servants to protect them. Here, we find divine support for God's servants, even if all people reject them.

(Verses 11-19): **Then the Lord said to Moses: "How long will these people reject Me? And how long will they not believe Me, with all the signs which I have performed among them? 12 I will strike them with the pestilence and disinherit them, and I will make of you a nation greater and mightier than they." 13 And Moses said to the Lord: "Then the Egyptians will hear it, for by Your might You brought these people up from among them, 14 and they will tell it to the inhabitants of this land. They have heard that You, Lord, are among these people; that You, Lord, are seen face to face and Your cloud stands above them, and You go before them in a pillar of cloud by day and in a pillar of fire by night. 15 Now if You kill these people as one man, then the nations which have heard of Your fame will speak, saying, 16 'Because the Lord was not able to bring this people to the land which He swore to give them, therefore He killed them in the wilderness.' 17 And now, I pray, let the power of my Lord**

be great, just as You have spoken, saying, 18 'The Lord is longsuffering and abundant in mercy, forgiving iniquity and transgression; but He by no means clears the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and fourth generation.' 19 Pardon the iniquity of this people, I pray, according to the greatness of Your mercy, just as You have forgiven this people, from Egypt even until now."

Once again we see the greatness of Moses in that he rejects his personal glory and intercedes for his people. He represents Christ on two sides. Christ left his glory to become an intercessor on behalf of people. On the other hand, God says, "**I will strike them with the pestilence and disinherit them, and I will make of you a nation greater and mightier than they.**" This was indeed done through Christ. We die with Christ in baptism and rise to become a larger people, but rather to become the body of Christ. Rather, Moses was in his intercession, his eye on the glory of God.

(Verse 16): **'Because the Lord was not able to bring this people to the land which He swore to give them, therefore He killed them in the wilderness.'**

The other nations would say **Because the Lord was not able to bring this people to the land.** Moses does not accept any insult to the name of the Lord from the pagan peoples. Note that the pagans' joy in the destruction of God's people is the same as the joy of Satan in the death and destruction of man. The death of man was a challenge to God's mind and the devils' joy and gloating was that satan thought that God was not able to solve the problem of man's death, then He is not able to enter us to our heavenly portion. That is why the mind of God, the Logos, the Word of God Christ was incarnated to restore to us through His intercession our heavenly portion, so Moses' intercession here was a symbol of Christ's intercession. Note here in verses 11,12: that God, for His love for Moses, informs him of His intention to discipline the people, as He did with Abraham in the matter of Sodom. Here, God gives Moses an opportunity to intercede for them. Rather, He urges him to intercede for the people. This is God's will that we pray and intercede for one another. This is a sign of love, and this is God's will, love: "Thus says the Lord, The Holy One of Israel, and his Maker: "Ask Me of things to come concerning My sons; And concerning the work of My hands, you command Me." (Isaiah 45: 11). **Note that the greatest and largest people are the people of Christ, and Christ, through His intercession, returned us to our heavenly portion. Moses' intercession here was a symbol of Christ's intercession.**

(Verse 17-18): **And now, I pray, let the power of my Lord be great, just as You have spoken, saying, 18 'The Lord is longsuffering and abundant in mercy, forgiving iniquity and transgression; but He by no means clears the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and fourth generation.'**

Moses here is certainly not asking that God postpone the punishment of these rebellious people until the third and fourth generations of their children. Rather, he is repeating what he had heard from the Lord earlier in the Ten Commandments: "For I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity

of the fathers upon the children to the third and fourth generations of those who hate Me, 6 but showing mercy to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments.” (Exodus 20: 5-6).

1) Therefore, Moses here asks for God's mercy, who says, "but showing mercy to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments."

2) But if sin continues and spreads among the people from fathers to sons and then to the sons' sons = "visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children to the third and fourth generations of those who hate Me" (i.e. those among whom sin continued until the third and fourth generations). Here, God's punishment will be collective. If sin spreads to the third and fourth generations, it will spread across most people. Therefore, the punishment will be collective because sin has become collective, i.e. widespread. Example: The Babylonian captivity came after paganism had been widespread among God's people for generations. The Babylonian captivity was a collective punishment. Before sin spread among the people, punishments were limited to those who sinned.

3) This does not mean that the children up to the third and fourth generations will inherit the sins of their fathers if the children are innocent of the sins of their fathers. This happened here: the fathers were denied entry into the Promised Land, while the innocent children entered the Promised Land. This is what the Prophet Ezekiel prophesied (Ezekiel 18: 1-18).

(Verse 18): **'The Lord is longsuffering and abundant in mercy, forgiving iniquity and transgression; but He by no means clears the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and fourth generation.'**

Here, we see an explanation: **How do the sons bear the sin of their fathers?** They wandered in the wilderness with their sinful fathers for 40 years. Like a father who sins and loses his money, his sons cannot find food. However, this verse does not apply spiritually unless the son follows his father's example (see Ezekiel 18). Here, for example, the sons entered the land of Canaan, but the sinning fathers did not enter, meaning that the innocent sons were not punished for the sins of their fathers.

but He by no means clears the guilty = God forgave and did not destroy the people because of this complaint. But God transferred the sin to the head of Christ, as Nathan the prophet said to David: “So David said to Nathan, “I have sinned against the Lord .” And Nathan said to David, “The Lord also has put away your sin; you shall not die.” (2 Samuel 12: 13). Christ bore the sins of the fathers of the Old Testament and the sins of the believers of the New Testament.

(Verses 20-36): **Then the Lord said: "I have pardoned, according to your word; 21 but truly, as I live, all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the Lord— 22 because all these men who have seen My glory and the signs which I did in Egypt and in the wilderness, and have put Me to the test now these ten times, and have not heeded My voice, 23 they certainly shall not see the land of which I swore to their fathers, nor shall any of those who rejected Me see it. 24 But My servant Caleb, because he has a**

different spirit in him and has followed Me fully, I will bring into the land where he went, and his descendants shall inherit it. 25 Now the Amalekites and the Canaanites dwell in the valley; tomorrow turn and move out into the wilderness by the Way of the Red Sea." 26 And the Lord spoke to Moses and Aaron, saying, 27 "How long shall I bear with this evil congregation who complain against Me? I have heard the complaints which the children of Israel make against Me. 28 Say to them, 'As I live,' says the Lord, 'just as you have spoken in My hearing, so I will do to you: 29 The carcasses of you who have complained against Me shall fall in this wilderness, all of you who were numbered, according to your entire number, from twenty years old and above. 30 Except for Caleb the son of Jephunneh and Joshua the son of Nun, you shall by no means enter the land which I swore I would make you dwell in. 31 But your little ones, whom you said would be victims, I will bring in, and they shall know the land which you have despised. 32 But as for you, your carcasses shall fall in this wilderness. 33 And your sons shall be shepherds in the wilderness forty years, and bear the brunt of your infidelity, until your carcasses are consumed in the wilderness. 34 According to the number of the days in which you spied out the land, forty days, for each day you shall bear your guilt one year, namely forty years, and you shall know My rejection. 35 I the Lord have spoken this. I will surely do so to all this evil congregation who are gathered together against Me. In this wilderness they shall be consumed, and there they shall die.'" 36 Now the men whom Moses sent to spy out the land, who returned and made all the congregation complain against him by bringing a bad report of the land,

All the trials that the people went through were schools of faith. But we see them as if they were students in a school. They take exams throughout the year to understand what they are studying. However, they did not benefit from their studies throughout the year. They came for the end-of-year exam and failed (they did not enter the Promised Land. Rather, they wandered). It is as if the test of the people's faith at the end of the journey when they are at the gates of the Promised Land is the end-of-year exam for the student. And so in our lives, God allows us many trials to grow our faith because "But without faith it is impossible to please Him" (Hebrews 11: 6). And if all of God's means to grow our faith do not work for us, we perish.

We see here God's way of dealing with His people and children. God has forgiven them, but a chastisement must be done for these people so that they befit Canaan, the holy land in which God will reside among them. This is God's way with us now, when He disciplines us to be worthy of the heavenly Canaan. And beautiful are the dealings of God, for God disciplines them by depriving them of the promised land and their death in the wilderness, but He did not leave them and continued to lead them. God disciplines his children, but he does not abandon them or leave them. And in their wanderings in the wilderness, they suffered greatly to be disciplined. As for Joshua and Caleb, God was with them in the period of wandering and comforted them. And whoever is pleased with and comforted by God is in heaven, and this consolation far exceeds their joy in Canaan.

Note that God's response to Moses was firm, and He would not change His decision; otherwise, the chastisement would not have brought its fruits. However, Moses' intercession succeeded in not destroying them at once and in the moment, and God pardoned them. But He wanted to complete the chastisement of the people. When God reveals His power, forgiveness, and holiness, the whole earth will be filled with His glory. Just as the glory of God appears in forgiveness, He also shows His glory in not

accepting sin and punishing the wicked (Psalm 99: 8) = so **all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the Lord.**

(Verse 22): **because all these men who have seen My glory and the signs which I did in Egypt and in the wilderness, and have put Me to the test now these ten times, and have not heeded My voice,**

have put Me to the test now these ten times: Probably ten times, means a complete number, i.e. that they tried me a lot, and the number 10 is the number of the commandments, that is, they broke all the commandments. And refer to (Exodus 14: 11,12 + 15: 23 + 16: 2 + 17: 1 + Exodus 32 + Numbers 11: 1-4) and that they left the manna for the next morning (Exodus 16: 20) and they went on the Sabbath to collect the manna.

(Verse 24): **But My servant Caleb, because he has a different spirit in him and has followed Me fully, I will bring into the land where he went, and his descendants shall inherit it.**

But My servant Caleb ... shall inherit it: Certainly, Caleb entered with Joshua. But this verse has a particular resonance as Caleb is from the tribe of Judah. It symbolizes Christ, who was the heir of all things (Hebrews 1: 2). We see here the condition for entering heavenly Canaan, which is faith, as the faith of Caleb.

(Verse 25): **Now the Amalekites and the Canaanites dwell in the valley; tomorrow turn and move out into the wilderness by the Way of the Red Sea."**

the Amalekites and the Canaanites dwell in the valley: Here, God's mercy and fatherhood appear as He disciplines, but here He is spying on the places of their enemies to protect them so that they do not fall into their hands, and the word dwell here means temporary residence. Probably they heard of their presence, so they went out to beat them and ambush them in the valley, and God asked them to follow another path in the way of the Red Sea so that they do not fall into trap.

The Amalekites and the Canaanites, as shown in verses 43-45, dwell in the mountains, but they are here in the valley, in an ambush for the people.

(Verses 29-31): **The carcasses of you who have complained against Me shall fall in this wilderness, all of you who were numbered, according to your entire number, from twenty years old and above. 30 Except for Caleb the son of Jephunneh and Joshua the son of Nun, you shall by no means enter the land which I swore I would make you dwell in. 31 But your little ones, whom you said would be victims, I will bring in, and they shall know the land which you have despised.**

The people's punishment was their own sin. They said, "We will not enter the Promised Land," and it is the same punishment that was inflicted on them. And their children, who feared for them, entered. Their destruction was in the wilderness until the end of that generation that used to slavery in Egypt. Hence, we see the second condition for entering the Promised Land: freedom and liberty from slavery to sin. The first condition was faith (verse 24).

(Verses 32-33): **But as for you, your carcasses shall fall in this wilderness. 33 And your sons shall be shepherds in the wilderness forty years, and bear the brunt of your infidelity, until your carcasses are consumed in the wilderness.**

(Verse 34): **According to the number of the days in which you spied out the land, forty days, for each day you shall bear your guilt one year, namely forty years, and you shall know My rejection.**

Question for us!! How many years in punishment correspond to the days we live in sin.

(Verse 37): **those very men who brought the evil report about the land, died by the plague before the Lord.**

A clear strike to those who were the reason so that the rest understand the lesson. **plague** = sudden strike.

(Verses 38-39): **But Joshua the son of Nun and Caleb the son of Jephunneh remained alive, of the men who went to spy out the land. 39 Then Moses told these words to all the children of Israel, and the people mourned greatly.**

Note: Caleb is called Al-Qanzi, and the word "Quanz" is similar to "Qunz" in Arabic, meaning "hunter." The Kenzians = fishermen.

(Verse 40): **And they rose early in the morning and went up to the top of the mountain, saying, "Here we are, and we will go up to the place which the Lord has promised, for we have sinned!"**

It is the nature of disobedience that is in us. When the Lord says, "Go up, they do not go up." And when He says, "Do not go up, they go up." It is strange for a person to imagine that he better understands than God.

Note: Caleb's name is Al-Qanzi, and the word "Qanz" is similar to "Qans" in Arabic, meaning hunter. So, Al-Qanziyyin = hunters.

(Verses 41-45): **And Moses said, "Now why do you transgress the command of the Lord? For this will not succeed. 42 Do not go up, lest you be defeated by your enemies, for the Lord is not among you. 43 For the Amalekites and the Canaanites are there before you, and you shall fall by the sword; because you have turned away from the Lord, the Lord will not be with you." 44 But they presumed to go up to the mountaintop. Nevertheless, neither the ark of the covenant of the Lord nor Moses departed from the camp. 45 Then the Amalekites and the Canaanites who dwelt in that mountain came down and attacked them, and drove them back as far as Hormah.**

A question for reflection... Was God not able to destroy the people of Canaan and make the people enter without war or resistance? Was not God able to destroy Satan and hide him after the cross?

But this is not God's way... We must strive, and God gives grace and aid to those who suffer themselves (Matthew 11: 12). This is what their sons experienced afterwards when they entered Canaan. Thus, God has chained Satan and leads us in our struggle against him. This is the "law of freedom." I freely choose God and carry out His commandments so that His power (grace) supports me against sin. Or accept the offers of Satan, that is, the pleasures of this world, and if I accept the temptations of Satan, I will not find God's help. But God, who is loving to His children, does not abandon us in case of our weakness or fall. Here God resorts to chastising us. It is as if Satan had become the tool of discipline that God allows to discipline us, so we would qualify to enter the heavenly Jerusalem (1 Peter 4: 1 + 1 Corinthians 5: 5). God, who loves us, is compelled to discipline us because He loves us (Hebrews 12: 6) and wants us to have our share with Him in the heavenly Jerusalem. Still, the problem is that a rebellious soul that tends to sin has become within us, so God had no choice but to discipline us as God disciplines His children.

Our striving is summed up in rejecting the offers of Satan and holding fast to Christ " he went out conquering (in the cross) and to conquer (in us)." Then I find grace to support me (by this Christ conquers in us). St. James, in his epistle, calls this "the living faith."

Note that the Jews here had the kind of faith that St. James said that it was a dead faith. They did not believe = they did not believe that God would help them against the Canaanites. They perished because their faith was dead, and as for their sons, they entered because their faith was a living faith.

We saw here their defeat against the Canaanites, which indicates that lack or absence of faith makes us powerless against the wars of the demons. And we learn from (Ephesians 6: 16) that the shield of faith is one of the weapons against demonic wars.

Chapter 15

Commandments for sanctification:

This chapter is between the people grumbling because of the spies and another grumbling led by Korah (Chapter 16), and it talks about sanctification. Its presence here means that God's grace surrounds us and the whole world despite all our transgressions. God's gifts are without regret: "For the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable." (Romans 11). But this does not preclude disciplining.

This chapter speaks to us about the sacrifices that are the way to forgive sins so that the sinner does not die. Therefore, the presence of this chapter in the midst of great sins (1*the murmuring of the people and the spies and 2*the murmuring of Korah) indicates that there is hope in forgiveness through the blood of the sacrifices as a symbol of the forgiveness of our sins through the blood of Christ. We always have hope.

The burnt offerings and the sin offerings refer to Christ who offered Himself as a sacrifice, and the flour offering refers to the pure life of Christ. The drink-offering refers to the mutual joy between God and us, and on the other hand, it means that Christ surrendered Himself as an offering to the last drop of His blood for our salvation (2 Timothy 4: 6) and refers to what God rejoices over the one who offers his soul as drink offering in the service of God, but rather pours out his life for Him. And let's note:

Sacrifices = blood refers to the forgiveness of sin (the sin offering) and the acceptance of people (the burnt offering).

Flour = refers to the life of Christ, with which He rose from the dead and gave it to us to live by it eternally. "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God." (Matthew 4: 4). Material bread gives us life for only a few years, but Christ, the Word of God, gives us eternal life, which is His life.

Wine = refers to joy, God's joy in our return to him, and our joy in His love and redemption. The joy between God and us is mutual, for God rejoices when we rejoice, and His joy is reflected on us, so we rejoice. As the inspiration says in the Book of Isaiah; "For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth; And the former shall not be remembered or come to mind. 18 But be glad and rejoice forever in what I create; For behold, I create Jerusalem as a rejoicing, And her people a joy. 19 I will rejoice in Jerusalem, And joy in My people; The voice of weeping shall no longer be heard in her, Nor the voice of crying. (Isaiah 65: 17-19). If we understand that the cross is the sacrifice of oneself to the last drop of blood, this is what the Lord Jesus did as a declaration of His love. Therefore, He asks everyone who wants to become His disciple in this school of love to carry his cross and follow Him, "And whoever does not bear his cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple." (Luke 14: 27). The school of Christ is self-sacrificing love. And whoever accepts this sacrifice and self-sacrificing love rejoices and also makes the heart of Christ rejoice; it is a mutual joy. And the Garden of Eden, which means joy, was filled with joy where love was mutual with God (God is love, and Adam was created in the image of God).

Indeed, the sinner offered sacrifices (burnt offering, sin offering, flour and wine) in order to be sanctified, that is, to become dedicated to God. But what is his role to be sanctified? 1* He offers the sin offering and confesses his sins and the innocent animal is slaughtered before him because it bore his sins that he confessed. He must say to himself, "I am the one who deserved to die in place of this innocent animal," and he is humbled and remorseful for his sins, deciding not to return to them again. This is what the Prophet David said, "For You do not desire sacrifice, or else I would give it; You do not delight in burnt offering. 17 The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, A broken and a contrite heart— These, O God, You will not despise." (Psalm 51: 16-17). 2*And when he offers a burnt offering and its fat is burned, he must say, "I am the one who must offer all my energies to serve you and glorify your name" (the animal's fat is the source of his energy). 3*And when the drink offering is poured out, he must say, "I, O Lord, am ready to give my life for You to the last drop of blood.

And this chapter comes here after God decides to let them wander in the wilderness so that He may raise the moral spirit of His people and rekindle hope in them. So that they do not think about the failures and bitterness of the past and consequently despair, but rather prepare for the coming spiritual gains and enjoy the faithful promises of God. God promised them with the land, and He does not turn back on His promises " For what if some did not believe? Will their unbelief make the faithfulness of God without effect?" (Romans 3: 3). Certainly, the answer is no. And if their disobedience is the secret of their present and past defeat, then their spiritual worship is the cure (the sacrifice of Christ helps us enter into the promised land). And here, he talks to them about worship again as a source of their relationship with Him.

(Verse 1): **And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying,**

(Verse 2): **"Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: 'When you have come into the land you are to inhabit, which I am giving to you,**

When you have come into the land you are to inhabit: God is now speaking to a people that was defeated and broken before the Canaanites (as man was defeated before Satan). As the people were judged to wander in the wilderness for 40 years, here we are in the wilderness of this world, and we will die in it. But this verse is very comforting, as it is a precious promise that the people will surely reach the land of their dwelling, and we have a promise to inherit with Christ. We have partially surrendered to falsehood (Romans 8: 20). These promises that they will enter the land are for the people not to despair, so the words were for the people and not for Moses and Aaron = **Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them.** We see in this verse the faithfulness of God. Our unfaithfulness does not cease the effect of God's faithfulness. It is a promise, and He will fulfil it.

(Verse 3): **and you make an offering by fire to the Lord, a burnt offering or a sacrifice, to fulfill a vow or as a freewill offering or in your appointed feasts, to make a sweet aroma to the Lord, from the herd or the flock,**

you make an offering by fire to the Lord: Indeed, we are in the wilderness of this world in a period of wandering, but we have to adhere to the sacrifice. God here quickly forgets their past mistake, but He commands adhering to the commandments and sacrifices. Regarding the rite, the sin offering was offered before the burnt offering, but the burnt offering is mentioned first, as it belongs to God. The sin offering represents the repentance and confession of the sinner, and his penitence and adherence to the forgiving blood of Christ. And with the burnt offering, God is pleased with the one offering the sacrifice. This refers to the return to abiding in Christ so that God will be pleased with us and we will be considered perfect in Christ. Whoever understands this and understands the Father's love and Christ's redemptive work, who brought us back to the bosom of the Heavenly Father, gives to God what he owns, but rather gives himself to God. He whose eyes open will feel the wondrous love of Christ, and says to himself, What do I offer you, O Lord? Even if I offer myself and what I have, it is nothing besides what you did for me. How did the inspiration express this? It said, **a freewill offering** = This offering is optional, not stipulated by the law, and it expresses what has preceded. This mutual love, God smells as **a sweet aroma to the Lord.**

offering by fire to the Lord: The sacrifices are called fuel in another translation, for the fat kindles the fire, and the fire devours the sacrifice.

The animal's fat is the animal's source of energy. Thus, the person who offers a burnt offering to God should stand before the burnt offering while the flames consume the fat of the burnt offering (all the fat of the sacrifice was offered to the fire of the altar), contemplating what is happening and addressing God: O Lord, I will offer you all my energies (spiritual, mental, muscular and sensual = this is what the faces of the four cherubim expressed) just as this burnt offering offered all its fat to the altar. Then he adds by saying **a freewill offering**, meaning that even if we offered all our energies to God, this is not enough, so we want to offer more. What Christ has given us is wonderful... "And the Angel of the Lord said to him, "Why do you ask My name, (The name in Hebrew refers to the abilities and work of the person, and with Christ it refers to His redemptive work.) seeing it is wonderful?" (Judges 13: 18) + "And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace." (Isaiah 9: 6). Christ did something wonderful, as He, being God, became incarnate and offered Himself for us and to us.

(Verses 4-12); **then he who presents his offering to the Lord shall bring a grain offering of one-tenth of an ephah of fine flour mixed with one-fourth of a hin of oil; 5 and one-fourth of a hin of wine as a drink offering you shall prepare with the burnt offering or the sacrifice, for each lamb. 6 Or for a ram you shall prepare as a grain offering two-tenths of an ephah of fine flour mixed with one-third of a hin of oil; 7 and as a drink offering you shall offer one-third of a hin of wine as a sweet aroma to the Lord. 8 And when you prepare a young bull as a burnt offering, or as a sacrifice to fulfill a vow, or as a peace offering to the Lord, 9 then shall be offered with the young bull a grain offering of three-tenths of an ephah of fine flour mixed with half a hin of oil; 10 and you shall bring as the drink offering half a hin of wine as an offering made by fire, a sweet aroma to the Lord.11 'Thus it shall be done for each young**

bull, for each ram, or for each lamb or young goat. 12 According to the number that you prepare, so you shall do with everyone according to their number.

With **lamb**: one-tenth of an ephah of fine flour + one-fourth of a hin of oil + one-fourth of a hin of wine.

With the **ram**: two-tenths of an ephah of fine flour + one-third of a hin of oil + one-third of a hin of wine.

With the **young bull**: three-tenths of an ephah of fine flour + half a hin of oil + half a hin of wine.

One-tenth is one-tenth of an ephah, and an ephah = 22.299 litres. A hin is a measure of fluids = 3.831 litres.

The offering was offered as a sign of confessing that their strength and crops come from the Lord, they honour Him with it, and the offering of the drink offering indicates:

1. They honour the Lord from the vineyards that God gave them.
2. Wine indicates joy—their joy in worshiping the Lord and the joy of the Lord in their worship and offerings.
3. The drink offering refers to the blood of Christ, which He shed on the Cross, and which He gave to His disciples to drink.
4. It refers to the martyrs who shed their blood for Christ (Philippians 2: 17) + (2 Timothy 4: 6). It refers to Christ's servants pouring out themselves, their lives, their strength, and their hearts in the service of the Lord and for His glory.
5. We notice in the sacrifices that they begin with the **lamb**, a reference to Christ: "The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!" (John 1: 29). And it is offered with **one-tenth of an ephah of flour**. If we understand that the number **10** represents the law perfection, and there is no salvation except by carrying out all the commandments of the law (Leviticus 18: 5), we understand that there is only **1** (one lamb) that carries our sins and there is no way to forgive sins and salvation except through Christ, He alone kept all the commandments of the law and did not sin in a single one, so He said, "Which of you convicts Me of sin?" (John 8: 46), and this is the meaning of the words of Saint Paul the Apostle, "God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law" (Galatians 4: 4). That is, without original sin. He was not born from a natural marriage but was miraculously born from a woman. Therefore, He did not inherit the original sin. He kept all the law, so He did not violate it even once. Therefore, we are considered perfect in Him, "that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus." (Colossians 1: 28). We are considered perfect, so we live (**the flour**), for the flour is the bread in which there is life. The one who abides us in the life of Christ is the Holy Spirit (**oil**). And the Holy Spirit is for all the world (The number 4). This is the meaning of the number **¼ hin of oil**. And to the extent of being filled with the Spirit, there is joy ¼ hin of wine. Therefore, we will find the measure of oil and wine are equal in the case of the ram and the bull. Joy is one of the fruits of being filled with the Holy Spirit (Galatians 5: 22).

6. **The ram** = the chief of the crowd, their leader, and the looked unto from them. The flock of sheep walk with their heads bowed, but if something scary happens, they raise their heads to the leader of the flock, that is, the ram. The whole flock directs its attention to the ram, to where he is going, and they follow him. This refers to Christ, the leader and head of the one body, and this is the meaning of the number **2** with the ram. The number **2** refers to the incarnation. For Christ was incarnated to lead the church as one body, where we are members of Him leading us to heaven, submitting to the Father "has made both one" (Ephesians 2: 14-16 + 1 Corinthians 15: 28). He is the way, and everyone who is abiding in the one body has life, and is considered perfect. This is the meaning of the number **2/10**. And the measure of oil here is $\frac{1}{4}$. And number **3** talks about the resurrection, the life, and the Holy Spirit, the life-giving Spirit. In the previous case, we saw the Holy Spirit available to all the world (**4**), But here we find that it is only for those who are in the one body, the body of Christ, and who rose from the death of sin, that is, who responded to the rebuke and grace of the Holy Spirit.

7. **The Bull** = Christ is the bearer of our worries and burdens. "Surely He has borne our griefs And carried our sorrows; Yet we esteemed Him stricken, Smitten by God, and afflicted." (Isaiah 53: 4). But this is for those who accept to be yoked with Christ. Rather, whoever bears His yoke finds the burden light, "For My yoke is easy and My burden is light." (Matthew 11: 30) (the yoke is the wooden rod that binds two bulls together to drag the waterwheel), meaning that whoever decides to carry out the commandments has tied himself with Christ, so he will find the matter easy because Christ is really the one who helps, so the Lord said, "for without Me you can do nothing." (John 15: 5). That is why the apostle Paul says, "let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us," (Hebrews 12: 1). The possibility in carrying out the commandments is due to our acceptance of a yoke association with Christ. With the same thought, we find that everyone who is abiding in Christ, when he passes through a painful and sad experience, finds the consolation of the Holy Spirit, for Christ bore our sorrows. And if we are bound to Christ, we will be able to keep the commandments, and by this, we rise from the death of sin, so that we will have life (**the flour**). This is the first resurrection and is symbolized by the number **3**. This is the meaning of the number **3/10** that we find with the sacrifice of a bull. And the measure of oil here ($\frac{1}{2}$) and the number **2** speaks of the division that occurred because of sin (Cain and Abel). It also speaks of the incarnation. The reconciliation took place in Christ, and the two became one (Ephesians 2: 14-16). And what is a way to reconcile other than love, which is the first fruit of the Holy Spirit? Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us. (Romans 5: 5). Through this love we are united with Christ: "As the Father loved Me, I also have loved you; abide in My love." (John 15: 9). This is the meaning of the presence of the number $\frac{1}{2}$ here. The Holy Spirit is the One who binds the members of the Church in the one body with joints that are love (Song of Solomon 7: 1 + Ephesians 4: 15, 16 + Colossians 2: 19) and the workman in verse (Song of Solomon of 7: 1) is the Holy Spirit, and The curves of your thighs are the joints of the body.

8. Thus, we see what Christ offered us (He bore our sins and reigned over us, to lead us as one body, His body, bearing all our sorrows and pains).

9. In offerings, the bull is more expensive than the ram, and the ram is more expensive than the lamb, and the meaning is that the greater the value of the gift, the more exertion by the giver of the gift. With the filling of the Spirit, the abiding of Christ's life in us increases (increasing the amount of flour). God's

joy increases by those who give and the joy of those who give themselves (wine) increases also. Note that the One who abides us in God so that we may live is the Holy Spirit (2 Corinthians 1: 21, 22).

10. In (verse 11), he speaks of a female sacrifice (**of a sheep or a goat**), which is offered as a sin offering for an individual of the congregation (see Leviticus 4, 5 and also verses 27-29 of this chapter). Female sheep or goats are cheaper. These female sacrifices refer to the Church, the Bride of Christ, who must offer herself as a sacrifice to her bridegroom. It also refers to Christ, the bridegroom, who offered Himself for His bride, the Church.

Summary

The lamb is offered with **1/10** of fine flour mixed with **1/4** hin of oil + **1/4** hin of wine

The lamb refers to Christ, the Lamb of God, who bears the sins of the world

1/10 of flour = the number **1** refers to the One Christ through whom sins are forgiven, for He alone committed to the whole law 10. Therefore, in Him, we are considered perfect. **The flour** is the bread by which we live, physically for years. As for Christ, He is the life-giving bread forever. **The oil** symbolizes the Holy Spirit who establishes us in Christ. The number **4** refers to universality, for the Holy Spirit is available to all who believe.

The ram is offered with **2/10** of fine flour mixed with **1/3** hin of oil + **1/3** hin of wine.

The ram = the master of the people and their leader and the one who is seen among them (Arabic dictionaries). **A reference to Christ, the head of the body, i.e. the church.** And the whole church follows Him. The number **2** refers to the incarnation of the Lord Christ, "who made the two one." He was incarnate to make us His body and lead us. But who would abide in the body of Christ to be saved? He who had the first resurrection from the death of sin. So here we find number **3**. And he who rises from the death of sin is he who responded to the Holy Spirit.

The bull is presented with **3/10** of fine flour mixed with **1/2** hin of oil + **1/2** hin of wine

The bull refers to Christ, the bearer of our worries and burdens. Here again, we find the number **2**. Christ made the two into one. But how does the whole church become one body? This is done by the work of the Holy Spirit who binds the whole church together with the joints of love, so we find the number **2** with the oil.

(Verse 11): **Thus it shall be done for each young bull, for each ram, or for each lamb or young goat.**

Here he speaks of the female sacrifice, **lamb or young goat** = the Church, the bride of Christ, must accept the cross as her bridegroom: "I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me." (Galatians 2: 20).

(Verse 12): **According to the number that you prepare, so you shall do with everyone according to their number.**

According to the number that you prepare: That is, multiplying the quantities of flour, oil and wine by the number of sacrifices, and the oil refers to the Holy Spirit. Kneading flour with oil indicates the hypostatic union between Christ and the Holy Spirit. The drink offering with the dough refers to Christ who poured out His life, that is, His life on earth, for the sake of His disciples. He is the inhabitant of heaven. He went down doing good without finding Himself a place to lay His head, insulted by all and rejected. And the animal sacrificed (bull / ram / lamb) indicates that at the end, He was offered as a sacrifice. Whoever partakes in the body of Christ through communion, the Holy Spirit gives him the life of Christ and gives him having the image of Christ in him and reach to pour himself out for Christ as Christ poured Himself out for us, and gives him to rejoice in Christ.

Thus, when we offer to the Lord, we bring to Him Christ, whom He gave to us. We do not have anything more valuable to offer. Note that God asked them for flour when they entered the land, as they do not have flour in the wilderness.

(Verses 13-16): **All who are native-born shall do these things in this manner, in presenting an offering made by fire, a sweet aroma to the Lord. 14 And if a stranger dwells with you, or whoever is among you throughout your generations, and would present an offering made by fire, a sweet aroma to the Lord, just as you do, so shall he do. 15 One ordinance shall be for you of the assembly and for the stranger who dwells with you, an ordinance forever throughout your generations; as you are, so shall the stranger be before the Lord. 16 One law and one custom shall be for you and for the stranger who dwells with you."**

The stranger is someone who belonged to God's people, to be a Jew, and circumcised (Exodus 12: 48-49), but this condition is not mentioned here. The meaning is that while the Jews were condemned to wandering (Chapters 13, 14), the gentiles were accepted. The Church now includes the Jews and the gentiles who believed together and all share the same sacrifice.

(Verses 17-21): **Again the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, 18 "Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: 'When you come into the land to which I bring you, 19 then it will be, when you eat of the bread of the land, that you shall offer up a heave offering to the Lord. 20 You shall offer up a cake of the first of your ground meal as a heave offering; as a heave offering of the threshing floor, so shall you offer it up. 21 Of the first of your ground meal you shall give to the Lord a heave offering throughout your generations.**

This is the law of first-fruit, as when God takes His portion, He blesses the rest. And we see here that it should be presented first of the first crop on the threshing floor and one of the first baked bread.

(Verses 22-26): **'If you sin unintentionally, and do not observe all these commandments which the Lord has spoken to Moses— 23 all that the Lord has commanded you by the hand of Moses, from the day the Lord gave commandment and onward throughout your generations— 24 then it will be, if it is unintentionally committed, [d]without the knowledge of the congregation, that the whole congregation shall offer one young bull as a burnt offering, as a sweet aroma to the Lord, with its grain offering and its drink offering, according to the ordinance, and one kid of the goats as a sin offering. 25 So the priest shall make atonement for the whole congregation of the children of Israel, and it shall be forgiven them, for it was unintentional; they shall bring their offering, an offering made by fire to the Lord, and their sin offering before the Lord, for their unintended sin. 26 It shall be forgiven the whole congregation of the children of Israel and the stranger who dwells among them, because all the people did it unintentionally.**

Here are the sacrifices of unintentional sins if the whole group sinned, and the word "unintentional" is translated in other translations out of ignorance. This refers to the absolute holiness of God, as He does not tolerate sin even if it is unintentional. Unintentional sins result from not being awake, indifference and lack of scrutiny. We have to appreciate the value of the life of holiness and being in the presence of God, and thus, we do not forget His commandments and lose our fellowship with God.

(Verses 27-29): **'And if a person sins unintentionally, then he shall bring a female goat in its first year as a sin offering. 28 So the priest shall make atonement for the person who sins unintentionally, when he sins unintentionally before the Lord, to make atonement for him; and it shall be forgiven him. 29 You shall have one law for him who sins unintentionally, for him who is native-born among the children of Israel and for the stranger who dwells among them.**

This is the offering for unintentional sin for an individual (2 Peter 1: 3), for God, is holy and wants us to be saints. And there is a solution for unintentional sins, which is sacrifice.

(Verses 30-36): **'But the person who does anything presumptuously, whether he is native-born or a stranger, that one brings reproach on the Lord, and he shall be cut off from among his people. 31 Because he has despised the word of the Lord, and has broken His commandment, that person shall be completely cut off; his guilt shall be upon him.'" 32 Now while the children of Israel were in the wilderness, they found a man gathering sticks on the Sabbath day. 33 And those who found him gathering sticks brought him to Moses and Aaron, and to all the congregation. 34 They put him under guard, because it had not been explained what should be done to him. 35 Then the Lord said to Moses, "The man must surely be put to death; all the congregation shall stone him with stones outside the camp." 36 So, as the Lord commanded Moses, all the congregation brought him outside the camp and stoned him with stones, and he died.**

The soul that weakens and commits a sin finds in the sacrifice of Christ a remedy for her. But as for the one who commits his sin **presumptuously** = that is, he commits the sin deliberately, without fear and

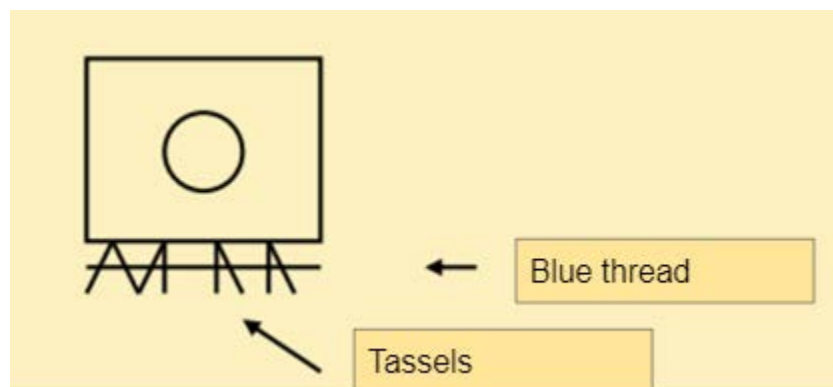
defiance, such a soul **shall be cut off from among his people** = by the issuance of a judgment from the congregation against it or by separating this soul from the group and leaving this soul to God for punishment. Therefore, not every sin is for death, but only what is deliberate and what is open disobedience. The sins of forgetfulness are erased with blood.

As an application to this, the story of the Sabbath-breaker was mentioned, and he was stoned. Note that he was gathering sticks, and wood was used to light the fire. It is strange that the person who leaves the rest that God prepares for him and chooses the fire of judgment for himself: What a person sows, he reaps: " for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap. " And the harsh punishment here is to deter everyone. This was repeated at the New Testament's beginning in Ananias and Sapphira's incident.

God intended with this severe punishment in both the Old and New Testaments:

1. In the Old Testament: That the commandments that God gave to His people are for life, and that whoever violates them will die, so the people are afraid of transgressing the commandments.
2. In the New Testament: The violation of the commandment, no matter how simple (such as the sin of Ananias and Sapphira), also leads to death. Let no one deceive us that whoever believes in Christ will be saved, no matter what his sin is, because the blood of Christ atones for him. And if this is true - why did Ananias and Sapphira die?!
3. God intended at the beginning of each covenant to confirm that " Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever." (Hebrews 13: 8). God hates sin, and the penalty for sin is death.

(Verses 37-41): **Again the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, 38 "Speak to the children of Israel: Tell them to make tassels on the corners of their garments throughout their generations, and to put a blue thread in the tassels of the corners. 39 And you shall have the tassel, that you may look upon it and remember all the commandments of the Lord and do them, and that you may not follow the harlotry to which your own heart and your own eyes are inclined, 40 and that you may remember and do all My commandments, and be holy for your God. 41 I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, to be your God: I am the Lord your God."**



The outer garment of the Jews was square and had a hole in the middle to enter from the head, and on it were placed tassels like those hung in curtains or at the end of the rosary. On the fringe of the tail, a blue band is placed, and the fringe of the tail reaches the dust. Putting a blue thread on it reminds us of the heavenly things, even if we live in the body (the garment on the earth), so when a person looks down, he sees the heavenly blue colour, so he remembers the heavenly matters and the commandment of God.

Tassels= they are braided threads. As for the Pharisees, they used to lengthen the fringes of their clothes to show their strict observance of the commandments and the law, as an honour for them (Matthew 23: 5). The ordinary people of the Jews believed in the holiness of those tassels, that is why the woman touched the hem of the garment of the Lord Jesus Christ (Matthew 9: 20). If God asks to put tassels to remember the commandment and abide by it, and to remember the heavenly matters, why do some blame the Orthodox Church, when she puts pictures of the saints to remind the people that by their holiness they are now in heaven " considering the outcome of their conduct."

you may not follow the harlotry to which your own heart: That is, you seek to attain what your hearts desire from the prohibitions.

God knows that it is human nature to forget these headbands to remember.

Note on chapter 15:

The people were now in Kadesh (Numbers 13: 26), in the wilderness of Paran, which is mostly Kadesh Barnea, and they had days to reach the promised land. But with their sin, they wandered for more than 38 years, and this chapter was the beginning, and end of the wandering journey in (Numbers 20: 14) when the journey began by walking to Canaan

Chapter 16

Taking Priesthood by force:

We saw in the previous chapter the faithfulness of God in His promises, and here we see the rebellion of human beings against the system established by God. We saw the murmuring of the people previously, but here we see the murmuring of the Levites and the leaders, and most likely, this agitation is compounded, so Korah is a Levite of the Kohathites. As for Dathan and Abiram are the children of Eliab, the son of Pallu, the son of Reuben (Numbers 26: 5-9). Korah, a Levite, was seeking the priesthood. It seems that Korah was a leader of stature and an influential figure, as he was able to influence 250 heads of the group, and this shows that Satan is working hard to exploit the great talents and capabilities. Korah and his group of 250 Levites asked to be priests. As for Dathan and Abiram, who are from the tribe of Reuben, probably they are jealous of the tribe of Judah, because they are in the forefront, and they consider themselves children of Reuben, the firstborn, and they are more deserving of the leadership, as they seek temporal authority. The Kohathites were adjacent to the Reubenites, and the two groups united to challenge Moses' religious and civil authority.

After that, God became angry when Saul offered a sacrifice and then got angry at King Uzziah and punished him for the same reason. The important thing is that we are in front of a state of greed for higher positions and talents. Korah had a job, but he coveted the work of Moses and Aaron. As servants of God, we must be faithful in the little that God has given us without envying others and coveting their service. Each has a role and service and should not covet the role of the other. The danger of envy is that it leads to spiritual and mental blindness. These envious people saw Moses the humble as authoritarian and elevated. And the 250 may be from the tribes of Israel, and they were leaders asking for the priesthood to be theirs. Or to have the priesthood in each family as it was before (the system of the Patriarchs) when the head of each family was its priest. This explains the presence of censers with them. Perhaps they practiced the priesthood with it before God specified a particular tribe and family, which is Aaron's family for the priesthood.

Perhaps they actually practiced the priesthood, each in his own house, before this general revolution that rejected God's order.

Let us note that the ordinary people grumbled because of their stomachs (meat / onions...) As for the leaders, they are struck with another temptation, which is pride, which is why pride is known as "rising towards down."

(Verse 1): **Now Korah the son of Izhar, the son of Kohath, the son of Levi, with Dathan and Abiram the sons of Eliab, and On the son of Peleth, sons of Reuben, took men;**

The name of **On the son of Peleth** is mentioned here and is not mentioned after that, as he may have offered repentance. Korah the son of Izhar, and Moses the son of Amram. And Izhar was the brother of Amram. Therefore, Moses is the cousin of Korah (Exodus 6: 18-20). The service of the Kohathites was in the most holy place (Numbers 4: 4). But Korah was not satisfied with his service, which is the greatest service in the Tabernacle, and grumbled against Moses, not for the love of service, but rather he wrestles with pride over honour. Two hundred fifty leaders protected him! Does God fear the number and change His decision?! This is what Christ said, "A prophet is not without honor except in his own country, among his own relatives, and in his own house." (Mark 6: 4). The one who led the revolt against Mose and was jealous of Moses, was his cousin Korah.

(Verse 2): **and they rose up before Moses with some of the children of Israel, two hundred and fifty leaders of the congregation, representatives of the congregation, men of renown.**

some of the children of Israel: This is what makes us understand that the revolution included chiefs from all the tribes who were influenced by the revolution of Korah, Dathan and Abiram.

representatives of the congregation: Means elected

(Verse 3): **They gathered together against Moses and Aaron, and said to them, "You take too much upon yourselves, for all the congregation is holy, every one of them, and the Lord is among them. Why then do you exalt yourselves above the assembly of the Lord?"**

These words are similar to those who say now, "We are all kings and priests, so why should priests be exalted above us?"

These did not understand that priesthood and service generally are humility and not elevation. The true servant is humble, seeks to serve and turns to God in prayer. He is not occupied with a position or leadership. And if he is chosen for taking responsibility, he understands that it is a responsibility that God will judge him to and not a position for bragging. The fake servant seeks his own glory, and this is done with a human arm, as happened here. As for the true servant, he turns to God for judgement in the injustice that befalls him. The true servant is lowly, and the false servant is arrogant.

(Verse 4): **So when Moses heard it, he fell on his face;**

Here Moses appears as a true servant, as **he fell on his face** before God to judge for him.

(Verses 5-6): **and he spoke to Korah and all his company, saying, "Tomorrow morning the Lord will show who is His and who is holy, and will cause him to come near to Him. That one whom He chooses He will cause to come near to Him. 6 Do this: Take censers, Korah and all your company;**

who is holy: This means whom God has chosen to devote himself to His service.

(Verse 7): **put fire in them and put incense in them before the Lord tomorrow, and it shall be that the man whom the Lord chooses is the holy one. You take too much upon yourselves, you sons of Levi!"**

You take too much upon yourselves, you sons of Levi!: This is a response to what they said to Moses and Aaron (in verse 3) **"You take too much upon yourselves"**

(Verses 8-9): **Then Moses said to Korah, "Hear now, you sons of Levi: 9 Is it a small thing to you that the God of Israel has separated you from the congregation of Israel, to bring you near to Himself, to do the work of the tabernacle of the Lord, and to stand before the congregation to serve them;**

Therefore, everyone has his service, and he must do it faithfully.

(Verse 10): **and that He has brought you near to Himself, you and all your brethren, the sons of Levi, with you? And are you seeking the priesthood also?**

(Verse 11): **Therefore you and all your company are gathered together against the Lord. And what is Aaron that you complain against him?"**

Here we see several attributes that a priest must have:

1. The priesthood is not requested, but rather the priest is chosen by God (Hebrews 5: 4), which is understood from verse 10.
2. The priest should not feel that by this position he is puffed up on anyone, and note the words of Moses, **"And what is Aaron."**
- 3) The faithful servant in his service who seeks the glory of God does not hinder to tell the truth. Complaining by the people is not against the servant but against God, whom the servant is applying His law.

(Verse 12): **And Moses sent to call Dathan and Abiram the sons of Eliab, but they said, "We will not come up!"**

In their pride, Dathan and Abiram refused to meet Moses.

(Verse 13): **Is it a small thing that you have brought us up out of a land flowing with milk and honey, to kill us in the wilderness, that you should keep acting like a prince over us?**

you have brought us up out of a land flowing with milk and honey: They mean Egypt, and they are here mocking that the Lord described the Promised Land as flowing with milk and honey. They describe the land of slavery with descriptions of the Promised Land, while Egypt is famous for its onions and garlic. They thought that they would remain in the wilderness forever.

(Verse 14): **Moreover you have not brought us into a land flowing with milk and honey, nor given us inheritance of fields and vineyards. Will you put out the eyes of these men? We will not come up!"**

Will you put out the eyes of these men? = It has several meanings: 1. After you brought us to this wilderness, there is nothing left for you to do but this. 2. You made the people like blind people walking after you as you wish. 3. That this people have eyes, and you cannot continue, O Moses, to deceive them, that this barren wilderness that you brought us to is flowing with milk and honey, and this is the most likely opinion.

(Verse 15): **Then Moses was very angry, and said to the Lord, "Do not respect their offering. I have not taken one donkey from them, nor have I hurt one of them."**

Moses, here in his anger, appears as a defender of the priesthood as a divine system they are trying to usurp. And his saying, "**Do not respect their offering**" = indicates the incident of the rejection of Cain's offerings, and Moses is the story's writer. The evidence that Moses was not angry because of his honour is that he returned and interceded for them.

(Verse 16-19): **And Moses said to Korah, "Tomorrow, you and all your company be present before the Lord—you and they, as well as Aaron. 17 Let each take his censer and put incense in it, and each of you bring his censer before the Lord, two hundred and fifty censers; both you and Aaron, each with his censer." 18 So every man took his censer, put fire in it, laid incense on it, and stood at the door of the tabernacle of meeting with Moses and Aaron. And Korah gathered all the congregation against them at the door of the tabernacle of meeting. Then the glory of the Lord appeared to all the congregation.**

Korah gathered all the congregation to support him. This is stupidity, as will they be strong against God?

(Verses 20-25): **And the Lord spoke to Moses and Aaron, saying, 21 "Separate yourselves from among this congregation, that I may consume them in a moment." 22 Then they fell on their faces, and said, "O God, the God of the spirits of all flesh, shall one man sin, and You be angry with all the congregation?" 23 So the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, "Speak to the congregation, saying, 'Get away from the tents of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram.'" 25 Then Moses rose and went to Dathan and Abiram, and the elders of Israel followed him.**

When Moses found out about God's intention to strike the rebels, he went to Dathan and Abiram, who had previously refused to go to Moses. And this is from the humility and love of Moses, and here he gives them a last chance. **Get away** = when we escape from the wicked and their evil, we escape their fate.

(Verses 26-29): **And he spoke to the congregation, saying, "Depart now from the tents of these wicked men! Touch nothing of theirs, lest you be consumed in all their sins." 27 So they got away from around the tents of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram; and Dathan and Abiram came out and stood at the door of their tents, with their wives, their sons, and their little children. 28 And Moses said: "By this you shall know that the Lord has sent me to do all these works, for I have not done them of my own will. 29 If these men die naturally like all men, or if they are visited by the common fate of all men, then the Lord has not sent me.**

Here he gives them a last chance to **Depart now** = when we isolate ourselves from the wicked and their evil, we escape their fate.

(Verse 30): **But if the Lord creates a new thing, and the earth opens its mouth and swallows them up with all that belongs to them, and they go down alive into the pit, then you will understand that these men have rejected the Lord."**

they go down alive into the pit: The pit here refers to the place where they will be buried under the earth when the earth opens and swallows them up, so this opening that has occurred will become a grave for them. But the pit here does not refer to hell. For it is said **with all that belongs to them**. For homes and belongings, do not go to hell.

these men have rejected the Lord = Whoever rejects a system established by God is rejecting God.

(Verses 31-35): **Now it came to pass, as he finished speaking all these words, that the ground split apart under them, 32 and the earth opened its mouth and swallowed them up, with their households and all the men with Korah, with all their goods. 33 So they and all those with them went down alive into the pit; the earth closed over them, and they perished from among the assembly. 34 Then all Israel who were around them fled at their cry, for they said, "Lest the earth swallow us up also!" And**

a fire came out from the Lord and consumed the two hundred and fifty men who were offering incense.

The fire consumed Korah and everyone who was inclined to use a censer, but in verse (verse 32), it was said **all the men with Korah** = meaning everyone who walked behind the illusion of Korah.

We are here in front of two punishments, the fire devoured those who usurped the priesthood, and the earth opened its mouth for those who pride entered them. The fire was for Korah. The earth opened its mouth to Dathan, Abiram, their children, and all their belongings.

It seems that Korah, during this agitation, had a residence with Dathan and Abiram without his wife and children. The children of Korah did not perish in this trouble. They are undoubtedly innocent and rejected the sin of their father Korah. Rather, some of his children sang in the temple and had psalms (Numbers 26: 11), but the children of Dathan and Abiram died with their fathers. God alone knows the hearts and knows who gets punished and who escapes punishment. This is another response to the thought of children bearing the sins of their fathers (Review Deuteronomy 11: 6 + Psalm 106: 17, 18) and note the destruction of each one by the element that he sinned with. Korah brought fire in his censer, and he was consumed with fire, and Dathan and Abiram raised their hearts in pride, and they fell under the earth and looked like demons, for it is the demons who go down under the earth. On the contrary, the psalms of the children of Korah are full of joy, for they did not resist like their father.

(Verses 36-37): **Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying: "Tell Eleazar, the son of Aaron the priest, to pick up the censers out of the blaze, for they are holy, and scatter the fire some distance away.**

God commissioned Eleazar to pick up the censers, and did not commission Aaron, for Aaron should not be defiled by touching the dead. Note that God considers that even these censers are sanctified because incense has been offered in them for His name,

(Verse 38): **The censers of these men who sinned against their own souls, let them be made into hammered plates as a covering for the altar. Because they presented them before the Lord, therefore they are holy; and they shall be a sign to the children of Israel."**

The censers of these men who sinned against their own souls, let them be made into hammered plates as a covering for the altar. Because they presented them before the Lord, therefore they are holy = Although those who offered incense in these censers were rejected by the Lord and were punished, they were sanctified because they contained incense offered to the Lord. Here, we must stand in awe before the altar utensils in which the body and blood of Christ are offered.

The censers were memorials of the punishments of the Lord, as was the portion of manna in remembrance of His blessings.

That is why the apostle Paul says, " considering the outcome of their conduct. (Hebrews 13: 7) and note that God considers these censers sanctified because incense was offered in them for His name.

The story of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram became a lesson to the extent that the daughters of Zelophehad said, "We are not of their children."

(Verses 39-40): **So Eleazar the priest took the bronze censers, which those who were burned up had presented, and they were hammered out as a covering on the altar, 40 to be a memorial to the children of Israel that no outsider, who is not a descendant of Aaron, should come near to offer incense before the Lord, that he might not become like Korah and his companions, just as the Lord had said to him through Moses.**

(Verse 41): **On the next day all the congregation of the children of Israel complained against Moses and Aaron, saying, "You have killed the people of the Lord."**

The whole congregation grumbled over their death, which revealed the extent of their influence. The strange thing is that they were not deterred, as man's nature is constantly complaining.

(Verses 42-45): **Now it happened, when the congregation had gathered against Moses and Aaron, that they turned toward the tabernacle of meeting; and suddenly the cloud covered it, and the glory of the Lord appeared. 43 Then Moses and Aaron came before the tabernacle of meeting. 44 And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, 45 "Get away from among this congregation, that I may consume them in a moment." And they fell on their faces.**

(Verses 46-48): **So Moses said to Aaron, "Take a censer and put fire in it from the altar, put incense on it, and take it quickly to the congregation and make atonement for them; for wrath has gone out from the Lord. The plague has begun." 47 Then Aaron took it as Moses commanded, and ran into the midst of the assembly; and already the plague had begun among the people. So he put in the incense and made atonement for the people. 48 And he stood between the dead and the living; so the plague was stopped.**

Here we find that the Lord struck the people with a deadly plague so that they would fear and stop murmuring.

Moses intercedes for his people. And Aaron quickly raises incense amid the congregation to stop the plague. We see here that the glory of the Lord appeared in the same way that it appeared previously on the day of Aaron's ordination (Leviticus 9: 23).

And God appears here to prove Aaron's work in front of these complainants. Here Aaron stood as a symbol of Christ when he stood between the living and the dead. And here they are, the complainants have accused Moses and Aaron of wanting to kill them and despised the priesthood of Aaron, but here we find Aaron is the one who saved them by his priesthood.

Note that Moses, who was offering sacrifices to God, did not offer incense to intercede for the people but asked Aaron to do so. Now there is a God-chosen high priest who offers incense.

(Verse 49-50): **Now those who died in the plague were fourteen thousand seven hundred, besides those who died in the Korah incident. 50 So Aaron returned to Moses at the door of the tabernacle of meeting, for the plague had stopped.**

Chapter 17

Aaron's Rod

God knew their thoughts. The firstborn or the head of the family was the priest of the family, and he raised the incense for his family, which was called the priesthood of the patriarchs. They thought that if Aaron, as the head of the family, became a priest, why shouldn't we all become priests? God had previously announced His will to discipline the rebels, but we find Him here performing the role of persuasion so that they do not revolt again and be destroyed. Here, God wanted to assure everyone that there is a new system that God has set for the priesthood, and that the choice of priests has become a matter that belongs to God personally (Hebrews 5: 4). And God does not deal only by force, as in the case of Korah, but deals with persuasion, " O Lord, You induced me, and I was persuaded" (Jeremiah 20: 7). Strength alone is not sufficient. The blossoming of Aaron's staff showed that Moses and Aaron do not claim anything that is not theirs, but rather it is a divine choice. Then, by placing the rod in front of the ark of the covenant, God intended that this choice should have the role of permanence.

The rods they used were almond wood. And the rod was the rod of the ruling or the fatherhood of the tribe. The rod of the tribe of Levi was written on it the name of Aaron.

(Verses 1-4): **And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying: 2 "Speak to the children of Israel, and get from them a rod from each father's house, all their leaders according to their fathers' houses—twelve rods. Write each man's name on his rod. 3 And you shall write Aaron's name on the rod of Levi. For there shall be one rod for the head of each father's house. 4 Then you shall place them in the tabernacle of meeting before the Testimony, where I meet with you.**

(Verse 5): **And it shall be that the rod of the man whom I choose will blossom; thus I will rid Myself of the complaints of the children of Israel, which they make against you."**

When I convince them, their murmurs will be silenced.

(Verses 6-7): **So Moses spoke to the children of Israel, and each of their leaders gave him a rod apiece, for each leader according to their fathers' houses, twelve rods; and the rod of Aaron was among their rods. 7 And Moses placed the rods before the Lord in the tabernacle of witness.**

(Verse 8): **Now it came to pass on the next day that Moses went into the tabernacle of witness, and behold, the rod of Aaron, of the house of Levi, had sprouted and put forth buds, had produced blossoms and yielded ripe almonds.**

The miracle is not only that the rod had sprouted. Perhaps the people said that Moses came at night and replaced the rod with a sprouted rod stick. But in the presence of buds, blossoms and ripe almonds together at the same time. It is the fruit, blossom and buds which each has a different time of the year, and so was the golden lampstand. And the existence of the three (fruit, bud, and blossom) is nothing but a miracle.

1. The buds refer to good desires, and the blossoms refer to holy decisions. The fruit refers to faith, love and complete obedience. This is the result of the work of Christ, who can transform death into life.
2. The sprouting of Aaron's rod is suitable for the priesthood. The priesthood must be fruitful, and its men must have living juice within. (John 15:16).
3. The almond tree is a sign of vigilance, as it blooms early, and the priest must be vigilant in his service.
4. The presence of buds with fruits indicates that the church has fruits, and some buds proclaim fruits.
5. This rod refers to Christ, for He is a rod that came out of the stem of Jesse (Isaiah 11: 1).
6. It refers to the Virgin Mary, who is like a rod in herself. She cannot give birth, as she was not married, but she gave us the fruit of life.
7. It refers to the Church, the Virgin, the mother of this Church, and Christ became dwelling in this Church. We are like dry rods, but He gave us life. "For to me, to live is Christ." (Philippians 1: 21).

Constantly placing the rod in front of the ark of the covenant is to remind the priests and the congregation that their priesthood is from God. So that the priests do not become arrogant and the people do not complain.

Keeping the rod, the manna, and the oil symbolizes the presence of the sacraments in the church and the work of the Holy Spirit in her. The people saw the rod in the ark, and they remembered the work of God's grace that gave life to this wood and bore fruit. Therefore, He can give them grace, life, victories, and blessings. Thus, in the sacraments, we obtain the grace of life through the work of the Holy Spirit in them. (The oil is the anointing oil, and the Jewish tradition says that Josiah ordered it to be put with the staff and the manna in the ark.)

And the rods were 12 because they often included the rods of Ephraim and Manasseh in the name of Joseph.

(Verses 9-11): **Then Moses brought out all the rods from before the Lord to all the children of Israel; and they looked, and each man took his rod. 10 And the Lord said to Moses, "Bring Aaron's rod back**

before the Testimony, to be kept as a sign against the rebels, that you may put their complaints away from Me, lest they die." 11 Thus did Moses; just as the Lord had commanded him, so he did.

(Verse 12-13): **So the children of Israel spoke to Moses, saying, "Surely we die, we perish, we all perish! Whoever even comes near the tabernacle of the Lord must die. Shall we all utterly die?"**

It seems that the Levites were terrified and thought that they were all perishing despite the miracle. For they are the ones who are allowed to approach the dwelling place of the Lord, so they say, "**Whoever even comes near the tabernacle of the Lord must die.**" Man is arrogant where he should humble himself and despair when he should trust in God's grace. Therefore, we find God in Chapter 18 reassuring them and declaring the good that He gave them.

Chapter 18

Priests' Responsibilities and Rights:

We saw the Levites in the previous chapter in a state of fear, asking in terror if they would ultimately perish. But we find God in His love answering their question and making arrangements for them here to calm them and announce the continuation of His acceptance of them. And to avoid the fear of death, they must abide by these arrangements. The people see in these arrangements that the priesthood against which they rebelled is the one which protects them, and we find God here declaring to them that He is their portion (verse 20) and He is committed to providing for them, but they must be clean (verse 11). God here assures them of their obligations and rights.

We see in all this and the above God's ways of dealing with His people: there are **punishments** (Korah), there is **persuasion** (Aaron's rod), and there is **kind treatment** (as in this chapter)

(Verse 1): **Then the Lord said to Aaron: "You and your sons and your father's house with you shall bear the iniquity related to the sanctuary, and you and your sons with you shall bear the iniquity associated with your priesthood."**

You and your sons and your father's house with you shall bear the iniquity related to the sanctuary:

This means the priests (you and your sons) + Levites = **your father's house**. Both of them bear the responsibility of any defilement to the sanctuary from the approaching of any stranger to it. They are committed to guarding it. The priests and servants are the spiritual guardians of the people, and they are responsible for every mistake committed by the people. The people are God's dwelling place: "You are the temple of God, and the Holy Spirit dwells in you." Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?" **you shall bear the iniquity associated with your priesthood** = As if every wrong thing or every violation of God's commandments committed by a priest, for which all the priests are accountable before God. The high priest and the priests are responsible before God to hold the sinner accountable and to stop him at his limit (1 Corinthians 5: 7-13) Let us recall the sin of Achan, which caused the defeat of the people before Ai and the killing Thousands of the people of Israel (Joshua 7).

This verse and this chapter are similar to the following two positions:

1- After the people grumbled about the issue of spies (Chapters 13, 14), then (Chapter 15) came to announce when you come to the land.

2- Peter, after denying Christ, Christ says to him, "Feed my sheep" (return to him the responsibility of spiritual caring degree for Christ's flock).

God, after His wrath on them because of the grumbling about the matter of Korah, brings them back to care here. And they bear the guilt if they fail to educate the people, but if they teach the people and warn them, and then the people err of their own will, they are innocent (Ezekiel 3).

(Verse 2): **Also bring with you your brethren of the tribe of Levi, the tribe of your father, that they may be joined with you and serve you while you and your sons are with you before the tabernacle of witness.**

that they may be joined with you: The word Levi, which means to be attached (Genesis 29: 34), is the same verb that Leah used when she gave him the name Levi. The meaning is that they all work in harmony and coordination with the priests and the high priest.

(Verse 3): **They shall attend to your needs and all the needs of the tabernacle; but they shall not come near the articles of the sanctuary and the altar, lest they die—they and you also.**

Priests alone have this right (each has his service and role).

They shall attend to your needs: This means attending to your personal needs and the needs of the tabernacle.

lest they die—they and you also: They would die if they transgressed and approached, and the priests would die if they were the ones who allowed them to approach or were negligent and did not warn them. Here we see the interpretation of **you shall bear the iniquity associated with your priesthood** (Numbers 18:1)

(Verse 4): **They shall be joined with you and attend to the needs of the tabernacle of meeting, for all the work of the tabernacle; but an outsider shall not come near you.**

Outsider: Each one outside the tribe of Levi (each one has his own service and role).

(Verses 5-6): **And you shall attend to the duties of the sanctuary and the duties of the altar, that there may be no more wrath on the children of Israel. 6 Behold, I Myself have taken your brethren the Levites from among the children of Israel; they are a gift to you, given by the Lord, to do the work of the tabernacle of meeting.**

(Verse 7): **Therefore you and your sons with you shall attend to your priesthood for everything at the altar and behind the veil; and you shall serve. I give your priesthood to you as a gift for service, but the outsider who comes near shall be put to death."**

I give your priesthood to you as a gift: Priesthood is a gift from God and an honourable blessing. Why is it a gift from God? Imagine the state of the people if there were no priesthood: It is known to them that any sin deserves death, "You shall therefore keep My statutes and My judgments, which if a man does, he shall live by them: I am the Lord" (Leviticus 18: 5) - so what would be the state of man if he sinned? - **This sinner would live in a state of terror and despair for fear of death.** The priest's job is to offer sacrifices to appease God so that God may forgive him. Here, we find hope for the sinner, so he does not despair but goes to the priest and offers a sacrifice; his sin is forgiven, and he returns home in peace. This is the job of the Christian priest - offering the Eucharistic sacrifice that is given for the forgiveness of sins and eternal life for all who partake of Him. Therefore, Aaron's blood sacrifices were considered a symbol of the sacrifice of Christ.

Approaching the sanctuaries was a cause for the death of those who approached. That is why Uzzah died when he touched the ark of the covenant of the Lord (2 Samuel 6: 6-7). The mystery of holiness is due to God's dwelling in the tabernacle and then the temple. But when God was angry with His people because of their idolatry, he left the temple (Ezekiel 8-11). Thus, the temple was only a pile of stones and wood, so the Babylonians entered it and destroyed it in 586 BC. The role of the Levites was to prevent the people from approaching (verses 21-24 of this chapter).

Verses 8-20 are the share of the priests, and verse 21 - the end is the share of the Levites.

(Verse 8): **And the Lord spoke to Aaron: "Here, I Myself have also given you charge of My heave offerings, all the holy gifts of the children of Israel; I have given them as a portion to you and your sons, as an ordinance forever.**

For the priests and Levites to devote themselves to serving the Lord, the Lord declares that he is committed to providing for them and is responsible for managing their material affairs so that they can devote themselves to service. He devoted the tithes and firstfruits for the people, and assigned them to the priests and the Levites. **I Myself have also given you charge of My heave offerings** = that is, I entrusted it to you to be your possession. The heave offerings are the part or parts of the offering or sacrifice that is lifted (taken) aside to be for God or the priests. And the fact that it is presented to God the Most High who is in the heavens, it is said that what is presented to God is a heave offering to God or offering up, and it is also said about what is presented to God that it is an ascent or an elevation. And its example is the high leg and the echoing breast of the peace offering. It is mentioned that the portion that is given to the priests is considered as being given to the Lord himself.

all the holy gifts of the children of Israel: like the vows and the first-fruits.

I have given them as a portion to you and your sons: That is, I give you all these as a right, a reward, or compensation for the service of the priesthood, which was given to you by the holy anointing with the Holy anointing oil.

as an ordinance forever: That is, as long as the Levitical priesthood exists. It is also a prophecy about the Christian priesthood and the continuation of the anointing and the promise to priests in Christianity, God gives them these shares because they do not work to earn a living, but their work is service.

Contemplation: In verse 8 he says, "**I Myself have also given you charge of My heave offerings**" But how do they guard God's gifts, even though they eat and consume them?! That is, only the priests eat of it, while they are in purity, and they eat it in a holy place (Leviticus 6: 25). This is the role of the Coptic priest, to give the body and blood of Christ only to those who deserve to receive it.

(Verse 9): **This shall be yours of the most holy things reserved from the fire: every offering of theirs, every grain offering and every sin offering and every trespass offering which they render to Me, shall be most holy for you and your sons.**

most holy things reserved from the fire: The things that come to you are considered holy, that is, utterly holy, because the sacrifice was presented to God. What is offered to God is presented to the altar to be burned on the altar's fire. And God sufficed with the fat of the sacrifices of sin and transgression to be burned on the altar of burnt offering (Leviticus 4-7). The rest of the sacrifice goes to the priest who offered it to eat it. As if what the priest takes is taken from the fire.

every offering of theirs: The sacrifices and all their offerings = food and drink offerings.

(Verse 10): **In a most holy place you shall eat it; every male shall eat it. It shall be holy to you.**

In a most holy place you shall eat it: That is, in the tent. The pure clean place.

We find that God in (verse 9) gave the priest the trespass and sin offerings as a reward in return for his priestly service. But God requires that he eat it in the Holy of Holies, that is, inside the tent. So does the priest eat all the sacrifice (if it was a lamb for example) inside the tent? And why eat it in the Holy of Holies?

1. The sinner would bring his sacrifice in front of the priest and hold the horns of the sacrifice and confess his sins before the priest.
2. By this, the sins of the confessor are transferred to the innocent sacrifice, as the Holy Christ bore our sins while He was without sin.
3. The sacrifice is slain and the priest performs the obligatory rites (Leviticus).

4. The priest who offered the sacrifice ate a part of it in the tent, declaring that the sin of the sinner had ended and was swallowed up = forgiven. This symbolizes the intercession of Christ, the bearer of our sins. The priest here symbolized Christ, who bore our sins and died with them on the cross, so He killed them with His death; sins died with the death of Christ, and this meant that they were forgiven. This sinner who offered the sacrifice would return home in peace because the priest ate part of the sacrifice as a sign of forgiveness of sin. The priest would not eat meat that still bore sin.

5. The act of forgiving sins is a holy act, as it was accomplished by the death of Christ on the cross, so the priest eats the meat of the sacrifice in a holy place.

6. The rest of the meat goes to the priest's house to be eaten by his family.

7. The book in Leviticus did not explicitly mention that the priest's family eat the meat of the sacrifice.. Why? If we understand that the sacrifice became bearer of the confessor's sin, and that the priest's eating of it indicates the intercession of Christ and His forgiveness of sin (the priest here symbolizes Christ), then it is not correct to say that anyone other than the priest who symbolizes Christ eats from the meat of the sacrifice, otherwise, there will be someone other than Christ interceding for us and bearing our sins.

8. Then, in the book of Numbers, we find that the inspiration announces something new. So we find that the meat of the sacrifices and the wave offerings is eaten by the priest and his sons and daughters (verse 11). But we see that males are allowed to eat from it = every male eats it: (a) The male refers to Christ, the bridegroom of the church, and the female refers to the church, the bride of Christ (Isaiah 50: 1 + Jeremiah 3: 8 + Song of Solomon 4: 8-12 + John 3: 29 + Revelation 21: 2 + Revelation 21: 9). (b) As long as eating indicates the forgiveness of sin, this indicates the love of Christ, the Bridegroom of the Church, for His bride, and His death for her to intercede for her. (c) This may indicate that the woman was the cause of the man's sin. This is the same as stipulated in the law of the mother woman. If she gives birth to a boy, she will be unclean for a week, and if she gives birth to a girl, she will be unclean for two weeks. This was the same thought of St. Paul the Apostle when he said, "And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived, fell into transgression" (1 Timothy 2: 14). This explains that the cause of the stumbling has a greater penalty. Placing differences between a man and a woman is a declaration that whoever causes a stumbling will have a greater punishment (Matthew 18: 6).

(Verse 11): **"This also is yours: the heave offering of their gift, with all the wave offerings of the children of Israel; I have given them to you, and your sons and daughters with you, as an ordinance forever. Everyone who is clean in your house may eat it.**

with all the wave offerings: The parts that were waved before the Lord like the leg and the waving breast. These are eaten by sons and daughters. As for the meat of sin offerings and trespass offerings, the priest alone eats a part of it in the Holy of Holies, and allows the males to eat of it (verse 10). The girls do not eat it.

(Verses 12-18): **"All the best of the oil, all the best of the new wine and the grain, their firstfruits which they offer to the Lord, I have given them to you. 13 Whatever first ripe fruit is in their land, which they bring to the Lord, shall be yours. Everyone who is clean in your house may eat it. 14 "Every devoted thing in Israel shall be yours. 15 "Everything that first opens the womb of all flesh, which they bring to the Lord, whether man or beast, shall be yours; nevertheless the firstborn of man you shall surely redeem, and the firstborn of unclean animals you shall redeem. 16 And those redeemed of the devoted things you shall redeem when one month old, according to your valuation, for five shekels of silver, according to the shekel of the sanctuary, which is twenty gerahs. 17 But the firstborn of a cow, the firstborn of a sheep, or the firstborn of a goat you shall not redeem; they are holy. You shall sprinkle their blood on the altar, and burn their fat as an offering made by fire for a sweet aroma to the Lord. 18 And their flesh shall be yours, just as the wave breast and the right thigh are yours.**

God gives them the firstfruits of everything, and everything that is **devoted**, such as the tithe (**devoted**, that is, it is assigned (devoted) to God, and it is not permissible for a person to touch it). And every firstborn they take his ransom if it was an unclean animal (such as a donkey), they take and ransom it, that is, they take money (silver) instead. **the firstborn of man you shall surely redeem** = the firstborn of man who is also for God. The priests take money instead (Numbers 3: 13, 44-51). But some vowed their son to serve God, as the mother of the prophet Samuel did.

But if it is a pure animal, it is slaughtered, and its fat is offered on the altar, and its blood is sprinkled (this is the portion of God himself, and the meat is for the priests, just as the leg of the sacrifice and the breast of the waving are given to them. Let us note that God gave great honour to the priesthood and many material gifts, but He placed on them a great responsibility. They should thank God for His grace and not be arrogant. But rather, they fear responsibility, and just as the priests are satisfied with their service (the meat of sacrifices), thus every servant is spiritually satisfied with his service. As Solomon said in Proverbs "And he who waters will also be watered himself."

(Verse 19): **"All the heave offerings of the holy things, which the children of Israel offer to the Lord, I have given to you and your sons and daughters with you as an ordinance forever; it is a covenant of salt forever before the Lord with you and your descendants with you."**

it is a covenant of salt forever: Salt is placed on the thing so as not to spoil. So the meaning is that these blessings of God are irreversible. It is a covenant that does not break, a close covenant. (Leviticus 2: 3 + 2 Chronicles 13: 5).

In Christianity, all Christians are priests in the general sense, and God is our portion and committed to our lives and expenses.

(Verse 20): **Then the Lord said to Aaron: "You shall have no inheritance in their land, nor shall you have any portion among them; I am your portion and your inheritance among the children of Israel.**

I am your portion and your inheritance: In the New Testament, the priests were called clergy, which is a Greek word that means portion. The Lord is their portion, and they are the portion of the Lord. It was sufficient for God to mention this phrase, and if the Lord was my portion, then I possessed everything. But because the people were in their spiritual childhood, God made this phrase the last, and it came after he had enumerated all the material gifts for them so they might be reassured.

(Verses 21-24): **"Behold, I have given the children of Levi all the tithes in Israel as an inheritance in return for the work which they perform, the work of the tabernacle of meeting. 22 Hereafter the children of Israel shall not come near the tabernacle of meeting, lest they bear sin and die. 23 But the Levites shall perform the work of the tabernacle of meeting, and they shall bear their iniquity; it shall be a statute forever, throughout your generations, that among the children of Israel they shall have no inheritance. 24 For the tithes of the children of Israel, which they offer up as a heave offering to the Lord, I have given to the Levites as an inheritance; therefore I have said to them, 'Among the children of Israel they shall have no inheritance.'"**

The Levites take tithes. And the people **which they offer up as a heave offering** = that is, it is raised from the crop to the account of the Lord. In (verse 22) a warning to the people not to approach lest they die, and this verse here means that this is the duty of the Levites to prevent the people from approaching, and this is their work that God gives them reward for it.

Note that God gave each tribe a share of the land as their possession, and none of the people were allowed to approach the tabernacle of meeting. He gave the Levites to come near the tabernacle and guard it, but they did not possess any portion of the land. Whoever violates will be punished. The Levites carry sin in two cases:- 1) If they were negligent and let the people approach the tabernacle. 2) That they own property in the land = **and they shall bear their iniquity** = So, after God says to them, "**I am your portion and your inheritance**" (verse 20), do they desire a share in the land?

(Verse 25): **Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying,**

(Verse 26): **"Speak thus to the Levites, and say to them: 'When you take from the children of Israel the tithes which I have given you from them as your inheritance, then you shall offer up a heave offering of it to the Lord, a tenth of the tithe.**

The Levites also give their tithes to the Lord, and it goes to the priests (verse 28) **to Aaron the priest.**

(Verse 27): **And your heave offering shall be reckoned to you as though it were the grain of the threshing floor and as the fullness of the winepress.**

The tithe that the Levites offer to the priests, the Lord counts for them as the tithe of the wheat that the people offer from the threshing floor, and as the perfect and good wine that the people offer from their winepress.

Although the Levites did not sow and did not press, the Lord considers what came to them from the tithe of the people as if they toiled in it, because their toil is their service. **as the fullness of the winepress** = filling the vessel with what fills it and filling the thing is its completeness and fullness. Therefore, the ram that was slaughtered in the ordination of Aaron and his sons was called "the ram of filling" or "the ram of consecration" because, by it, they were consecrated and filled with the grace of the priesthood. They became God's property completely. The meaning here is that the tithe offered by the Levites has the same position and status as the tithe the people offer from their winepress and give to the Levites.

There is another meaning. All our material goods belong to God who gave them to us, but He asks for one-tenth of it for Himself, and we keep the nine-tenths for ourselves. The yield of the field is for God. God gave it and asks for a tenth of it for Himself, and He gave this tenth to the Levites. The Levites get the property of God where He asks one-tenth for Himself and the Levite keeps the nine-tenths to himself. He gives this tenth to God, which God gives to the priests.

(Verses 28-29): **Thus you shall also offer a heave offering to the Lord from all your tithes which you receive from the children of Israel, and you shall give the Lord's heave offering from it to Aaron the priest. 29 Of all your gifts you shall offer up every heave offering due to the Lord, from all the best of them, the consecrated part of them.'**

the consecrated part of them: The word **consecrated** here comes in other translations as **fatty** which means the best of the good things you have. This giving was considered a holy fat because it is dedicated to the Lord on the one hand, and it is presented to the priests as one of their rights. But the expression of **the consecrated part** indicates that what we give to the Lord of tithes or first fruits... It must be from the best of what we have.

(Verse 30): **Therefore you shall say to them: 'When you have lifted up the best of it, then the rest shall be accounted to the Levites as the produce of the threshing floor and as the produce of the winepress.**

be accounted to the Levites as the produce of the threshing floor and as the produce of the winepress: That is, you shall have a portion after you have taken out of it, the portion of the Lord.

(Verse 31): **You may eat it in any place, you and your households, for it is your reward for your work in the tabernacle of meeting.**

The Levites ate from it anywhere.

(Verse 32): **And you shall bear no sin because of it, when you have lifted up the best of it. But you shall not profane the holy gifts of the children of Israel, lest you die."**

And you shall bear no sin because of it, when you have lifted up the best of it: If you give the best fat as a tithe of your gifts to the priests, you will be innocent before God, and if you do not, it is a sin.

But you shall not profane the holy gifts of the children of Israel, lest you die: The holy gifts are all that is the right of the Lord from what the people offer, whether obligatory or voluntary. They are holy because they have been assigned for him. And each of these holy gifts has a way to manage with them (Leviticus 22), and whoever acts in a wrong way profane it. For example, if the Levites do not pay their tithes to the priests, they will profane the holy gifts of the children of Israel that the children of Israel gave them. And whoever profaned the holy gifts of God has his punishment from God, and here is the Levite who did not pay his tithes.

Note:

This is the system that God put in place to support His servants, a system that preserves the dignity of His servants. For the people would not feel that they are the ones who give the wages of the Levites, but rather the people pay to the Lord, and the Lord gives to His servants. Also, the Levites do not feel that they are giving to the priests, but they give to the Lord, and the Lord gives to the priests.

Commentary on the chapter

God was dealing with the people of the Old Testament, even the priests of the Old Testament and the Levites, as children spiritually. Children are happy with the tangible things they play with.

Here, God wants to explain the concept of dedication: that the priests and Levites are dedicated to Him, they serve Him, and He provides for them. They do not own land or do any work to earn a living, and God is responsible for providing for them. And God says to them, **"I am your portion and your inheritance among the children of Israel."** And because they would not understand the magnitude of this promise, God promised them what they would understand, which is material things. So, God gave them the firstfruits, the tithes, and a lot of the meat of the sacrifices to reassure them that they would be satisfied and not hungry. These material promises were before God said to them, **"I am your portion and your inheritance among the children of Israel."** As for the bride of the Song of Songs, she had entered into a relationship of love and there is trust in love, so she did not pay attention to any material gifts. Rather, she said, "I am my beloved's, And my beloved is mine." (Song of Solomon 6: 3). Thus, God's

promises to His people in the Old Testament and the blessings of the Old Testament were material and tangible blessings – for example: increased lifespan / inheritance of the land / many children etc.

But we find that there are those whose thoughts have risen and ascended to understand that there are spiritual blessings that satisfy the soul:

*“And there is none upon earth that I desire besides You.” (Psalm 73: 25).

*"With Your hand from men, O Lord, From men of the world who have their portion in this life, And whose belly You fill with Your hidden treasure. They are satisfied with children, And leave the rest of their possession for their babes. 15 As for me, I will see Your face in righteousness; I shall be satisfied when I awake in Your likeness." (Whoever awakens from the death of sin will have the image of Christ) (Psalm 17: 14-15).

*"O God, You are my God; Early will I seek You; My soul thirsts for You; My flesh longs for You In a dry and thirsty land Where there is no water. 2 So I have looked for You in the sanctuary, To see Your power and Your glory. 3 Because Your lovingkindness is better than life, My lips shall praise You. 4 Thus I will bless You while I live; I will lift up my hands in Your name. 5 My soul shall be satisfied as with marrow and fatness, And my mouth shall praise You with joyful lips. 6 When I remember You on my bed, I meditate on You in the night watches. 7 Because You have been my help, Therefore in the shadow of Your wings I will rejoice." (Psalm 63: 1-7).

*“He shall see the labor of His soul, and be satisfied. By His knowledge My righteous Servant shall justify many, For He shall bear their iniquities.” (Isaiah 53: 11).

*"Rejoice with Jerusalem, And be glad with her, all you who love her; Rejoice for joy with her, all you who mourn for her; 11 That you may feed and be satisfied With the consolation of her bosom, That you may drink deeply and be delighted With the abundance of her glory." 12 For thus says the Lord: "Behold, I will extend peace to her like a river, And the glory of the Gentiles like a flowing stream. Then you shall feed; On her sides shall you be carried, And be dandled on her knees. 13 As one whom his mother comforts, So I will comfort you; And you shall be comforted in Jerusalem." 14 When you see this, your heart shall rejoice, And your bones shall flourish like grass; The hand of the Lord shall be known to His servants, And His indignation to His enemies." (Isaiah 66: 10-14).

*"I will satiate the soul of the priests with abundance, And My people shall be satisfied with My goodness, says the Lord ." (Jeremiah 31: 14).

Blessings of the New Testament:

There are no promises of material blessings in the New Testament, but rather satiation is spiritual satiation:

*Satiating is in the life of Christ in us “For to me, to live is Christ” (Philippians 1: 21). “I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.” (Galatians 2: 20).

*But Christ taught us not to seek material things. ““Therefore I say to you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink; nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing? 26 Look at the birds of the air, for they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? 27 Which of you by worrying can add one cubit to his stature? 28 “So why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin; 29 and yet I say to you that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. 30 Now if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will He not much more clothe you, O you of little faith? 31 “Therefore do not worry, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ 32 For after all these things the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. 33 But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.” (Matthew 6: 25-33).

*Therefore, Christ taught us to pray, “Give us today our daily bread,” meaning, give us to be satisfied with You, O Lord, today, that is, now, and not wait until tomorrow to be satisfied with You in heaven: for our Lord Jesus is the true bread. “And Jesus said to them, “I am the bread of life. He who comes to Me shall never hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst.” (John 6: 35). And Christ gives a promise to all who overcome that they will be satisfied with Him in heaven: “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes I will give to eat from the tree of life, which is in the midst of the Paradise of God.” (Revelation 2: 7) + “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes I will give some of the hidden manna to eat. ” (Revelation 2: 17).

*And the soul that has tasted satiation in the person of Christ longs to be satiated by complete union with Him as will happen in heaven, so it prays, saying, “Give us today our daily bread (the satiation that will happen in heaven)” (so that we may be satisfied with You, O Lord, today). Therefore, we completely reject the translation (Our bread satiated us).

Note that in the Eucharist we use bread, which the Holy Spirit transforms into the Body of Christ. Why bread? The Lord Jesus Christ says, “Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.” (Matthew 4: 4). Bread is the source of life for the body, and bread gives satisfaction to the body. Thus, the Body of Christ gives life to man, but it is eternal life, unlike material bread. It gives satisfaction through Christ so that a person says, “Whom have I in heaven but You? And there is none upon earth that I desire besides You.” (Psalm 73: 25).

Chapter 19

The ordinance of the red heifer:

This chapter comes after a series of weaknesses of the people of God (fear of the Promised Land - unbelief and grumbling - objection to Moses' leadership - the usurpation of the priesthood...). This shows man's failure even though God had previously said about them "Israel is my firstborn son." This is similar to the appearance of the old man in us, that is, the appearance of our weaknesses and sins that cling to the impurities of this world during the journey of our lives on earth after we obtained sonship by baptism.

And the red heifer is a sin offering. Since the sin offerings and all the sacrifices were mentioned in the Book of Leviticus, it was conceivable that the Book of Leviticus would also mention this ordinance. The ordinance of the red heifer is among the sacrifices, but it is mentioned here in the book of Numbers and after the weaknesses of the people appeared, so that God would announce that there is a cure for my weaknesses that will appear during my life's journey. The journey of forty years in the wilderness represents the life journey of our sojourn on earth.

The complaint of the Levites in (Numbers 17: 13) was that "Whoever even comes near the tabernacle of the Lord must die." And we saw in (Chapter 18) that it is possible to approach during the Levitical priesthood. Here he reveals the need for sanctification, without which no one can see God (Hebrews 12: 14). This red heifer is not for atonement for sins but purification from impurity or holiness. The blood of Christ atones for our sins and cleanses us from our impurities.

What does the word sanctification mean?

"For I am the Lord your God. You shall therefore consecrate yourselves, and you shall be holy; for I am holy. Neither shall you defile yourselves with any creeping thing that creeps on the earth." (Leviticus 11: 44).

It is said about God that He is holy, a word that can only be said about God. And holy in Greek ἅγιος agios.... linguistically, it means A = no, and Gi = earth, and Gios = earthly. So it becomes Agios = the no earthly, meaning the heavenly one who is elevated above the earthly. It corresponds to the saying of St. James about God that "God cannot be tempted by evil" (James 1: 13). While humans are said to be saints. The word refers to one who seeks to occupy himself with the heavenly things, abandoning the concern for the earthly things. The more a person transcends materialism, the higher his holiness becomes. In Hebrew, "sanctify to the Lord" means that this thing or person is dedicated or devoted to the Lord. Thus, the Greek meaning is integrated with the Hebrew, and the holy man is the one who turns away from the impurities of the earth and transcends it, seeking the heavenly things, dedicating himself to God.

St. Paul the Apostle summarized this in (Colossians 3: 1-5): " If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth. For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory. Therefore put to death your members which are on the earth: fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry."

And creeping creatures are like snakes and lizards... They move on their belly and eat from the dust of the earth. The meaning of the verse (Leviticus 11: 44) is that our God and our heavenly Father is holy and transcends the impurities of the earth, so we, His children, should imitate Him and not pursue the lusts of the earth. And the same meaning is found in (Colossians 3:1-5).

Thus, we understand that the ordinance of the red heifer refers to our sanctification whenever we come into contact with the impurity of the earthly matters during the life journey of our sojourn on earth.

We find rituals or ordinances of sacrifices in three places in the Bible, and each of them has a purpose:

1. **The Passover lamb.... Exodus book**, the book of freedom from the bondage of Pharaoh... The blood of Christ gives us freedom from the bondage of Satan.
2. **Burnt offerings and grain offerings/ the sacrifices of sin, iniquity and peace.... Leviticus**, which is the book of holiness.... The blood of Christ atones for our sins and puts us on the first steps of the ladder of holiness. This is what Christ did by offering Himself as a sacrifice. He satisfied the Father's heart with His obedience. While we are in Him, we are counted as obedient. He forgave our sins and gave us His life to walk in righteousness.
3. **The red Heifer ... The Book of Numbers**, which is the journey of wandering in the wilderness until crossing the Jordan River (which refers to our physical death)..... The blood of Christ sanctifies us during the journey of our lives to give us assistance to rise on the ladder of holiness by standing as dead before the impurities of the world, asking for the heavenly things, and this requires our striving.

We cannot approach the dwelling of the Lord or enjoy partnership with Him and persevere in Him except through the sacrifice of the cross and entering into a life of sanctification. In this rite (the red cow), the priest prepares the ashes from burning the heifer, and uses the ashes to prepare the water of sanctification or, as he calls it, the water of impurity because this water purifies from impurity and transfers a person from a state of impurity to a state of holiness.

The ashes of the heifer came from burning it and crushing the products of the fire. A part of it was kept in every city to make the necessary purifications for everyone who was defiled and to make it easier for the people to obtain it. Jewish scholars say that only one red cow was offered in the days of Moses, and they kept its ashes until the days of exile. When they offered another cow, they kept its ashes until the days of Christ (the second cow was offered after returning from exile).

Whether this history or Jewish tradition is true or false, the book does not mention this ordinance of the red heifer except in this place. And this is a reference to Christ, who was offered as a sacrifice once and

for the whole world. Not everyone who erred offered a red heifer, but one red heifer was enough. This is as the book mentions only once that Moses hit the rock, and it brought out water because Christ was crucified once to pour out the spirit on the church.

They used to put a few of these ashes on the water, but it was preserved by them everywhere, and this refers to the sacraments of the church that are preserved and always present, which derive their strength from the one sacrifice of Christ. The red heifer was extremely rare to find, and the Jews used to say that if there were two black or white hair, the heifer was denied. This is an indication that Christ has no equal. It was red because Christ took His body from the earth, and His clothes were red from the blood of Himself and the blood of his enemies. And the red heifer was offered from the congregation's money and not for one person's account, so it is for everyone. But also everyone, all the Jews, presented Him to the cross. The burning of the heifer refers to the psychological and physical pain that Christ endured (Isaiah 63: 1-3). Therefore, it is a sign of Christ who passed through the press of divine wrath alone.

The effects of the Church Sacraments

Baptism: It is death, burial, and then resurrection with Christ (see Romans 6: 1-14).

The Chrism: The indwelling of the Holy Spirit in us, who convicts of sin and helps our weaknesses (John 16: 8 + Romans 8: 26).

Repentance and Confession: It is a decision to change the course of life by dying for the loved sins and confessing them to the priest, and by the prayer of absolution, the Holy Spirit transfers our sins to Christ, who offers Himself as a sacrifice on the altar in the sacrament of the Eucharist.

The Eucharist: Given for the remission of sins and eternal life to those who partake of Him.

The ashes of the red heifer is a reference to the body of Christ who died on the cross. The water in the ordinance of the red heifer is a reference to the Holy Spirit who works to help man, to keep the old person who died in baptism to remain dead or in ashes and does not return to uncleanness again. That is, his body remains buried with Christ during his life's journey on earth as he seeks the heavenly things. Thus, he is sanctified and continues rising on the ladder of holiness, staying away from the impurities of this world and seeking to live a heavenly life.

In fact, the verse that perfectly expresses the work of **the sacrifice of the red heifer** is the one said by St. Paul the Apostle: "For if you live according to the flesh you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live." (Romans 8: 13). His statement, "but if by the Spirit" is symbolically paralleled by **the water** in the Law of the Red Heifer. You put to death the deeds of the body, and this is what we call the life of mortification = that is, we live as dead before sin. This is paralleled by **the ashes** in the Law of the Red Heifer.

But the Holy Spirit does not work alone without the will of man, and this requires man's striving to consider himself dead in front of sin (that is, he considers himself ashes). Striving means forcing ourselves, so we gain life and the kingdom about which the Lord of glory said "suffers violence, and the violent take it by force." (Matthew 11: 12) and the Spirit helps the one who does (Romans 8: 13,26), and the one who does it shows the life of Christ. Let's hear what the Bible says about this:

- "present your bodies a living sacrifice "(Romans 12: 1)
- "reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin "(Romans 6: 11)
- "Therefore put to death your members which are on the earth" (Colossians 3: 5)
- "but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live." (Romans 8: 13)
- "Likewise the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses." (Romans 8: 26)
- "always carrying about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus" (2 Corinthians 4: 10)
- The dying is the acceptance of a person to die with Christ by his own free will and to stand before sin as dead. Then he finds help from the Holy Spirit (water) to keep the old man in him dead and buried with Christ. This began with the baptism (ashes of the red heifer). And therefore, the eternal life of Christ appears in him as he walks in God's righteousness (2 Corinthians 5: 21), and by this, he is sanctified and dedicated to God and becomes clean from the uncleanness of sin.
- In baptism, we die and are buried with Christ, but baptism does not and will not cancel our freedom, for we were created in the image of God free. But after baptism, the person comes into contact with the impurities in the world, and as such, the old person in him is awakened. And to remain in the life of holiness, he must decide to die to the impure pleasures of the world, which we call put to death. Therefore, the decision to put to death is my decision, and then the life of Christ will remain abiding in me, and I say with the Apostle Paul, "I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me" (Galatians 2: 20). The word crucified in this verse is my decision to die voluntarily for the uncleanness of the world. That is why the Apostle Paul says, " But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law. And those who are Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires." (Galatians 5: 22-24). Therefore, the Holy Spirit works and helps those who accept to crucify the passions and desires of their body and stand as a dead before sin and impurity, so the Spirit helps them turn to ashes, which is what is called the work of grace.
- After this introduction, we say that the water of impurity (water + ashes of the red heifer) is for sanctification, meaning that the Holy Spirit (and its symbol is water) helps us to be as dead before the lusts of the world (this is what is symbolized by the ashes of the red heifer) and thus we implement the words of the Apostle Paul "I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me" (Galatians 2: 20). And when we live as dead before sin (Romans 6: 11 + Colossians 3: 5), we are sanctified to God, that is, we are sanctified and consecrated to God. The water refers to the help of the Holy Spirit, and the ashes refer to the act of death in Christ. In Christ now, there are two actions: the act of death of the life of Adam, which He took from the Virgin, and the act of eternal life, which He resurrected from the dead. And now we live by it after baptism, saying with the Apostle Paul, " For to me, to live is Christ" (Philippians 1:

21). The Holy Spirit abides us in the act of death in Christ. Note that the eternal life that Christ rose with, was united with the dead body of Christ, who was dead with the life of Adam.

(Verse 1): **Now the Lord spoke to Moses and Aaron, saying,**

(Verse 2): **"This is the ordinance of the law which the Lord has commanded, saying: 'Speak to the children of Israel, that they bring you a red heifer without blemish, in which there is no defect and on which a yoke has never come.**

a red heifer without blemish: "Who is this who comes from Edom, With dyed garments from Bozrah, This One who is glorious in His apparel, Traveling in the greatness of His strength?— "I who speak in righteousness, mighty to save." 2 Why is Your apparel red, And Your garments like one who treads in the winepress? 3 "I have trodden the winepress alone, And from the peoples no one was with Me. For I have trodden them in My anger, And trampled them in My fury; Their blood is sprinkled upon My garments, And I have stained all My robes." (Isaiah 63: 1-3). This refers to the Lord Christ, whose body was covered with blood, as we saw in these verses from the prophecy of Isaiah.

without blemish: Only Christ was without sin. **on which a yoke has never come:** He did not fall under the yoke of sin, and the Lord Christ said, " Which of you convicts Me of sin?" (John 8: 46). He who is without blemish when burned, does not burn for His own sin, but for the sake of others, as redemption for them. When He was burnt and died, He was carrying the sins of His church. Thus, He put those sins to death.

As for his saying, "**without blemish, in which there is no defect,**" the two words have the same meaning. So why the two words = without blemish, in which there is no defect? The meaning is that Christ is without blemish, without sin inherited from Adam, as He was born of a woman. And in His life, He adhered to the law completely, so He had no sin. This is what Saint Paul the Apostle said, "But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons." (Galatians 4: 4-5). Because He had no sin (original or committed sin), He died for us to redeem us. If He had sin, He would have died for Himself.

Note that the heifer is female, indicating that He took a body of our humanity, which is a complete and natural body. Rather, the church became the body of Christ, " For we are members of His body, [a]of His flesh and of His bones." (Ephesians 5: 30).

(Verse 3): **You shall give it to Eleazar the priest, that he may take it outside the camp, and it shall be slaughtered before him;**

take it outside the camp: Christ was crucified outside Jerusalem. Outside the camp, there are the lepers, as He has become a sin for us (2 Corinthians 5: 21; Hebrews 8: 1-4; 9: 11-24; 10:12).

You shall give it to Eleazar: Why not to Aaron?

- a. Aaron, as a high priest, should not go outside the camp.
- b. In verse 7, whoever offers it becomes unclean until evening. If Aaron did that, he would be temporarily unclean, and his work as a high priest would cease during his uncleanness.
- c. Perhaps this indicated that another priesthood would replace the Aaronic priesthood.
- d. Christ was crucified outside Jerusalem, and at the exact moment he entered the Holy of Holies, and here the rite explains this by Eleazar and the heifer are outside the camp, and Aaron is inside the camp. Christ, as a high priest, is not separated from His Father, nor does He leave His heavens by His divinity. But He was on the cross outside the camp for us, atoning for our sins, and He is in the bosom of His Father to bring us to His righteousness.

and it shall be slaughtered before him: The priests of the Jews, descendants of Aaron, were the ones who presented Christ to the cross, and he was slaughtered before them, and thus they became defiled.

(Verse 4): **and Eleazar the priest shall take some of its blood with his finger, and sprinkle some of its blood seven times directly in front of the tabernacle of meeting.**

Number 7 is the number of completeness. The tent of meeting symbolizes the church. This means that Christ sanctified His Church in complete sanctification. And the number 7 refers to all days of the week, for Christ sanctified His church all days and to the end of the age. John saw Christ as a lamb slain, because His blood still sanctifies His church and makes atonement for her. The effectiveness of the blood does not stop. Rather, this gives hope to the sinner that the blood of Christ and His righteousness is greater than my sin. He cleanses from all sin.

(Verse 5): **Then the heifer shall be burned in his sight: its hide, its flesh, its blood, and its offal shall be burned.**

be burned: Fire is the fire of God's judgment that came down on Christ in my place. He accepted judgment instead of me.

its offal: The leftovers in it. The burning of everything is a sign that the body of Christ was complete and not imaginary.

(Verse 6): **And the priest shall take cedar wood and hyssop and scarlet, and cast them into the midst of the fire burning the heifer.**

cedar wood is the biggest plant, and **hyssop** is the smallest plant. Solomon spoke of trees: "Also he spoke of trees, from the cedar tree of Lebanon even to the hyssop that springs out of the wall" (1 Kings 4: 33). The cross is the rejection of the world in all its glory and pride (cedar). Even to the smallest of it (hyssop). "the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world." And the cedar with its height refers to the heavenly Christ, high and exalted above all, who humbled Himself and became very simple as hyssop. He shed His blood (**scarlet**) to bear our sins on the cross = **burning the heifer**.

As for the scarlet in terms of colour, it refers to sin, "If your sins are like scarlet..." and refers to blood. The blood (scarlet colour) refers to the death of Christ, who died bearing our sins (scarlet), and thus he killed our sins by His death. We find the meaning that our sins were burnt when the scarlet colour was burnt scarlet, we find in the ashes the fire of scarlet. Therefore, scarlet ashes indicate that my sin has been burned.

* Cedar, hyssop, and scarlet were used in the rite of purification of the leper in the same sense.

* Cedar wood may refer to the cross, hyssop for washing (Purge me with hyssop) and scarlet for blood.

* It may indicate that I should burn my pride (cedar) with the smallness of my soul (hyssop) with all the glory, lust and desires of the world (scarlet). The scarlet was the robe of the Jews' kings and the purple of the kings of the nations.

* Cedar, because it ages for a very long time, indicates the permanence of the work of the blood, and because the body of Christ did not see corruption.

(Verses 7-10): **Then the priest shall wash his clothes, he shall bathe in water, and afterward he shall come into the camp; the priest shall be unclean until evening. 8 And the one who burns it shall wash his clothes in water, bathe in water, and shall be unclean until evening. 9 Then a man who is clean shall gather up the ashes of the heifer, and store them outside the camp in a clean place; and they shall be kept for the congregation of the children of Israel for the water of purification; it is for purifying from sin. 10 And the one who gathers the ashes of the heifer shall wash his clothes, and be unclean until evening. It shall be a statute forever to the children of Israel and to the stranger who dwells among them.**

Whoever approaches it is defiled, but its ashes is sanctified (the priest - who burned it and who collected its ashes) are defiled. For everyone who approaches the cross feels his uncleanness, and his need for purification. This is what Saint Paul the Apostle felt when he came very close to Christ and felt the amazing love of Christ, saying, "For the love of Christ compels us," (2 Corinthians 5: 14). As a result of his closeness to Christ, he felt that he was more sinful than all people, "This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief." (1 Timothy 1: 15). As for the Jews, they declared, through their interpretations, that they were unable to understand

this ordinance, and they said that even Solomon could not explain it. How can those who offer this sacrifice become defiled while it is a purification for the one who is defiled:

1. Christ became a sin for us to sanctify us. He did not sin but became the bearer of our sins. The strange thing is that Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea, when they shrouded Christ, and according to this law, were defiled when they came into contact with a dead person. According to (verse 22), Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea remained unclean until evening, until they were cleansed with water!!! That is why the Apostle Paul said that "For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him." (2 Corinthians 5: 21). According to this law mentioned here + what came in the matter of uncleanness from contact with the dead (Numbers 19: 11-22), then Nicodemus was defiled when he came into contact with the dead body of Christ, but contact with the body of Christ sanctifies. This is the explanation for what Solomon could not explain, and it was impossible for anyone to understand this mystery before the cross of Christ.
2. Christ's crucifixion defiled the Jews, but their action was to purify humanity with the blood of Christ.
3. The sacrifice of Christ bore the sins of the whole world, and it is the secret of purifying the Jews and nations = Notice what Saint Paul the Apostle said about Christ: "For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him." (2 Corinthians 5: 21). And also: "Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us (for it is written, "Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree") (Galatians 3: 13). The Apostle says here that Christ became sin, so he bore our sins and became a curse when he was crucified on the cross. But it was to redeem us from the curse of the law and sanctify us = so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.
4. **the stranger** = that is, for every believer.

How much you endured for us, O Lord!!

(Verses 11-19): **'He who touches the dead body of anyone shall be unclean seven days. 12 He shall purify himself with the water on the third day and on the seventh day; then he will be clean. But if he does not purify himself on the third day and on the seventh day, he will not be clean. 13 Whoever touches the body of anyone who has died, and does not purify himself, defiles the tabernacle of the Lord. That person shall be cut off from Israel. He shall be unclean, because the water of purification was not sprinkled on him; his uncleanness is still on him. 14 'This is the law when a man dies in a tent: All who come into the tent and all who are in the tent shall be unclean seven days; 15 and every open vessel, which has no cover fastened on it, is unclean. 16 Whoever in the open field touches one who is slain by a sword or who has died, or a bone of a man, or a grave, shall be unclean seven days. 17 'And for an unclean person they shall take some of the ashes of the heifer burnt for purification from sin, and running water shall be put on them in a vessel. 18 A clean person shall take hyssop and dip it in the water, sprinkle it on the tent, on all the vessels, on the persons who were there, or on the one**

who touched a bone, the slain, the dead, or a grave. 19 The clean person shall sprinkle the unclean on the third day and on the seventh day; and on the seventh day he shall purify himself, wash his clothes, and bathe in water; and at evening he shall be clean.

Review the introduction to this chapter to see that purification occurs if the sinner decides to mortify (become ashes), that is, to die with Christ and to die of sin by his own will. And whoever does, the Holy Spirit (whose symbol is water) helps him to implement it.

He who touches the dead body: God engraves in the minds and consciences of His people that sin is equal to death.

He shall purify himself with the water on the third day = This refers to the water of impurity (verses 9, 10) in His statement, **“to the children of Israel and to the stranger who dwells among them..”** That is, the water of impurity is for the purification of whoever comes into contact with sin (and its symbol here is **He who touches the dead body**).

The death of the body in the Old Testament was a symbol of the sin that kills the soul. Sin resulted in death. Sin is a separation from the Holy God, and God is life. Therefore, if someone touches a dead person, he becomes unclean. He becomes unclean for seven days, a symbol of not being cleansed from sin all the days of our sojourning unless these ashes and water interfere. Purification is done on the third day with impurity water containing ash. The meaning is that our purification is accomplished by the water of baptism, which took its strength from the sacrifice of Christ, and by the resurrection with Christ (the third day). Baptism is death with Christ, and this gives forgiveness of sins. It is also a resurrection with Christ and union with Him, so that we will have His life and walk in His righteousness.

After that, during our life journey on earth, we sin (as if we come into contact with death again). Whoever accepts God’s call to repent and accepts the life of mortification, that is, lives as dead to sin (this is analogous to the dust or ashes of the red heifer), and this means accepting to live as dead with Christ = that is, remaining in the act of death that is in Christ, for Christ died with the life of Adam. Then he rose to eternal life (and this is the act of life in Christ. (And whoever does so will rise from the death of sin. And the resurrection is expressed by the number 3 = **on the third day**. And whoever accepts the resurrection from the death of sin, accepting the life of mortification, the Holy Spirit (water) will help him, and he will remain pure for the rest of his life after that as long as he accepts the life of mortification = **and on the seventh day he shall purify himself**. And whoever is not purified on the third day (i.e., he refuses to rise from the death of sin) will not be purified on the seventh day, i.e. even after his life on earth ends. And whoever is purified on the third day, the effectiveness of the purification will remain for the rest of his life and until he passes over to the other life. Rather, whoever is not purified, **That person shall be cut off from Israel** (he does not belong to the church, the bride of Christ).

Note that he continues to be pure, the one who is sanctified on the eighth day, i.e. the Day of Resurrection, for its effectiveness is eternal. Whoever begins his purification with the first resurrection (the third day) will complete his purification with the second resurrection (the eighth day). According to the Jewish rite, the purification rite ends at the end of the seventh day, which is considered the

beginning of the eighth day. During the period of our life (the seven days, everyone touching the dead needs to be cleansed, which is done with purification water).

(Verses 14-15): **This is the law when a man dies in a tent: All who come into the tent and all who are in the tent shall be unclean seven days; 15 and every open vessel, which has no cover fastened on it, is unclean.**

We see the ugliness of sin, for death defiles everyone who enters the tent. Rather, every open vessel is defiled. This has a healthy medical concept, for the dead person may be sick with an infectious disease, and whoever touches him or the used utensils must be purified. The open vessels also refer to the open senses, and this defiles the body if it is open to the sins of the world. A dead person inside a tent refers to a sinful person spreading his poison. The open vessel refers to a person who opened his senses to the words and principles of this dead sinner, and he became impure. That is why he needs purification and sanctification. "Set a guard, O Lord, over my mouth; Keep watch over the door of my lips. Do not incline my heart to any evil thing, To practice wicked works."

Let's see multiple cases of death:

a. Whoever dies inside a tent... This indicates a hidden infiltrated disease that leads to spiritual weakness, sluggishness and old age, resulting from neglect and spiritual apathy (little foxes). The tent in which a group of people live, and if there is an evil sinner among them (referring here to the dead), then this evil one (the dead) spreads sin among them, and the righteous learn sin from the wicked.

b. Whoever is killed with a sword in the desert... represents the one who was violently attacked by sin and, in moments, brought him down while he was lively and active. The one in the desert is alone in the midst of the devastation of this world, isolated from the Church that supports and protects him with her teachings and sacraments. The desert has no water, "When an unclean spirit goes out of a man, he goes through dry places, seeking rest, and finds none." (Matthew 12: 43) (water is a reference to the Holy Spirit, and Satan goes to these places where there is no water). The meaning for this man in the desert becomes that he is not filled with the Spirit, so he is without rebuke or comfort. He is alone and fought by Satan in the wilderness. And he is killed by the sword, that is, he is violently attacked by sin, and this is the same meaning of the wise Solomon's saying: "Two are better than one, Because they have a good reward for their labor. 10 For if they fall, one will lift up his companion. But woe to him who is alone when he falls, For he has no one to help him up." (Ecclesiastes 4: 9,10).

c. The dry bones... These refer to the one who lived in sin for a long time until he became sick.

(Verse 17): **'And for an unclean person they shall take some of the ashes of the heifer burnt for purification from sin, and running water shall be put on them in a vessel.**

Purification is done with **water + ashes**. Water refers to the work of the Holy Spirit during the journey of life to kill the old man = ashes if the baptized believer chooses the life of mortification. This is what St. Paul the Apostle says about it: "renewing of the Holy Spirit." "but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit," (Titus 3: 5). And **running water** = is an indication of the continuous work of the Holy Spirit with the baptized believer who is anointed with chrism oil to renew his nature. The Holy Spirit also works to help him in the decision of putting himself to death, that is, his striving to stand before the sins of the world and its impurities as dead. This is just as the running water in the river sweeps away and cleans the river of the dirt in it, so it is cleaned and purified. Thus, this is what the Holy Spirit does in the human heart: "Create in me a clean heart, O God, And renew a steadfast spirit within me." (Psalm 51: 10). The Jews used to call the running water living water (see John 4: 10).

For this work of the Holy Spirit in the believer, He abides him in Christ and purifies him throughout his life's journey from the impurities of the world that seep into him. We say about the Holy Spirit, the life-giving Spirit. The Spirit always works to help man to die and resurrect with Christ, death by the old man and life by the life of Christ, which we took in union with Christ in baptism. The ashes indicate the death of Christ on the cross. The cross is what gave water the power to rebirth, that is, to die with Christ and be born with a body united with Christ, the Son of God. But the ashes refer to something else, which is a decision to mortify, that is, to die for the sins of the world. It is an act of repentance from the world with its pride (cedar) and glory (scarlet) and its weaknesses (hyssop). Baptism is the beginning and completion of continuous repentance. And the life of repentance is a joint action with God: "Restore me, and I will return." God calls and helps, and I must respond (Jeremiah 31:18). Saint Paul the Apostle explains this when he says, "For if you live according to the flesh you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live." (Romans 8: 13).

And faith is the hyssop with which we cleanse our consciences. Whoever confesses and repents must believe that his sin has been forgiven. Sin itself is not fatal, for whoever touches a dead person, that soul is not cut off from its people. But rather whoever neglects purification, that is, whoever refuses repentance, that soul is cut off from its people (verse 12) because he has become an offender against God and the law. This law gives hope to everyone who has touched a dead person (sinned) that there is a way to sanctification.

All this explains the idea of the effects of the red heifer

(Verse 18): **A clean person shall take hyssop and dip it in the water, sprinkle it on the tent, on all the vessels, on the persons who were there, or on the one who touched a bone, the slain, the dead, or a grave.**

Only one pure man, Christ, who cleansed us from our sins. This verse is a warning to every servant to live pure.

Note:

Death no longer has its impurity in the New Testament, for it has been swallowed up, and its sting has gone (1 Corinthians 15: 55).

(Verses 20-21): **'But the man who is unclean and does not purify himself, that person shall be cut off from among the assembly, because he has defiled the sanctuary of the Lord. The water of purification has not been sprinkled on him; he is unclean. 21 It shall be a perpetual statute for them. He who sprinkles the water of purification shall wash his clothes; and he who touches the water of purification shall be unclean until evening.**

Whoever approaches the cross and realizes the greatness of the amazing price that Christ paid because of our sins realizes how unclean he was when he committed the sin and that he needs purification.

(Verse 22): **Whatever the unclean person touches shall be unclean; and the person who touches it shall be unclean until evening."**

Whatever the unclean person touches shall be unclean: That is, anything the unclean person (because of a dead person) touches becomes unclean. And if **the person who touches it shall be unclean until evening.** His saying **until evening** refers to the end of the evening of the seventh day in which we live now (the seventh day began with the fall of Adam and ends with the coming of Christ on the eighth day to begin the happy eternity, and in the middle of the seventh day the redemption and forgiveness of sins were completed). Thus, we understand that all the sinners of the Old Testament were not justified and purified except after the coming of Christ, the Sun of Righteousness, and the work of redemption, and to begin the morning of the seventh day. As for before the cross and redemption, we as humans were living in sin on the night of the seventh day, the night of sin. And forgiveness of sins did not happen except by the blood of Christ, which happened on the morning of the seventh day = therefore whoever sinned before the morning of the seventh day was without forgiveness = **the person who touches it shall be unclean until evening.**

Now that the book has explained all the sacrifices let us see how:

The sacrifices refer to the work of the cross

The Passover Lamb: The blood of Christ liberates from the bondage of Satan and saves the firstborn from death [We in Christ have become the firstborn of the Church (Hebrews 12: 23)].

The burnt offering: refers to complete obedience, and we, who are abiding in Christ, are considered perfect and blameless (Ephesians 1: 3 + Colossians 1: 28). Therefore, in the sacrifice of the burnt offering, God smelled sweet aroma (Leviticus 1: 9) because He saw in the sacrifice of Christ that His children would become completely obedient. Why is God pleased with the obedience of man?

First: Because obedience is a sign of man's love and trust in God, so he obeys His commandments.

Second: Because whoever obeys God's commandments will be saved. God's commandments aim to liberate man from Satan's bondage and thus salvation for himself. It was said about Christ that He became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross. (Philippians 2: 8). God considers who is in Christ to be perfect.

Third: In the baptism of Christ, the Father said, " This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." The Father rejoiced in our return in Christ as sons who were lost.

Grain offering: We live in righteousness (the white color of flour) by the life of Christ in us (2 Corinthians 5: 21 + Galatians 2: 20 + Philippians 1: 21).

Sin Offering: The blood of Christ cleanses us from original sin.

Trespass Offering: The blood of Christ cleanses us from our sins resulting from the corruption of our nature because of the original sin with which we were born: "in sin my mother conceived me"

Peace Offering: It refers to the Eucharist, which is itself the sacrifice of the cross and an extension of it.

The Red heifer: The Holy Spirit sanctifies us during the sojourn of our lives on earth by giving us a helping hand to die from the lusts of the body, rather from the world, seeking the heavenly matters.

The ram of Consecration: This is for the priests, and with this sacrifice, God would fill them to priest for Him, and God would fill them with grace to serve and teach the people. "For the lips of a priest should keep knowledge, And people should seek the law from his mouth" (Malachi 2: 7), and this is what happens with the Christian priest.

Note that the law of the ram of consecration came in chapter 29 of the Book of Exodus = the book of liberation from the bondage of Pharaoh, and Pharaoh is a symbol of Satan and the sin that enslaved man. This is because God fills the priest to perform his role in the service of the sacraments and in teaching, and this helps the people to be freed from their sins.

Chapter 20

This chapter begins the fortieth year's events, which are as long as the first year.

At the beginning of their journey, they did not find water, and so at the end of their journey. For this world lacks many things, and nothing but the mercies of God can satisfy us in it.

Among the important events of this chapter is the death of Mary and Aaron, and the deprivation of Moses, the Great, from entering the Promised Land. The earthly Canaan was not the best that God promised to those who loved him, as evidenced by depriving the best believers of it, namely Moses, Aaron and Mary. Mary was a great prophetess and led the people in praise as Moses led the people with his rod and Aaron led them with his priesthood. See (Exodus 15: 20 + Micah 6: 4). But these saints were symbols of the Old Testament, so Moses was a symbol of the law (according to the law, any sin, no matter how simple or out of ignorance, prevents life (Leviticus 18: 5) = and striking the rock in this chapter is a sin).

Aaron is a symbol of the Levitical priesthood, and Mary is a symbol of the Old Testament prophets. All of these do not enter without the grace of Christ. Therefore, the one who made the people enter the promised land was Joshua, a symbol of Jesus. (Joshua and Jesus, both are the same name, Joshua is the Hebrew, and Jesus is the Greek pronunciation).

(Verse 1): **Then the children of Israel, the whole congregation, came into the Wilderness of Zin in the first month, and the people stayed in Kadesh; and Miriam died there and was buried there.**

in Kadesh: The judgment was passed on the people while they were in Kadesh, wandering 40 years in the wilderness (Numbers 13: 26), and here we find that they came to Kadesh as well, so that their wandering journey ended as it had begun. We do not hear that Moses wept for Mary or Aaron, and this is not because he did not actually weep, for even Christ wept over the tomb of Lazarus. But Moses does not record his personal feelings towards his family, as his first concern is the glory of God. That is why he used to record his outcry against the people if they sinned against God so that they would repent and glorify God. In this Moses resembled Jesus when he wept for the daughters of Jerusalem.

Mary is older than Moses, and her age was about 130 years when she died, and she was the one who followed Moses while he was in the ark (basket).

(Verses 2-13): **Now there was no water for the congregation; so they gathered together against Moses and Aaron. 3 And the people contended with Moses and spoke, saying: "If only we had died when our brethren died before the Lord! 4 Why have you brought up the assembly of the Lord into this wilderness, that we and our animals should die here? 5 And why have you made us come up out of**

Egypt, to bring us to this evil place? It is not a place of grain or figs or vines or pomegranates; nor is there any water to drink." 6 So Moses and Aaron went from the presence of the assembly to the door of the tabernacle of meeting, and they fell on their faces. And the glory of the Lord appeared to them. 7 Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, 8 "Take the rod; you and your brother Aaron gather the congregation together. Speak to the rock before their eyes, and it will yield its water; thus you shall bring water for them out of the rock, and give drink to the congregation and their animals." 9 So Moses took the rod from before the Lord as He commanded him. 10 And Moses and Aaron gathered the assembly together before the rock; and he said to them, "Hear now, you rebels! Must we bring water for you out of this rock?" 11 Then Moses lifted his hand and struck the rock twice with his rod; and water came out abundantly, and the congregation and their animals drank. 12 Then the Lord spoke to Moses and Aaron, "Because you did not believe Me, to hallow Me in the eyes of the children of Israel, therefore you shall not bring this assembly into the land which I have given them." 13 This was the water of Meribah, because the children of Israel contended with the Lord, and He was hallowed among them.

The water of Meribah:

Once again the people complain about the lack of water. And the rock refers to Christ, just as the first rock referred to Christ as well. That is why the apostle Paul says, "and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them (that is, the first time and this time), and that Rock was Christ." In the first time, Moses struck the rock with the stick, as a symbol of Christ's stabbing in his side and a symbol of his crucifixion. Water came out of the rock with the strike symbolizing the water and blood that came out of Christ's side to purify us. As for the second time, God asked that Moses take the rod with him only, without hitting the rock and to speak to the rock, and it would give water. This symbolizes that by the merits of the cross (the rod) when we come to Christ (the rock) and pray (we speak to the rock), Jesus sends us the comforter (John 7: 37-39). Moses' mistake was that he hit the rock and did not listen to God's words. This error is symbolic because Christ is not crucified twice nor beaten twice. Perhaps Moses did this in his anger at them and his fury, while he is the forbearing (Psalm 106: 32, 33). Probably he did this as it used to for 40 years, as he hit a rock wherever they went, and water came out. And the word Meribah means quarrel. The people quarreled with Moses, and they quarreled with God, with the evidence of their saying: **If only we had died when our brethren died**

before the Lord: Such as Korah and Dathan and other complainants. It is strange that they consider themselves **the assembly of the Lord** (verse 4) and then doubt that the Lord supports them.

It is logical that throughout the journey Moses struck a rock that God guided him to, and water came out for the people, but this was not mentioned to complete the symbol that Christ would be crucified once, and the Spirit would be poured out on the church. After that, God would give the Spirit to those who ask Him.

(Verse 8): **"Take the rod; you and your brother Aaron gather the congregation together. Speak to the rock before their eyes, and it will yield its water; thus you shall bring water for them out of the rock, and give drink to the congregation and their animals."**

In it is a symbol of the work of the Holy Trinity (as happened on the day of Christ's baptism). The Father from heaven wants to pour out the Holy Spirit on His church and on the believers, after the blood of Christ accomplished the reconciliation. But how does this happen? We note that the rock symbolizes Christ (1 Corinthians 10: 4). Water is a symbol of the Holy Spirit. We understand that the way for the Holy Spirit to be poured out on us is by prayer and supplication. This is what was indicated by Moses speaking to the rock. By our prayers, repentance and confession, we are filled with the Holy Spirit = "your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!" (Luke 11: 13). The church is filled with the Holy Spirit when the people pray with one accord (Acts 2: 1-4 + Acts 4: 31).

Take the rod: This rod (the symbol of the cross) Moses struck the river with it to turn into blood, a symbol of Christ stricken for us. But the rock should not be hit twice, as Christ only dies once (Romans 6: 9,10) + (Hebrews 9: 26,27). Perhaps the sin of Moses was his doubt that God would give water without using a rod, a method that he had previously tested repeatedly during his forty-year journey, but God has many and varied ways. Or perhaps Moses doubted that God would give water to this rebellious generation. Or he is attributing the miraculous work (water coming out) to himself = **Must we bring water for you out of this rock?** This was because of anger and with whom! With Moses, the humble. We must be afraid because even our strengths may become the cause of our downfall if we are not careful.

But how did Moses understand the mystery of the cross and redemption? Moses did not understand that when he hits the rock twice, he corrupts the symbol, as he causes Christ to be crucified twice, and this is the greatest possibility. We note that it is not important to understand God's wisdom in His commandments, but we must carry out God's commandments without asking or understanding. But the barring of Moses because of this simple error was a declaration that this is the way of the law in holding people accountable, and Moses is the representative of the law.

As for entering Canaan (which is the symbol of heaven, the heavenly Canaan), it is by Joshua a symbol of Christ Jesus (Jesus is the Greek pronunciation of the Hebrew name Joshua). The most that the law can see is glories from afar, just as Moses viewed the Promised Land from above the mountain. This is symbolically, but realistically, Moses is the greatest of all by the testimony of God himself, and he appeared with Christ on the Mount of Transfiguration.

The first time that water came out of the rock was in the Book of Exodus (Exodus 17).

"And the Lord said to Moses, "Go on before the people, and take with you some of the elders of Israel. Also take in your hand your rod with which you struck the river, and go. Behold, I will stand before you there on the rock in Horeb; and you shall strike the rock, and water will come out of it, that the people may drink." And Moses did so in the sight of the elders of Israel.

The first time refers to the crucifixion of Christ by which reconciliation was made with the Father, "For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son" (Romans 5: 10). After the reconciliation, God sent us the Holy Spirit, symbolized by water. Here, the rod in Aaron's hand refers to the cross, and the rock refers to Christ, and striking the rock indicates the crucifixion of Christ. The elders refer to the elders of Israel, the Sanhedrin, and the chief priests who plotted to crucify Christ.

In these verses from the Book of Numbers (the twentieth chapter), we find the second and last time

"Take the rod; you and your brother Aaron gather the congregation together. Speak to the rock before their eyes, and it will yield its water; thus you shall bring water for them out of the rock, and give drink to the congregation and their animals."

The second time refers to how the Holy Spirit is poured out on the church and us now: The Lord of glory says, "how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!" (Luke 11: 13). That is, the Holy Spirit is now pouring out on us as individuals and on the church by prayer = **Speak to the rock**. Moses took the rod with him because the work of the cross continues, that is, the intercession of the blood of Christ, through which the Father sent the Holy Spirit. This is what the Lord of glory said: "And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever— the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you." (John 14: 16-17). And I will pray the Father means His atoning intercession.

But why did God ask Moses to take Aaron with him?

God asked Moses the second time to take Aaron with him as a representative of the priesthood of Christ, who offered himself on the cross. And this priesthood of Christ extends through the Christian priesthood, the priesthood of bread and wine that continues to the end of time. About whom the Psalm said, "The Lord has sworn, and will not repent: "The Lord has sworn And will not relent, "You are a priest forever According to the order of Melchizedek" (Psalm 110: 4). **The presence of Aaron was an explanation of the work of the priesthood in the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in the Church**

The Holy Spirit descends and sanctifies the water of baptism through the prayers of the priests. In the sacrament of chrism, the Holy Spirit dwells in the baptized with the breath of the Holy Spirit in the mouth of the baptized. And in the sacrament of confession, the Holy Spirit transfers the sins of the confessor to Christ with the prayer of absolution that the priest prays. In the sacrament of the Eucharist and through the priest's prayer, the Holy Spirit transforms the bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ (stood a Lamb as though it had been slain), which is given for the forgiveness of sins and eternal life for everyone who partakes of Him. Priestly ordinations (the ordination of bishops, priests, and deacons) are by prayer and laying on of hands (Acts 13: 2-3 + 1 Timothy 5: 22). Thus the sacrament of marriage, the priest, as an agent of God in the fulfillment of the church mysteries, prays, and God brings the spouses together in one body (Matthew 19: 6 + 1 Corinthians 4: 1-2).

gather the congregation together: And when we gather with one soul and in love and pray, the Holy Spirit pours out and fills us (Psalm 133 + Acts 2: 1-4 + Acts 4: 31). It is not correct to pray a Liturgy except in the presence of a congregation, so the Lord asked Moses to **gather the congregation together**.

and give drink to the congregation and their animals: There are those in whom the Holy Spirit dwells in and try to attract them to the heavenly places, but they resist the voice of the Holy Spirit, preferring a life of sensual pleasures. As the Angel, Raphael said to Tobias, "Then the Angel Raphael said to him: Hear me, and I will shew thee who they are, over whom the devil can prevail. 17. For they who in such manner receive matrimony, as to shut out God from themselves, and from their mind, and to give themselves to their lust, as the horse and mule, which have not understanding, over them the devil hath power " (Tobias 6: 16-17). Likewise, we find that there are those who partake of the Eucharist unworthily and without repentance while continuing in their lustful life, indifferent to the sanctity of this mystery. Like these, he said about the **animals**, and thus the Angel Raphael said to Tobias.

(Verse 13): **This was the water of Meribah, because the children of Israel contended with the Lord, and He was hallowed among them.**

He was hallowed among them: God was hallowed with the descent of the water despite their unworthiness. He was hallowed by depriving Moses and Aaron from entering the Promised Land, for God does not accept any error.

(Verses 14-21): **Now Moses sent messengers from Kadesh to the king of Edom. "Thus says your brother Israel: 'You know all the hardship that has befallen us, 15 how our fathers went down to Egypt, and we dwelt in Egypt a long time, and the Egyptians afflicted us and our fathers. 16 When we cried out to the Lord, He heard our voice and sent the Angel and brought us up out of Egypt; now here we are in Kadesh, a city on the edge of your border. 17 Please let us pass through your country. We will not pass through fields or vineyards, nor will we drink water from wells; we will go along the King's Highway; we will not turn aside to the right hand or to the left until we have passed through your territory.'" 18 Then Edom said to him, "You shall not pass through my land, lest I come out against you with the sword." 19 So the children of Israel said to him, "We will go by the Highway, and if I or my livestock drink any of your water, then I will pay for it; let me only pass through on foot, nothing more." 20 Then he said, "You shall not pass through." So Edom came out against them with many men and with a strong hand. 21 Thus Edom refused to give Israel passage through his territory; so Israel turned away from him.**

Edom's enmity against Israel, the people of God, is traditional and symbolizes Satan. The fact that Edom refused the passage of Israel represents Satan, who puts obstacles on our way to the heavenly Jerusalem to prevent us from reaching there. Edom means bloody, as they allied themselves with other peoples against God's people and caused them much harm later on.

the King's Highway: It is called the Ruler's Road. Probably it is the main road that the king traverses through his lands (Numbers 21: 22). Despite Edom's bad treatment of Israel, we see Moses' love and forgiveness, as he commanded the people not to take revenge on Edom (Deuteronomy 23: 7).

“You shall not abhor an Edomite, for he is your brother. You shall not abhor an Egyptian, because you were an alien in his land.” (Deuteronomy 23: 7). This is the first lesson on the way to implementing the Lord Jesus' commandment, “love your enemies” (Matthew 5: 44).

(Verse 21): **Thus Edom refused to give Israel passage through his territory; so Israel turned away from him.**

so Israel turned away from him: If there is a way other than confrontation, why don't we use it and run away from the devil? Thus, as a child, Christ fled from Herod.

(Verse 22): **Now the children of Israel, the whole congregation, journeyed from Kadesh and came to Mount Hor.**

The journey began in Kadesh and ended in Kadesh, the journey of wandering for about 39 years, and they probably travelled behind water and pastures and by the command of God (the cloud). And from here, the journey began again.

(Verses 23-29): **And the Lord spoke to Moses and Aaron in Mount Hor by the border of the land of Edom, saying: 24 "Aaron shall be gathered to his people, for he shall not enter the land which I have given to the children of Israel, because you rebelled against My word at the water of Meribah. 25 Take Aaron and Eleazar his son, and bring them up to Mount Hor; 26 and strip Aaron of his garments and put them on Eleazar his son; for Aaron shall be gathered to his people and die there." 27 So Moses did just as the Lord commanded, and they went up to Mount Hor in the sight of all the congregation. 28 Moses stripped Aaron of his garments and put them on Eleazar his son; and Aaron died there on the top of the mountain. Then Moses and Eleazar came down from the mountain. 29 Now when all the congregation saw that Aaron was dead, all the house of Israel mourned for Aaron thirty days.**

Moses, Aaron, and Eleazar ascended the mountain to receive a new generation of priesthood from an old generation. This happened before all the congregation so that no one would covet the Eleazar priesthood. And the death of Aaron on a mountain is the death of the saints. The handing over of the priesthood by Moses from Aaron to Eleazar is the handing over of the priesthood from Christ to the apostles to their successors. Here we find Aaron the High Priest dying on a mountain, and Dathan and Abiram descending underground. The death of the righteous is a rise, and the end of the wicked is a fall and a descent to the bottom. Moses took off Aaron's clothes before he died, because if he died and his

clothes were on him, they would be defiled, and Eleazar would not wear them. The congregation also attended these ceremonies, recommending the new high priest.

The Aaronic Priesthood and the Christian Priesthood

Why was the condition of the Jewish priest to be a descendant of Aaron?

The condition of the Jewish priest to be a descendant of Aaron is as if it were a continuation of the priesthood of Aaron. The Christian priesthood, which according to the Melchizedek rite is in Christ, is a continuity of the priesthood of Christ. Just as there is no Jewish priesthood outside the descendants of Aaron, i.e. the body of Aaron, there is no Christian priesthood outside the priesthood of Christ. Christ, our true high priest, offered Himself as a sacrifice in the form of bread and wine, and the Christian priest offers the Eucharistic sacrifice, the sacrifice of bread and wine after the Holy Spirit transforms the bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ. The sacrifice of the Eucharist is the same as the sacrifice of the cross. Christ offered Himself on the cross as a sacrifice, and now, as St. John saw Him, " stood a Lamb as though it had been slain." With the prayers of the priest, the Holy Spirit transforms the bread and wine into the image of Christ, "the risen lamb as if slain" (Revelation 5:6). Thus, St. Paul the Apostle said about the Christian priesthood that it is an honor. A job assigned to him by Christ, not to crucify Him again, but rather to pray so that the bread and wine turn into the image of the standing lamb as if it had been slain, the image of Christ that exists today. This is how Saint John saw Him in his vision. The Christian priesthood is the priesthood of Christ, who became a living sacrifice (sacrifice = as if he was slain, meaning the act of death) and (live = standing, meaning the act of life). The Christian priest prays, and the Holy Spirit transforms the bread and wine into this living sacrifice. Then he distributes it to those who partake of Him to be united with the slain body, so that their sins are forgiven (as they are united by the action of death that was in the slain body of Christ), and they are united to the living body, so they will have eternal life (as they are united by the action of life in the risen Christ). Therefore, the priest prays in the liturgy and says, "Given for the remission of sins and eternal life to those who shall partake of Him."

Chapter 21

The Journey of Victory

During the journey (the journey of our life on earth), there will be a victory if God is in our midst, and if murmuring enters, there will be defeat. Rather, there will be fiery serpents (as happened in the journey of the Jews' exodus from Egypt), but there will also be hope. And the bronze serpent is a symbol of the crucified Christ.

(Verses 1-3): **The king of Arad, the Canaanite, who dwelt in the South, heard that Israel was coming on the road to Atharim. Then he fought against Israel and took some of them prisoners. 2 So Israel made a vow to the Lord, and said, "If You will indeed deliver this people into my hand, then I will utterly destroy their cities." 3 And the Lord listened to the voice of Israel and delivered up the Canaanites, and they utterly destroyed them and their cities. So the name of that place was called Hormah.**

We saw Satan represented in Edom, putting difficulties in the way. But here, we find him represented in the king of Arad at war. (The word **Arad** = zebra) and the word **Atharim** means trail, as he rose like a zebra, following their tracks, to strike and attack them. God allowed the people to be defeated so they would know that without Him, they would not be able to do anything. After vowing **If You will indeed deliver this people into my hand, then I will utterly destroy their cities** = a vow to quit and forbid sin, which has the meaning of the prohibition of the place with its sinful human beings and even their beasts. They will leave nothing of it and remove everything unclean. The place becomes holy to the Lord. After the vow, they were victorious over them so that God would show them his hatred of sin and that it causes death and destruction, and to show them the possibility of easy victory over sin, as He is in the midst of them aiding them. The king of Arad is one of the kings of the Canaanite peoples in which sin was rampant, and his country is south of Palestine in the Negev. The place in which they were victorious is the same in which they were defeated 39 years ago in the incident of spies, and it is a **Hormah** (Numbers 14: 45). For God is able to turn defeat into victory in the same place. The word **Hormah** is a Hebrew word which means to kill everyone, every animal and destroy everything in this place because it's polluted with sin. Then, this place became holy and clean before God.

they utterly destroyed them and their cities: If we understand that the king of Arad is a symbol of Satan, and our victory over Satan began with the cross of Christ, and our victory continues with Christ who "went out conquering and to conquer." (Revelation 6: 2). But this is for him who desires to be healed (John 5: 6). And what comes after the victory = **they utterly destroyed them and their cities** = that is, the complete annihilation of all the lands and possessions of the king of Arad. If Satan is the ruler of this world, he uses the lusts of this world to bring us down. But we cannot annihilate all the lusts of the world that Satan uses. But we can stand before it as dead: "Likewise you also, reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord." (Romans 6: 11) + "I beseech you

therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service." (Romans 12: 1).

(Verses 4-6): **Then they journeyed from Mount Hor by the Way of the Red Sea, to go around the land of Edom; and the soul of the people became very discouraged on the way. 5 And the people spoke against God and against Moses: "Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? For there is no food and no water, and our soul loathes this worthless bread." 6 So the Lord sent fiery serpents among the people, and they bit the people; and many of the people of Israel died.**

The bronze serpent:

Because of Edom's refusal for the Israelites to pass through their land, they made a long round in the wilderness and returned to complain. And when a person begins to complain, he enters into a circle of hell, seeing everything around him as bleak, while all his problem is one thing that may be simple or temporary. Here, we find an excuse for them in distress due to the hot weather and lack of water, but it is only a matter of days. But what does this have to do with their complaints of **no food**? What is the meaning of worthless bread while they have manna? This grumbling and distress, if it begins to increase, is in itself painful like snake bites and a killer because it spoils the relationship between man and God, so man dies and is lost if he loses God. God explains this by allowing serpents to bite the grumbling people. The wilderness is full of serpents, and God protected them from it throughout their journey, but here we find that He leaves the serpents to attack them. For nature and all creatures are subject to God. It may be serpents that God specially sent in an unnatural way to discipline His people. And just as the treatment was in a supernatural way (looking at a bronze serpent), perhaps the serpents themselves are unnatural.

And the word for a fiery serpent in Hebrew is "hanahashim haseraphim" And Nahashim is similar to Hanash, which means serpent in Arabic.

Seraphim is from the verb saraph, which means to ignite (Isaiah 6), and from it, Paul said that the angels are a flame of fire (Hebrews 1: 7), and the verb is fiery here because the sting of this serpent hits the body like fire, and its sting is very burning and causes great thirst. Let us note that rebellious desires produce snakes that spew poison that kills whoever they bite.

Reflection:

Grumbling is a kind of loss of inner peace. Grumbling begins because of a problem, but the state of inner lack of peace makes this person see everything around him as a cause of inner discomfort, even though he sees it daily. As soon as the state of grumbling begins, the person begins to revolt against everything and grumble about everything. Here, we see an application of that. The problem was their going around Edom, as the king of Edom refused their passage through his land. But the revolt began inside them against everything, even the food, their exit from Egypt, and that they were exposed to death, and the sweet manna became worthless food. The loss of inner peace is actually like burning bites and causes a

person to become very agitated. Rather, the world turns black in the face of this grumbling person. The plague of the serpents was an explanation of their condition. We see that the burning serpents are an educational lesson for them and for us as well: that grumbling begins with grumbling about a small issue, then spreads internally and becomes grumbling and distress about everything. This leads to a state of inner discomfort, which is like a burning fever. It is the same method that God followed with Saul of Tarsus when He struck him with blindness to explain his problem to him: How come, Saul, you, who is a student of the Old Testament, did not see the prophecies that testify to Christ and believe? Saul's problem was not seeing the prophecies. So, the strike was about sight. It is also the same method that God used with Zechariah the priest: He did not rejoice and praise the Lord when he heard the news of the coming of the awaited Messiah. So God made him silent. For he did not believe, rejoice, and praise the coming of the awaited Messiah.

As for us, we must trust in the love of our God and believe that He is the Pantocrator and that all the events He allows in our lives are for our purification and the growth of our faith. We should accept all the events that happen in our lives with a spirit of thanksgiving (Colossians 2: 7 + James 1: 2). **Why thanksgiving?** 1) God is a benevolent doer and will not allow anything that harms us. 2) What He allows is for my purification and preparation for heaven. 3) Discipline is a sign of His love (Hebrews 12: 6). 4) Whoever meets the events that happen in his life with thanksgiving will have peace in his heart, and this is what the Lord Jesus said, "These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." (John 16: 33).

(Verse 7): **Therefore the people came to Moses, and said, "We have sinned, for we have spoken against the Lord and against you; pray to the Lord that He take away the serpents from us." So Moses prayed for the people.**

Great is the admission of guilt and confession. And God is very pleased with this and forgives (1 John 1: 9).

(Verses 8-9): **Then the Lord said to Moses, "Make a fiery serpent, and set it on a pole; and it shall be that everyone who is bitten, when he looks at it, shall live." 9 So Moses made a bronze serpent, and put it on a pole; and so it was, if a serpent had bitten anyone, when he looked at the bronze serpent, he lived.**

God did not prevent burnt serpents but rather set a way to save them from its poison. Sin is still present, Satan's deceptions are still present, grumbling is still present, and whoever falls into them is bitten by a serpent, but there is a solution in the bronze serpent. Christ, who came in the likeness of the body of sin, took the form of a serpent. He did not kill the serpents but made their bites non-lethal. Sin is the true serpent (John 3: 14,15).

Some were among the people who died because they thought that it was unreasonable to look at a bronze serpent and be cured. But we must believe strongly and look upon Christ with faith, and He can save.

Note that God told him to **Make a fiery serpent** (in its origin, make for yourself a saraph, meaning a fiery), so Moses made it from bronze, and the word "serpent" means "nahash," and it is close to the Arabic Hanash (means serpent). Bronze in Hebrew is "Nahushit." From those was derived the word Nahshtan, which was given to this bronze serpent, for which the children of Israel used to burn offerings afterwards, until King Hezekiah crushed it and removed it (2 Kings 18: 4). And the bronze serpent refers to Christ, for He became our form, the form of the body of sin (Romans 8: 3), for Christ resembled us in everything except sin alone = meaning that He does not have the poison of the serpent. Refer to the Book of Wisdom (Wisdom of Solomon 16: 4-12).

(Verses 10-13): **Now the children of Israel moved on and camped in Oboth. 11 And they journeyed from Oboth and camped at Ije Abarim, in the wilderness which is east of Moab, toward the sunrise. 12 From there they moved and camped in the Valley of Zered. 13 From there they moved and camped on the other side of the Arnon, which is in the wilderness that extends from the border of the Amorites; for the Arnon is the border of Moab, between Moab and the Amorites.**

The Arnon River separates Moab from the Amorites. Moab is south of the river, and the Amorites are to the north of the river, and this river flows into the Dead Sea in its middle from the east.

There is a symbolic interpretation of these names, **Oboth** = succession of growth, **Ije Abarim** = the depth of crossing. **in the wilderness** = this depth and this growth is possible while we are in the wilderness of this world. **the Valley of Zered** = Zered is a Hebrew word meaning prosperity. It is as if the believer has to be in a state of continuous growth without interruption and enter the depth to cross to heaven. **east of Moab, toward the sunrise** = means east of Moab. The spiritual meaning is that the believer must strive to enter the depths to continue to grow and live prosperously, that is, spiritually alive until he meets the Lord Jesus, the Sun of Righteousness.

They are travelling to the Promised Land, and so we are travelling to heaven: we must enter the depth and grow always. And we remain like this until we meet our Christ, the Sun of Righteousness = **toward the sunrise**. And why the struggle to continue in constant growth, seeking to enter the depth as the Lord Jesus said, "When He had stopped speaking, He said to Simon, "Launch out into the deep and let down your nets for a catch." (Luke 5: 4)? Because the enemy, the devil, surrounds us and lies in wait for us = **that extends from the border of the Amorites**. And **border** = means boundaries. That is, the evil Amorites, a symbol of the devils, surround us; they are on the borders.

(Verses 14-15): **Therefore it is said in the Book of the Wars of the Lord: " Waheb in Suphah, The brooks of the Arnon, 15 And the slope of the brooks That reaches to the dwelling of Ar, And lies on the border of Moab."**

And we hear here about the Book of the Wars of the Lord, and it is probably a poetic book to praise the Lord for His works of caring for His people in the wilderness and leading them to Canaan, and we only know about it what was written here.

Waheb has two interpretations, as it is either the name of a place or a city that is not known now. It can also mean "as he made." **Suphah** also has two meanings: it may mean the intended, and they called the Red Sea the Suph Sea because it has places where reeds grow. The other meaning may be a storm.

1. According to the interpretation of the Septuagint: The sentence was interpreted as: **Waheb in Suphah, The brooks of the Arnon** = as what was made in Suph (red sea), it will be made in the brooks of Arnon. In other words, as he gave them victory in Suph, He will help them here.
2. According to the Jesuit translation, They considered Waheb the name of the city, and Suphah means the storm, so they interpreted it as they crossed Waheb as crossing the storm and the valleys of Arnon.
3. It may be understood from the talk about Waheb and Suphah that they are a city in a province called Suphah, which is a province in Moab, and perhaps it was called the growth of reeds. This interpretation is as if it determines where they are geographical. That it is in Suphah (Moab) and at the mouth of the valleys, i.e. the slope of the valley, and he mostly means the Arnon Valley and its rivers. **That reaches to the dwelling of Ar** = meaning that the mouth of the valleys extended to Ar, which is either the capital of Moab or one of its major cities. It was called Aroer (Deuteronomy 2: 36). **And lies on the border of Moab**, meaning that the mouth of the valleys descended gently towards the border of Moab.
4. The Arnon River separates Moab from the Amorites. Moab is south of the river, and the Amorites are north of it. This river flows into the Dead Sea in the middle of it from the east.

(Verse 16): **From there they went to Beer, which is the well where the Lord said to Moses, "Gather the people together, and I will give them water."**

They journeyed from the valley of Arnon to the town of **Beer** (it is a Hebrew word which means well), which was called so for a well that the people's chiefs had dug in it at the command of the Lord (verse 18). It is also located in Moab. Here, God is the one who gathers them to give them water. God wants to give us, and He will provide us without us grumbling or even asking

And let us note that God's insistence to gather the people to give them water has a spiritual meaning: Whoever triumphed over the serpent's poison, though has traces of stings, but survived when he looked at the bronze serpent, God grants him to have a living well and rivers of living water overflow from his heart (a symbol of the Holy Spirit). This is a sign of God's will that we be filled with the Holy Spirit. These wells, in their depth, refer to the experience that a person will have, so that he will know the paternity

of the heavenly Father and that the Son is the eternal and faithful bridegroom. This is the work of the Holy Spirit, for it is the Holy Spirit who leads us on our journey to heaven to the depths (verses 10-13). Therefore, symbolically, we find:

*Rebecca's meeting with her bridegroom Isaac was at a well.

*Jacob's meeting with Rachel was at a well.

*Moses' meeting with his wife was at a well.

*The meaning is that the meeting of the bridegroom and the bride (Christ with his church) is at a well.

The well with water is a symbol of the Holy Spirit. 1*The Holy Spirit is the One who connects us, unites us, and confirms us as a bride with our Bridegroom Christ in baptism. 2*The Holy Spirit is the one who tells us about Christ, so we love Christ, "He will glorify Me, for He will take of what is Mine and declare it to you." (John 16: 14). 3*The Holy Spirit is the One who "pours out the love of God into our hearts" (Romans 5: 5). 4*He is the One who leads us to the depth so we live. That is why God asks Moses to ask the people who were saved from the bite of the fiery serpents to dig a well. The spiritual meaning is that everyone who believes in Christ is baptized and saved from deadly sin, and they must strive to be filled with the Spirit. The Spirit confirms him in Christ, so he is saved (symbolically, he reaches the heavenly Canaan, the symbol here of which is the earthly Canaan). Therefore, Saint Paul the Apostle says, "And not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit," (Ephesians 5: 18). 5*The Holy Spirit is the giver of prophecy and fellowship, so the heart exults with joy. Note that Rebekah's meeting with her groom was at a well. The wells of divine knowledge aim at entering the soul into union with her heavenly Groom, Jesus Christ. There is contemplation that the Lord's saying to Moses, "**Gather the people together**," indicates that God wants Moses to testify to the people of the Old Testament about the person of the Savior, "Moses wrote about me." (John 5: 46)

Reflection: Note that the people here, after they had overcome the bites of the fiery serpents by means of the bronze serpent (this corresponds to the work of **grace**), and after they had strived and been victorious in the Arnon until the border of Moab (verses 14, 15) (this corresponds to the work of **striving**). We find that God asks them to dig a well (verse 16). Why did God ask them to dig a well? From a material standpoint, they need water. But from a spiritual standpoint, water refers to the Holy Spirit. The question for us is: **Why does God care that we be filled with the Holy Spirit?**

1. After the striving against our enemy Satan (among the wars Satan wages against us are the tribulations he incites against us daily), we need the comfort of the Holy Spirit, the Comforter, "But when the Helper comes, whom I shall send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify of Me." (John 15: 26). God sees our pain and wants to comfort us without us complaining about our tribulations, and this is the meaning of God's request that they dig a well. We find this meaning in the words of the Psalm: "As the deer pants for the water brooks, So pants my soul for You, O God. 2 My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When shall I come and appear before God?" (Psalm 42: 1-2). Deer (a type of gazelle) has a strange property: they go to snake holes and blow into them, and the snake emerges. They enter into battle with it and trample it under their feet

until they defeat it. From the intensity of the struggle, they become thirsty and run to streams of water to drink. Thus, we are spiritually in a struggle with Satan, and through our struggle, we overcome him, for God has given us the authority to trample him (Luke 10: 19). **God wants us to be filled with the Holy Spirit to comfort us amid the troubles of this world.**

2. After our battles with Satan and our victory, we are filled with the Holy Spirit. Thus it was said about the Lord Jesus after He defeated Satan on the mountain, “Then Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit to Galilee, and news of Him went out through all the surrounding region.” (Luke 4: 14). We are filled with the Spirit, and we are thirsty for more filling. God gives and fills whoever is thirsty and asks to be filled with His Holy Spirit. “On the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, “If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. 38He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.” 39But this He spoke concerning the Spirit, whom those believing in Him would receive; for the Holy Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.” (John 7: 37-39). The Lord Jesus also says, “Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, For they shall be filled.” (Matthew 5: 6). And also, “If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!” (Luke 11: 13). **God wants us to be filled with the Holy Spirit, to give us strength,** “For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.” (2 Timothy 1: 7).

3. And with the filling of the Spirit we know Christ more, for the work of the Holy Spirit in us is to tell us about Christ, “He will glorify Me, for He will take of what is Mine and declare it to you.” (John 16: 14), and the more we know Christ, the more we will love Him. This is what it means that the Holy Spirit pours the love of God into our hearts (Romans 5:5). Christ our God truly triumphed over Satan in the battle of the cross, **but we need to have true knowledge and a personal relationship with Christ.** We discover His love and love Him. This is the work of the Holy Spirit with us. The Holy Spirit establishes us in Christ, and this is the path to true joy and peace. “Therefore you now have sorrow; but I will see you again and your heart will rejoice, and your joy no one will take from you.” (John 16: 22). “These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.” (John 16: 33). In the same sense, Saint Paul the Apostle says, “Rejoice in the Lord always. Again I will say, rejoice! 5 Let your gentleness be known to all men. The Lord is at hand. 6 Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; 7 and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.” (Philippians 4: 4-7). **God wants us to be filled with the Spirit so that we may abide in Christ, enter into a personal relationship with Him, and experience a life of joy and peace. He who rejoices praises from his heart with joy. Note also that praise is the way to be filled with the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 5: 18-21). We know Christ and rejoice, we rejoice and praise, we praise and are filled with the Spirit, we are filled with the Spirit and know more, we know more and rejoice more. And so on without stopping.**

(Verses 17-20): **Then Israel sang this song: "Spring up, O well! All of you sing to it— 18 The well the leaders sank, Dug by the nation's nobles, By the lawgiver, with their staves." And from the wilderness**

they went to Mattanah, 19 from Mattanah to Nahaliel, from Nahaliel to Bamoth, 20 and from Bamoth, in the valley that is in the country of Moab, to the top of Pisgah which looks down on the wasteland.

Spring up, O well: Means overflow and rise. **All of you sing to it** = sing and cheer for her. It is good to praise the Lord for his works: "Bless the Lord, O my soul, And forget not all His benefits:" (Psalm 103: 2).

The well the leaders sank: It is a glorious well (meaning the leaders dug it) because the ones who dug it are the heads of the people. **By the lawgiver, with their staves:** they dug it with the rods of the presidency or the rods of care that express their authority. Example: The prayers of the Pope and the bishops to prepare the Chrism Oil, with which, through prayers, the Holy Spirit descends upon the baptized person.

Compare this with "Take the rod; you and your brother Aaron gather the congregation together. Speak to the rock before their eyes, and it will yield its water; thus you shall bring water for them out of the rock, and give drink to the congregation and their animals." (Review the interpretation in its place (Numbers 20: 8).

And another observation; because the Lord took from the spirit on Moses and put it on the leaders, they did the same as Moses did. They brought out water with their rods. And the Holy Spirit descends on the shepherds with prayer and laying on of hands. This verse refers to how the Holy Spirit is poured out on the church and on us. The rod = the continuous efficacy of the cross. Aaron = representative of the priesthood of Christ and extending through the Christian priesthood. The presence of Aaron was an explanation of the work of the priesthood in the descending of the Holy Spirit. And the assembly of the congregation = refers to the church gathered in love, and the Holy Spirit is poured out = The well filled with water is here.

The application here in the church: the chiefs with their rods refer to the priestly care through the ecclesiastical sacraments. And the well = refers to the Holy Spirit. Continuous praise and request to be filled with the Holy Spirit = **All of you sing to it**. The way to pour out the spirit, so we will be filled = **Spring up, O well**. " how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!" (Luke 11: 13). Thus, Saint Paul the Apostle teaches that praising from the heart is the way to be filled with the Holy Spirit: "And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit, 19 speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord, 20 giving thanks always for all things to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, 21submitting to one another in the fear of God." (Ephesians 5: 18-21). The same meaning here = **All of you sing to it**.

We see here the work of grace and striving; God guided them to the place of water and asked them to dig to get it.

And from the wilderness they went to Mattanah, 19 from Mattanah to Nahaliel, from Nahaliel to Bamoth, 20 and from Bamoth, in the valley that is in the country of Moab, to the top of Pisgah which looks down on the wasteland.

Mattanah, Nahaliel, and Bamoth may be the names of places the people actually came to during their journey.

Moses did not mention these places in the travel record in chapter 33 of the book of Numbers, and this may be because they are unimportant places, or they did not reside in them much, so he did not mention them. Or have symbolic meanings and be among the words of the well song.

The word Mattanah means gifts or grants. God moved them from the wilderness, where they were thirsty, and brought them to where the well overflows with water. This is one of God's grants and a gift to them.

And the word Nahliel means God's Valley. And God brought them to a place where He is, which is the Valley of God, which may mean the great springs that God gave from wells and water. From fullness to more fullness to overflowing.

And the word Bamoth means heights or the coming of death. The meaning is that God preserves them in His valley until He brings them to the heavenly heights. God gives them heights like heights here on earth; after death, He takes them to the heavens (spiritual interpretation).

Valley: In Hebrew, It is the plural of "go" and "gi", meaning great valley. The valley may have come from the clash of the desert wind. They see that they live on earth in wide lands, and the spiritual meaning is that there is heaven after death.

to the top of Pisgah: It is a high heavenly place on Mount of Perfection. From the top of Pisgah, Moses saw all of the promised land (Deuteronomy 34: 1), and the promised land is the symbol of the heavenly Jerusalem.

(Verses 21-23): **Then Israel sent messengers to Sihon king of the Amorites, saying, 22 "Let me pass through your land. We will not turn aside into fields or vineyards; we will not drink water from wells. We will go by the King's Highway until we have passed through your territory." 23 But Sihon would not allow Israel to pass through his territory. So Sihon gathered all his people together and went out against Israel in the wilderness, and he came to Jahaz and fought against Israel.**

There is an opinion that Sihon means haughty. And that the word Amorites came from bitterness. It is a symbol of the arrogant devil filled with bitterness against man. And when we denied Satan in baptism, it was as if we were repeating after Moses, **We will not turn aside into fields or vineyards; we will not drink water from wells. We will go by the King's Highway until we have passed through your territory.**" We are walking in the wilderness of this world in the way of Christ our King. Until we leave this world, the world is the kingdom of Satan, and he is the head of this world. In our journey, we do not accept anything from his hand (water / vineyards..), and the water that Satan gives is material goods, and vineyards are the joys and pleasures of the world. But note 1) all to demise. 2) Whoever drinks of this water will be thirsty. 3) The gift of Christ is the Holy Spirit, the water from which he who drinks will not thirst but have true joy.

Jahaz means the fulfillment of the commandments or a place that is stepped on and open. If we understand the first meaning, then the place of our war with Satan is in the field of fulfilling the commandments, and in the second sense, it means that we should follow the path that the fathers took before us. They entered it and fought Satan and defeated him. Sihon's life ended with the sword, and Christ defeated Satan with the word of God, which is sharper than the sword.

(Verse 24): **Then Israel defeated him with the edge of the sword, and took possession of his land from the Arnon to the Jabbok, as far as the people of Ammon; for the border of the people of Ammon was fortified.**

Arnon: A river separates Moab (south) and the Amorites (North), and Reuben replaced the Amorites.

Jabbok: It is an eastern branch of the Jordan River (currently the Zarqa River), representing the western border of Bani Ammonites and separating them from the Amorites). This place was inherited by the tribe of Gad instead of the Amorites. As for the northern part, it was owned by Og, whom 1/2 the tribe of Manasseh took it from him.

the people of Ammon: That is, the Israelites took all the land of the Amorites, but they did not come close to the borders of the Ammonites, adjacent to the borders of the Amorites, which was subject to King Sihon. God gave them the land of the Amorites only. While he had given the land of the Ammonites as an inheritance for the Ammonites, Israel should not take it from them, as it is God's gift to them. In addition, **for the border of the people of Ammon was fortified** = because the Ammonite border was strong. But if God wanted to give them the land of the Ammonites, God would give them victory over them, no matter how powerful they were. But God gave His people Israel, the Promised Land in which only the Canaanites lived, and He expelled the Canaanites from their land and destroyed them by His people as punishment for their terrible impurities. God even prevented His people from attacking the lands of Moab, the lands of the Ammonites, and the lands of Edom. If God prevented His people from attacking the lands of their neighbours, would He give His people free rein against distant peoples as the enemies of the Bible say?!

*"Then the Lord said to me, 'Do not harass Moab, nor contend with them in battle, for I will not give you any of their land as a possession, because I have given Ar to the descendants of Lot as a possession.'" (Deuteronomy 2: 9).

*"And when you come near the people of Ammon, do not harass them or meddle with them, for I will not give you any of the land of the people of Ammon as a possession, because I have given it to the descendants of Lot as a possession." (Deuteronomy 2: 19).

*"You shall not abhor an Edomite, for he is your brother. You shall not abhor an Egyptian, because you were an alien in his land." (Deuteronomy 23: 7).

*From the previous verses we see that God did not give His people Israel the right to attack all the peoples of the world. Rather, He only gave them the land of Canaan, just as He gave each people a land

to live in. As He says in "because I have given Ar to the descendants of Lot as a possession."
(Deuteronomy 2: 19,9).

So what is the meaning of the saying "**and took possession of his land from the Arnon to the Jabbok, as far as the people of Ammon; for the border of the people of Ammon was fortified**" = God did not allow His people to approach the land of the Ammonites as we have seen. Moses did not approach Ammon not because of their strength but because God prevented him. But we understand the meaning from (verse 32) of this chapter = **Then Moses sent to spy out Jazer; and they took its villages and drove out the Amorites who were there** = Jazer was among the lands of Sihon that God's people had seized from the Amorites, and it became God's people's. But because it was near the Ammonites, Moses did not want to enter into a war with the Ammonites until he was sure that the Ammonites would not impose their protection on Jazer. And when he spied out the land and learned that there was no connection between the Ammonites and Jazer, God's people took it and drove out the Amorites from it.

(Verse 25): **So Israel took all these cities, and Israel dwelt in all the cities of the Amorites, in Heshbon and in all its villages.**

(Verse 26): **For Heshbon was the city of Sihon king of the Amorites, who had fought against the former king of Moab, and had taken all his land from his hand as far as the Arnon.**

Review (Judges 11: 12-28).

Under the leadership of their king Sihon, the Amorites occupied the northern region of Moab and had the city of Heshbon. Therefore, Heshbon was a Moabite and was taken over by the Amorites. After Israel's victory over Sihon, all these lands became theirs. Note that the victory of the Amorites over the Moabites is temporary prosperity of evil, followed by the victory of God's children of God.

Reflections:

1. There are many ways to the heavenly Jerusalem, and if Satan closed the door of Edom, we would find another.
2. When we approach the heavenly Jerusalem, God guides us to a deep well, with water flowing (water + depth).

The Holy Spirit (water) is the One who gives us depth in the knowledge of Christ, and the love of Christ pours it into our hearts so that we have Christ as a secret of satiety, and we do not need anything else.

Christ is symbolized by love, and the well symbolizes the Holy Spirit.

(Verses 27-30): **Therefore those who speak in proverbs say: "Come to Heshbon, let it be built; Let the city of Sihon be repaired. 28 "For fire went out from Heshbon, A flame from the city of Sihon; It consumed Ar of Moab, The lords of the heights of the Arnon. 29 Woe to you, Moab! You have perished, O people of Chemosh! He has given his sons as fugitives, And his daughters into captivity, To Sihon king of the Amorites. 30 "But we have shot at them; Heshbon has perished as far as Dibon. Then we laid waste as far as Nophah, Which reaches to Medeba."**

Here we find another poetic poem that has become a proverb repeated by people (verses 27, 28) that records the insults and ridicule that the Amorites said when they defeated the Moabites.

Verse 29 expresses the Israelites' sympathy and pity for Moab's destruction with a mockery of their god Chemosh, who could not protect them from the attack of Sihon and his army on them.

30 The vengeance of Israel against Sihon in every town from Heshbon to Dibon, and from Nophah to Medeba.

(Verses 27): **Therefore those who speak in proverbs say: "Come to Heshbon, let it be built; Let the city of Sihon be repaired.**

The Amorite poets said this line: after we destroyed it in the war, let us build it to fit our king Sihon.

(Verse 28): **"For fire went out from Heshbon, A flame from the city of Sihon; It consumed Ar of Moab, The lords of the heights of the Arnon.**

After Sihon possessed the city of Heshbon, he sent fire on the rest of the cities of Moab, like Ar of Moab. And he decimated the people of the heights of Arnon.

(Verse 29): **Woe to you, Moab! You have perished, O people of Chemosh! He has given his sons as fugitives, And his daughters into captivity, To Sihon king of the Amorites.**

Here is the poetry written by the Children of Israel and added to the poem of the Amorites. In this verse and verse 30. **Woe to you, Moab** = meaning what a severe torment you suffered when Sihon defeated you.

You have perished, O people of Chemosh = Your god could not save you, and Chemosh, the god of the Moabites, and they were offering him their children. **He has given his sons as fugitives** = this false god made his followers, that is, his sons run away, and he was not able to protect them.

(Verse 30): **"But we have shot at them; Heshbon has perished as far as Dibon. Then we laid waste as far as Nophah, Which reaches to Medeba."**

And despite the strength of Sihon, who did this to Moab and Chemosh, **we have shot at them** = meaning, we aimed our blows at them, that is, against the Amorites. And we struck the cities they had taken, from Heshbon to Dibon.

(Verse 31): **Thus Israel dwelt in the land of the Amorites.**

(Verse 32): **Then Moses sent to spy out Jazer; and they took its villages and drove out the Amorites who were there.**

Jazer was a fortified Amorite city, as it is on the borders of the mighty Ammonites, so Moses left it until the matter was established for him in all the land of the Amorites. And the whole land became theirs.

The poetic piece has a symbolic meaning (verses 27-30). If we understand that Sihon symbolizes Satan, he has reigned over the people of God for some time and struck them. But God came and stopped him and rebuilt the city, meaning His body, symbolizing it with Heshbon, and the fire of the Holy Spirit went out to rebuild (Jeremiah 1: 9,10).

(Verses 33-35): **And they turned and went up by the way to Bashan. So Og king of Bashan went out against them, he and all his people, to battle at Edrei. 34 Then the Lord said to Moses, "Do not fear him, for I have delivered him into your hand, with all his people and his land; and you shall do to him as you did to Sihon king of the Amorites, who dwelt at Heshbon." 35 So they defeated him, his sons, and all his people, until there was no survivor left him; and they took possession of his land.**

Bashan means disgrace, and it represents crooked roads, and its king is Og = crooked. Therefore, Moses did not go to negotiate, as there is no negotiation with evil. This Og was very huge and very powerful (a symbol of the powerful Satan), but what is this strength in front of the power of God (Deuteronomy 3: 11). Og and Sihon are both Amorites.

Chapter 22

Balaam

Satan has many ways to make people fall and prevent them from entering the heavenly Jerusalem. He has now experienced Edom's provocation and then Og and Sihon's war. And here he is experimenting with the weapon of the curse. So Balak the king of Moab, when he saw that Israel had defeated his neighbours, became afraid and called a prophet named Balaam, to curse the people for him.

But let us consider God's loving care for His people:

1. He did not accept anyone to curse His people;
2. He forced Balaam to utter a blessing instead of a curse.
3. God opened the mouth of the donkey to speak against his nature;
4. He opened Balaam's mouth to utter the blessing against his will;
5. God punishes His people if they sin, but He defends them in front of foreign peoples.

Let's read what Balaam said "He has not observed iniquity in Jacob" (Numbers 23: 21)

God had prevented Moses from fighting Moab, as God gave it as an inheritance to the sons of Lot, as he did with the Ammonites (Deuteronomy 2: 9). But Balak, the king of Moab, was terrified, as he did not know this. He first refused to give permission to the people to pass (Judges 11: 17), then they feared them for the news of their victories. And the sinner is always in a state of fear of nothing. Balak's trusting in the curses of Balaam, as he who trusts these days in the power of deeds, envy, magic, ...etc.

The Character of Balaam, the son of Beor:

1. He is not from God's people but from Pethor, which is in Mesopotamia (Deuteronomy 23: 4), and in (Numbers 23: 7), he said, "Balak brought me from Aram." And in (Numbers 22: 5), it is said Pethor, which is near the River. He is from Mesopotamia. Aram is related to Aram, the son of Shem, who first inhabited it (Genesis 10: 22, 23) and then extended to Syria and Lebanon. Aram is between the two rivers, the Tigris and the Euphrates. When it is said the two rivers, it means the Tigris and the Euphrates, and when it is said the river only, it means the Euphrates. This will be Pethor on the Euphrates River in Iraq; thus, the apostles' journey will take a month. Aram began first in the land of Iraq and was called Aram Mesopotamia, then spread to Syria and Lebanon and was called Aram at that time only. And there are Aram of Damascus, Aram of Soba, Aram of Beth Rehob, and Aram of Maacah, but the saying Aram only means Syria.

2. Apparently, he was famous for his supernatural works. And his news reached Moab, and they summoned him.

3. Some believe that Balaam was a true prophet and he entered into dealings with God and was consulting him before any action. Their evidence is these verses "Then God came to Balaam" (verse 9) + "And God said to Balaam" (verse 12), in addition to the fact that Balaam's prophecies were very remarkable. They add that it is not strange for God to deal with the nations, as this happened with Nebuchadnezzar, and He sent Jonah to Nineveh. In the apostolic age, we found Cornelius, who worshiped God with piety. God does not limit Himself to a particular people or a particular person. They explain the validity of his prophecy that if he was a sorcerer, why did God so insistently care not to curse His people, for what comes out of the mouth of Satan and his followers against the children of God has no value. As for the fact that Balaam made a mistake and repeated his mistake, and his life ended with a major crime he committed against God and His children, they believe that the word prophet does not mean a permanent job when it is given to a person which accompanied him all his life, but he can bestow the spirit of prophecy for a specific period to achieve a specific plan and then this Spirit is taken away from them. Also, the prophets themselves have their own mistakes in their personal lives and the service (2 Samuel 7: 1-16). Additionally, God uses the best of what is available to deliver His message, and He found Balaam, the best person he could deal with for a certain period. As King Saul was the best person for a certain period, God filled him with the Holy Spirit, but when he sinned, the Spirit was removed from him, which is what happened with Balaam. God dealt with him for a long time, but his love for money dropped him. The most dangerous thing that affects the clergy in general is the love of money (2 Peter 2: 14-16 + Jude 11). This is what happened with Judas, a disciple of Christ. Certainly, this opinion is the right one. God does not leave people without dealing with them in one way or another, as He is the Creator of all and is responsible for the whole world.

4. Some of the Church Fathers saw that he was a sorcerer and soothsayer. Joshua said about him that he was a soothsayer (Joshua 13: 22), but God used him to achieve higher divine purposes. Here, God brought out of the strong sweetness. They also said that he was carrying a demonic power, but God explained the inability of Satan's powers to harm his children but turned the curse into a blessing. God allowed this before the people entered the Promised Land to declare that the man abiding in God, who is justified by the blood of Christ, and in whom the Holy Spirit dwells, and ascends toward the heavenly Jerusalem, the demons cannot curse or slander him, but rather the divine light shines in him and everyone bears witness to him. Those who hold this view prove that he is a sorcerer by accepting the diviner's fee. His request to build seven altars on the Baal heights was also the soothsayer's behaviour. And his saying that "For there is no sorcery against Jacob" (Numbers 23: 23) means that his abilities in divination have entirely ceased. And if God blessed Abraham and his descendants, how does the curse of anyone affect them?

5. Here we say that the opinion that he is a magician is a rejected opinion: 1. God used to order the killing of sorcerers (Exodus 22: 18). So does God give beautiful prophecies about Christ to a sorcerer who deals with demons? 2. So, the opinion that he is a sorcerer is far from true. 3. The strongest evidence for this is verse (9): " Then God came to Balaam and said, " So does God do this to a sorcerer?! 4. And his saying, " For there is no sorcery against Jacob " means that you, Balak, are asking me to curse the people

of God, but no curse, nor magic works can befall the people whom God protects. 5. As for this sentence, "God commanded the killing of sorcerers (Exodus 22: 18), it does not oblige God not to deal with sorcerers, but rather it is directed to those who go to sorcerers who undo the spells. God protects God's children and they do not need sorcerers to undo the spells of demons. 6. Indeed, he asked to build seven altars, but he was asking and uttering what God was telling him. 7. And his acceptance of the wage, is his weakness, the love of money is like that of Judas, who was a disciple of Christ, but it is said that he had rejected it the first time.. 8. Here we say that when Joshua said about him that he was a soothsayer after his fall and bad advice, which caused the killing of 24,000 people.

6. This prophet (or the soothsayer, as it is said about him) had disciples who kept his prophecies, and from them the Magi knew about the Lord Christ, especially this prophecy. " A Star shall come out of Jacob; A Scepter shall rise out of Israel" (Numbers 24: 17).

7. Who was actually speaking to Balaam? Was God really or Satan? The important thing is that everything Balaam said about Christ was true. Therefore, it was God who spoke to him when he announced his prophecies. And it was Satan who spoke to him when he gave Balak evil advice. His love for money was the strong motive for his mistakes, and the lust for love of money overcame him, and from here, Satan overpowered him, but God forbade him to say a bad word about His people, and this is God's protection for His people. God could have let Balaam speak and curse the people and still He protects His people. Will God execute the curses of demons and magicians when they utter them against his people!!! These curses are definitely worthless, but this shows how much God loves and cares for us. In His love for His people, we find that God did not even accept that Balaam curses His people. Therefore, Balaam was a person who had a relationship with God and was used by God, but was finally overcome by his love of money. This is what happened with Judas, the disciple of Christ. He had relationship with Christ where He sent him to heal the sick and cast out demons. Then the love of money overcame him, and Satan entered him (John 13: 27).

8. The name is mentioned here as Balaam the son of Beor, and Peter calls him Balaam the son Basur. This is due to the fact that he has two names, or that this name is the Greek name, or it is a famous name among the Jews, and they changed its name from Beor to Basur. The meaning of his name Balaam = swallowed + am (the people) and Beor = destroyed and perished the people. The meaning becomes that he destroyed and annihilated, and swallowed the people. As for Besur, this is the Chaldean pronunciation of the name Beor. And by Besur means a body, and St. Peter the Apostle chose a name by Besur to refer to the sin of fornication that Balaam pointed out to Balak, the king of Moab, in which God's people would fall. God would then be angry with His people, and then they would be defeated before Moab.

9. It is clear from the story that Moab was allied with the tribes of Midian, who are many tribes and wanderers in the desert. Probably, when the king of Moab was afraid of Israel, he consulted with the elders of Midian, and they advised him this advice. They had a connection with Balaam because of their wanderings in every place, and the evidence is that after Balaam finished his mission and pointed to Moab his bad advice, he went and stayed with his friends from the people of Midian.

(Verse 1): **Then the children of Israel moved, and camped in the plains of Moab on the side of the Jordan across from Jericho.**

the plains of Moab: Means valleys of Moab.

on the side of the Jordan across from Jericho: The part of the Jordan River on which Jericho is located, the area between the Red Sea and the Dead Sea. The word plain means desert, wilderness, or extended plain.

(Verses 2-3): **Now Balak the son of Zippor saw all that Israel had done to the Amorites. 3 And Moab was exceedingly afraid of the people because they were many, and Moab was sick with dread because of the children of Israel.**

(Verse 4): **So Moab said to the elders of Midian, "Now this company will lick up everything around us, as an ox licks up the grass of the field." And Balak the son of Zippor was king of the Moabites at that time.**

Balak complains to the elders of Midian because of his fear of the people.

(Verse 5): **Then he sent messengers to Balaam the son of Beor at Pethor, which is near the River in the land of the sons of his people, to call him, saying: "Look, a people has come from Egypt. See, they cover the face of the earth, and are settling next to me!"**

We find him sending to Balaam, so the counsellors are the elders of Midian. It seems that Balak, king of Moab, realized that the people's victories were unnatural and that a special blessing accompanied them, as they did not use weapons against Pharaoh. Rather, they are victorious by the power of prayer and supplications. That is why Balak did not prepare an army to fight with but resorted to divination and magic to face the blessing.

(Verse 6): **Therefore please come at once, curse this people for me, for they are too mighty for me. Perhaps I shall be able to defeat them and drive them out of the land, for I know that he whom you bless is blessed, and he whom you curse is cursed."**

he whom you bless is blessed, and he whom you curse is cursed: Probably these are the words of the elders of Midian.

(Verse 7): **So the elders of Moab and the elders of Midian departed with the diviner's fee in their hand, and they came to Balaam and spoke to him the words of Balak.**

Once again, we see **the elders of Moab and the elders of Midian** called Balaam

(Verse 8): **And he said to them, "Lodge here tonight, and I will bring back word to you, as the Lord speaks to me." So the princes of Moab stayed with Balaam.**

(Verse 9): **Then God came to Balaam and said, "Who are these men with you?"**

Who are these men with you?: Not that God does not know, but God warns him not to fall and go with them.

(Verses 10-14): **So Balaam said to God, "Balak the son of Zippor, king of Moab, has sent to me, saying, 11 'Look, a people has come out of Egypt, and they cover the face of the earth. Come now, curse them for me; perhaps I shall be able to overpower them and drive them out.'" 12 And God said to Balaam, "You shall not go with them; you shall not curse the people, for they are blessed." 13 So Balaam rose in the morning and said to the princes of Balak, "Go back to your land, for the Lord has refused to give me permission to go with you." 14 And the princes of Moab rose and went to Balak, and said, "Balaam refuses to come with us."**

Here we see a clear example of the wrong transmission of words, which distorts the word of God by not transmitting it faithfully and note the wrong transmission sequence..... This is what happened with Eve and the serpent. This is the way of Satan.

God said to Balaam: **You shall not go with them; you shall not curse the people, for they are blessed.**

Balaam says to the messengers: **the Lord has refused to give me permission to go with you.....** This is less than what God told him.

The messengers say to the king: **Balaam refuses to come with us....** This is less than what Balaam said to them.

(Verses 15-18): **Then Balak again sent princes, more numerous and more honorable than they. 16 And they came to Balaam and said to him, "Thus says Balak the son of Zippor: 'Please let nothing hinder you from coming to me; 17 for I will certainly honor you greatly, and I will do whatever you say to me. Therefore please come, curse this people for me.'" 18 Then Balaam answered and said to the servants of Balak, "Though Balak were to give me his house full of silver and gold, I could not go beyond the word of the Lord my God, to do less or more.**

Balaam's clear and powerful answer here rebukes the believers. Unfortunately, he was limping between the two groups. And note that Balaam says **the Lord my God** (Verse 18). Therefore, he knows God. This does not come from a magician who deals with Satan. It can be said that in this place Balaam was "the best of the worst" and God did not find a better one to deal with.

(Verse 19): **Now therefore, please, you also stay here tonight, that I may know what more the Lord will say to me."**

This sentence made clear his hesitation. Will God change his mind because Balak increased the reward? He was hoping for this increase God would allow. And note that Balaam says **the Lord my God**, then he knows God.

(Verse 20): **And God came to Balaam at night and said to him, "If the men come to call you, rise and go with them; but only the word which I speak to you—that you shall do."**

The Lord left him to his desire. The Lord gives each one according to his heart (Psalm 20: 4), and see (Psalm 81: 12) " So I gave them over to their own stubborn heart, To walk in their own counsels." Therefore, we find in (Numbers 23: 5) that God put words in his mouth, not in his heart, for the heart is occupied with the love of silver and money.

If the men come to call you: God knows he's in a hurry to go with them to get the money. But God is trying to restrain him.

rise and go with them; but only the word which I speak to you: This is because God wanted:

- 1) To prophesy to these people the coming Christ and His work in saving mankind, and from this prophecy, the Magi searched for Christ.
- 2) To declare that these people are God's beloved people and that He blesses and protects them. This is what Balaam said in front of everyone.
- 3) God brings out sweetness from the strong.

(Verses 21-30): **So Balaam rose in the morning, saddled his donkey, and went with the princes of Moab. 22 Then God's anger was aroused because he went, and the Angel of the Lord took His stand in the way as an adversary against him. And he was riding on his donkey, and his two servants were with him. 23 Now the donkey saw the Angel of the Lord standing in the way with His drawn sword in His hand, and the donkey turned aside out of the way and went into the field. So Balaam struck the donkey to turn her back onto the road. 24 Then the Angel of the Lord stood in a narrow path between the vineyards, with a wall on this side and a wall on that side. 25 And when the donkey saw the Angel**

of the Lord, she pushed herself against the wall and crushed Balaam's foot against the wall; so he struck her again. 26 Then the Angel of the Lord went further, and stood in a narrow place where there was no way to turn either to the right hand or to the left. 27 And when the donkey saw the Angel of the Lord, she lay down under Balaam; so Balaam's anger was aroused, and he struck the donkey with his staff. 28 Then the Lord opened the mouth of the donkey, and she said to Balaam, "What have I done to you, that you have struck me these three times?" 29 And Balaam said to the donkey, "Because you have abused me. I wish there were a sword in my hand, for now I would kill you!" 30 So the donkey said to Balaam, "Am I not your donkey on which you have ridden, ever since I became yours, to this day? Was I ever disposed to do this to you?" And he said, "No."

Note the angel's pressurizing sequence:-

1. **the donkey turned aside out of the way**
2. On his way, **a narrow path between the vineyards**, i.e. a narrow corridor surrounded by walls and shaded by vineyards. So the donkey tilted, and the foot of Balaam was stuck in the wall.
3. **a narrow place where there was no way to turn**, i.e. or there is no other way to get off the road.

God, to declare His dissatisfaction in whatever path Balaam chose which God is not satisfied with. We notice that human freedom is limited, while God's sovereignty is absolute. He puts obstacles in the way so that man may understand that God is not satisfied. But suppose a person pursues his lust like Balaam, does not care and does not heed attention to these obstacles, as Balaam did, and continues to beat the donkey. In that case, God will leave him to his fate according to the words of the Psalm: " May He grant you according to your heart's desire, And fulfill all your purpose." (Psalm 20: 4).

Note Balaam's sadness and revolt from these obstacles while they had saved his life.

ever since I became yours = since you started riding or since you were born.

Note that Balaam said in his prophecies that his eyes are open. But his eyes were closed here because of the lust for money that possessed him. On the other hand, the donkey has opened its eyes, saw the angel, and even opened its mouth.

It is not surprising that the donkey speaks, for Satan spoke on the mouth of the serpent before. Is it too much that God makes a donkey speak? The meaning of the words of the donkey is that something beyond his power prevented him from walking. There are questions about how Balaam was not surprised that his donkey spoke?

- 1- Often, at the time of a miracle, a person is like sleeping or feels as if he was in a dream, and afterwards, he feels astonished by what happened.
- 2- Perhaps he was shocked when the book did not record this, and perhaps he understood that this is in the hands of God.

3- Perhaps he is like a fortune-teller who is accustomed to such miraculous practices. The pagans were talking with animals and were optimistic and pessimistic about their movements and trends. And perhaps the Lord rebuked him by the same method that he was using, and the pagans definitely, when they deal with animals in this way, the animal is under demonic influence.

(Verses 31-35): **Then the Lord opened Balaam's eyes, and he saw the Angel of the Lord standing in the way with His drawn sword in His hand; and he bowed his head and fell flat on his face. 32 And the Angel of the Lord said to him, "Why have you struck your donkey these three times? Behold, I have come out to stand against you, because your way is perverse before Me. 33 The donkey saw Me and turned aside from Me these three times. If she had not turned aside from Me, surely I would also have killed you by now, and let her live." 34 And Balaam said to the Angel of the Lord, "I have sinned, for I did not know You stood in the way against me. Now therefore, if it displeases You, I will turn back." 35 Then the Angel of the Lord said to Balaam, "Go with the men, but only the word that I speak to you, that you shall speak." So Balaam went with the princes of Balak.**

Then the Lord opened Balaam's eyes: The love of money made him without prejudice to God's opinion, and this caused him blindness, so he did not see the angel, while the donkey saw him. In a similar situation. Review the story of Uzzah's death when he touched the ark of the covenant when David wanted to move it. They put the ark on a chariot drawn by oxen (2 Samuel 6: 1-8). We find that the bulls stumbled in panic or fear. There were many mistakes in moving the Ark of the Covenant on that day, and God was angry. The strange thing is that the bulls felt the wrath of God, so they snorted before all those present. David was angry because of the death of Uzzah and did not realize the wrath of God. Thus, Balaam was angry without realizing the wrath of God also. On the day of Christ's crucifixion, the sun and the earth felt God's wrath, which The sun eclipsed and the earth quaked, and the Jews went to celebrate the Passover. God's creation of animals and inanimate objects feels God's wrath before humans feel it, so it is often said, "The mountains and the hills Shall break forth into singing before you, And all the trees of the field shall clap their hands." and vice versa.

because your way is perverse before Me: Meaning I found your path leads to perdition.

(Verses 36-40): **Now when Balak heard that Balaam was coming, he went out to meet him at the city of Moab, which is on the border at the Arnon, the boundary of the territory. 37 Then Balak said to Balaam, "Did I not earnestly send to you, calling for you? Why did you not come to me? Am I not able to honor you?" 38 And Balaam said to Balak, "Look, I have come to you! Now, have I any power at all to say anything? The word that God puts in my mouth, that I must speak." 39 So Balaam went with Balak, and they came to Kirjath Huzoth. 40 Then Balak offered oxen and sheep, and he sent some to Balaam and to the princes who were with him.**

It is certain that Balaam when he reached Balak and said what God puts in his mouth, Balak thought he wanted more, as happened before, so he began to honour him with feasts. Balak's slaughter of cows and sheep is probably a religious ritual.

(Verse 41): **So it was, the next day, that Balak took Balaam and brought him up to the high places of Baal, that from there he might observe the extent of the people.**

high places of Baal: Balak thought that the curse of Balaam would be more severe from the high places of Baal, while he saw the people from the hill in abundance (this is like envy).

Chapter 23

Balaam's Prophecies:

(Verse 1): **Then Balaam said to Balak, "Build seven altars for me here, and prepare for me here seven bulls and seven rams."**

The abundance of altars is a clear sign of pagan worship (Hosea 8: 11), while the fathers used to establish one altar. The pagans used to offer sacrifices to their gods to lift the afflictions, and the number 7 is a perfect number for many people.

Important note: Here, we find a secret conspiracy between Balak and Balaam, the elders of Moab and the elders of Midian, and between Satan, who stirs all these. While the people of Israel do not know, but God, who does not slumber or sleep, protects His people without them even knowing or asking.

(Verses 2-4): **And Balak did just as Balaam had spoken, and Balak and Balaam offered a bull and a ram on each altar. 3 Then Balaam said to Balak, "Stand by your burnt offering, and I will go; perhaps the Lord will come to meet me, and whatever He shows me I will tell you." So he went to a desolate height. 4 And God met Balaam, and he said to Him, "I have prepared the seven altars, and I have offered on each altar a bull and a ram."**

Balaam may boast here that he set up 7 altars to the Lord and offered sacrifices on them = **I have prepared**, or he is flattering God to agree to him to curse the people and get the reward. Although there are errors, God wanted Balaam to testify to the truth before the nations. It is clear here that when God allowed Balaam to go with Balak's messengers to Balak, God wanted to bear witness to His people and His love and protection for His people before these nations so that they would fear His people. But notice Balaam's saying, "**perhaps the Lord will come to meet me**" = so he was accustomed to God coming to meet him.

(Verses 5-6): **Then the Lord put a word in Balaam's mouth, and said, "Return to Balak, and thus you shall speak." 6 So he returned to him, and there he was, standing by his burnt offering, he and all the princes of Moab.**

The First Prophecy:

(Verses 7-10): **And he took up his oracle and said: "Balak the king of Moab has brought me from Aram, From the mountains of the east. 'Come, curse Jacob for me, And come, denounce Israel!' 8 "How shall**

I curse whom God has not cursed? And how shall I denounce whom the Lord has not denounced? 9 For from the top of the rocks I see him, And from the hills I behold him; There! A people dwelling alone, Not reckoning itself among the nations. 10 "Who can count the dust of Jacob, Or number one-fourth of Israel? Let me die the death of the righteous, And let my end be like his!"

The Church, The Body of Christ:

How shall I curse whom God has not cursed? The people of Christ, His secret body, of which Israel was a symbol, are not to be cursed, and no one has authority over him. He has the new nature of the image of His Creator, and a nature that was justified and sanctified in the blood of Christ cannot be cursed or insulted.

For from the top of the rocks I see him, And from the hills I behold him; There! A people dwelling alone, Not reckoning itself among the nations:

Balaam, now on the mountain (Numbers 22: 41), sees the people of the Lord isolated from the pagan peoples, distinct from them and not like them.

And Israel was in Egypt isolated from the pagan peoples around them in Egypt. God miraculously preserved them, even after the captivity, for they returned as a distinguished people, and strong nations such as Canaan, Babylon, and Tyre perished before them.

And God's people are always separate from the world's sins " because you are not of the world" (John 15: 19).

And the people of God are spiritually transcendent and live in heavenly places, so he saw them from the top of the rocks. The spiritual Israel is located on the high mountains, meaning they live a virtuous heavenly life. Christ is the rock (1 Corinthians 10: 4 + Psalm 18: 2), and the church was founded on the true rock, Christ. And the prophet Isaiah prophesied about Christ, "That the mountain of the Lord's house Shall be established on the top of the mountains, And shall be exalted above the hills" (Isaiah 2: 2). This means that Christ is a mountain and is the head of His church which is made up of people steadfast in their faith like mountains, as the psalmist said: " Those who trust in the Lord Are like Mount Zion, Which cannot be moved, but abides forever." (Psalm 125: 1). To say that Christ is a rock is to say that Christ is a mountain. He is the heavenly high One who does not change or shake. He is the One in whom His children take refuge from the storms of the desert of this world, and they resemble Him in His steadfastness and their heavenly life. So we understand Balaam's prophecy here: "**For from the top of the rocks I see him**" as being about Christ, the head of the church. And the church is in the heavenly, exalted Christ. To see and realize how the Church lives, you must rise to the heavenly places and be in Christ = **from the top of the rocks I see him**, for she lives in Christ, the heavenly Lord, saying, " And there is none upon earth that I desire besides You" (Psalm 73). And the people of Christ is **not reckoning itself among the nations** in the temporal sense because they live in the heavenly places (mountains) and despise the earthly, and their faith is firm and does not shake like mountains. Thus we pray in the Liturgy of St. Basil, "We are the sojourners in this world."

As for the people of Israel, they had a relationship with God; they rather saw God on the Mount of Sinai. They have prophets whom God speaks to and who convey to the people the words of God. They have a temple in which God dwells. They were a people isolated from the pagan world with all that it included. They, as a people are still isolated to this day, they used to live isolated from the society they live in. Even as far as Israel is concerned, the prophecy is still valid and true to this day.

Who can count the dust of Jacob, Or number one-fourth of Israel?

The Lord said to Abraham, "And I will make your descendants as the dust of the earth" (Genesis 13: 16), a sign of the great number. And again, "Then He brought him outside and said, "Look now toward heaven, and count the stars if you are able to number them." And He said to him, "So shall your descendants be." (Genesis 15: 5). His saying, the stars of heaven, refers to the Israel of the Old Testament, the sons of Jacob in the flesh. And his saying, the dust of the earth, refers to the Church. The stars of heaven are seen with the eye in the darkness of night. And so were the people of Israel in the Old Testament. They lived in the darkness of the seventh day before Christ, the Sun of Righteousness, appeared. As for the Church of Christ, it is represented by the dust of the earth, which is only seen in the light of the sun. And the Church has been justified by the Sun of Righteousness. So his saying, **the dust of Jacob**, refers to the Church, which is his physical offspring, and also to his sons by faith. This church in which the Jews gathered with the nations extended throughout the world and cannot be counted or enumerated. And since we say that the dust of the earth refers to the church, his saying **Who can count the dust of Jacob** = makes us understand that this is in the light. So can someone who wants to count the dust rise in the darkness.

Or number one-fourth of Israel = And the tents of Israel were divided into four camps and each camp was very numerous, so who can count even one camp, meaning a quarter of Israel or one of its four sections? This is evidence of their large number. This is what was said about God's people in heaven: "After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could number, of all nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, with palm branches in their hands," (Revelation 7: 9). But let us notice that the phrase "**one-fourth of Israel**" refers to the people of Israel who were before Balaam and were divided into four camps. So Israel here refers to the people of the Old Testament. While the saying "**the dust of Jacob**" refers to the New Testament Church upon which the light of the Sun of Righteousness shone.

Let me die the death of the righteous, And let my end be like his! He described the people as the righteous, for the Lord chose them, and Christ justified us. Perhaps he did not understand that the Church died with Christ and rose, so he desired this death or uttered it without understanding. **But the meaning of what he said is to die with Christ, to live for God so that his end will be in heaven on the day of the eternal resurrection of mankind.**

Unfortunately, neither his desire nor this prophecy was fulfilled. He gave Balak bad advice, and the result was his death with the people of Midian in the hands of the people of the Lord, and he died perishing because of his love for money. (Numbers 31: 8, 16 + Jude 11). However, it is strange that Balaam longed for death at a time when death was a curse even among the Jews, but he said this in the spirit of prophecy. What Balaam lost because of his counsel, his disciples were not lost by the Magi, for they came to Christ, confirming his kingdom and priesthood.

Is it strange that Balaam prophesied about the Messiah? The answer is that God used to use people everywhere to announce to all mankind His will. For example, there was a pagan poet 600 years before Christ in Greece, and this poet said there was an unknown God. He wrote a poem about him in which he said:

They made a tomb for you, O Most Holy One. Cretans are always liars and murderers. And you are not dead forever. You are risen and alive, because in you, we live, move, and exist. From this poem, the Apostle Paul quotes two passages (Acts 17 + Titus 1). Did not Caiaphas prophesy about the Messiah while he issued a judgment of his death on the cross (John 11: 49-52)? God does not leave Himself without a witness (Acts 14: 16).

Summary of the first prophecy of Balaam

Balaam saw from the mountain the tents of the people of Israel with Joshua as their leader. He saw in them the church that Christ creates and establishes on Him, and He is like a rock protecting her. Therefore, this church is also firm, like a rock that does not shake. The new creation was that the old creation (taken from Adam) would die in it. She is a heavenly church different from the peoples of the world, isolated from its sins. And God blesses her. She is huge, filling the world, and no one can count her number. So he desired that his old nature would die and that he would have the same end as this new creation that Christ justified. Christ justified His church and made her heavenly in Him after He put the old creation to death in Him and established her in Him = Therefore, Balaam saw the church at the top of the rocks. The rocks are the believers and the top of the rocks is Christ.

(Verses 11-17): **Then Balak said to Balaam, "What have you done to me? I took you to curse my enemies, and look, you have blessed them bountifully!" 12 So he answered and said, "Must I not take heed to speak what the Lord has put in my mouth?" 13 Then Balak said to him, "Please come with me to another place from which you may see them; you shall see only the outer part of them, and shall not see them all; curse them for me from there." 14 So he brought him to the field of Zophim, to the top of Pisgah, and built seven altars, and offered a bull and a ram on each altar. 15 And he said to Balak, "Stand here by your burnt offering while I meet the Lord over there." 16 Then the Lord met Balaam, and put a word in his mouth, and said, "Go back to Balak, and thus you shall speak." 17 So he came to him, and there he was, standing by his burnt offering, and the princes of Moab were with him. And Balak said to him, "What has the Lord spoken?"**

The king was terrified and angry at Balaam. Balak took him to another place where he saw part of the congregation of the people of the Lord and not the whole. Balak thought that Balaam was terrified of the large crowd, so he was afraid that he would curse the people and the people would offend him when they defeat Moab (the behaviour of the ostrich). But God does not accept a curse, not a single member of the congregation, not a part of it. God can make the enemies of His people argue and divide while He mocks them and protects His people. And from **the top of Pisgah**, Moses saw the Promised Land.

The Second Prophecy:

(Verses 18-24): **Then he took up his oracle and said: "Rise up, Balak, and hear! Listen to me, son of Zippor! 19 "God is not a man, that He should lie, Nor a son of man, that He should repent. Has He said, and will He not do? Or has He spoken, and will He not make it good? 20 Behold, I have received a command to bless; He has blessed, and I cannot reverse it. 21 "He has not observed iniquity in Jacob, Nor has He seen wickedness in Israel. The Lord his God is with him, And the shout of a King is among them. 22 God brings them out of Egypt; He has strength like a wild ox. 23 "For there is no sorcery against Jacob, Nor any divination against Israel. It now must be said of Jacob And of Israel, 'Oh, what God has done!' 24 Look, a people rises like a lioness, And lifts itself up like a lion; It shall not lie down until it devours the prey, And drinks the blood of the slain."**

Redemption washes away sins

Then he took up his oracle and said: "Rise up, Balak, and hear! Listen to me, son of Zippor!"

He was standing at the altar. The meaning is symbolic. The word Balak means spoiled or saboteur. Therefore, it is a call to the nations that have lived for a long time worshipping idols and have become ruined to rise with the risen Christ. This is what was said to Saul of Tarsus, " Arise and go into the city" (Acts 9: 6 + Ephesians 5: 14).

After the resurrection, the Holy Spirit enters into the Risen one, and he hears what the Spirit says to the churches (Ezekiel 2: 1,2 + Revelation 2: 7).

God is not a man, that He should lie, Nor a son of man, that He should repent ... I have received a command to bless

God has promised His people a blessing, and He is keeping His promise. He promised that the seed of the woman would crush the head of the serpent so that the blessing would return. This blessing will cost God His incarnation and crucifixion, but will He go back on His promise? Far be it from Him. He was crucified to bear the curse from me and give me the blessing instead of the curse. He would raise up His people for the new blessed life.

He has not observed iniquity in Jacob:

Israel is far better than the pagan peoples. God does not see in them what deserves to be cursed. Or it means that God forgave His people, or he looks at their fathers and sees them through their fathers. But the spiritual interpretation of this verse is that Christ made atonement for His people with His blood. They enjoy His righteousness instead of their iniquity.

The Lord his God is with him, And the shout of a King is among them:

They praise God who is in their midst and fights their wars. He reigned over His people with His cross, so they rejoiced and praised Him and chanted for Him = **the shout of a King is among them**, meaning He is a king is among His people, chanting for their salvation and the forgiveness of their sins = **He has not observed iniquity**

God brings them out of Egypt; He has strength like a wild ox:

God brought the people out of Egypt on the night of the Passover, so they crossed over to freedom. And with the cross of Christ, they were delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. This divine transit in the life of the believers takes place with strength and speed, as the speed of the wild ox. The interpreters differed in the interpretation of the intended type of animal (wild ox), and it is one of two possibilities: a type of wild bull that became extinct from the world and was distinguished by its speed and great strength. See (Job 39: 9-12). This wild ox could not be bowing his neck to the yoke or harnessing to serve man, so it would be a symbol of the Christ, who has risen from the dead with power (Deuteronomy 33: 7). Or it may be a unicorn and see (Exodus 19: 4), "and how I bore you on eagles' wings." If God brought them out, how would you stop them, Balak? The prophecy means that the people of Israel left Egypt quickly and powerfully, and Pharaoh and his army could not catch up with them or harm them.

For there is no sorcery against Jacob, Nor any divination against Israel:

Divination is knowledge of the unseen by means of magic. And sorcery is knowledge of the unseen using certain animals and birds. This is forbidden by God and considered impure. Here, we see that these evil forces have no authority over the children of God, as they cannot harm them (Isaiah 54: 17 + Matthew 16: 18 + Ephesians 6: 16). Rather, God gave His people the power to trample this enemy "serpents and scorpions" (Luke 10: 19).

It now must be said of Jacob And of Israel, 'Oh, what God has done!':

now = This is what St. Paul the Apostle said about it, "the fullness of the time," meaning the time that God sees fit. But this time has been determined from eternity, "But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law," (Galatians 4: 4). When this happens, it will be said at that time, how great is what God has done for them. When redemption is accomplished through the cross, reconciliation with the Father occurs, and the Father sends the Holy Spirit to the Church. **It now must** = when the Father sends the Holy Spirit to the church. He will explain to us so we understand the wondrous work of Christ, who forgave our sins and gave us eternal life in His glory. **Jacob** = This is about the Jews. And this **Israel** is the Church, the Israel of God (Galatians 6: 16).

a people rises like a lioness, And lifts itself up like a lion; It shall not lie down until it devours the prey, And drinks the blood of the slain.

The lioness is the female of the lion. And the Church is the bride of Christ, the lion coming out of the tribe of Judah, enjoying the power of the resurrection of her Groom, and she rises with Him to His heavens. This prophecy is similar to Jacob's prophecy to Judah: "Judah is a lion's whelp; From the prey, my son, you have gone up. He bows down, he lies down as a lion; And as a lion, who shall rouse him?" (Genesis 49: 9). We must share with Christ in the cross: "I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me;" (Galatians 2: 20). We die with Christ and rise to defeat our enemy, the devil, whom Christ made prey. This is the meaning of Jacob's words in his prophecy: "He bows down" = "He was crucified on the cross." And "he lies down as a lion" = "He was crucified like a lion who lies down for the prey" = "He lies in wait for the prey with strength." Therefore, while on the cross, He defeated Satan and bound him.

This people does not rest until it defeats its enemies, the demons, who have become its prey. He strives against them until the kingdom is attained, and his words "**And drinks the blood of the slain**" are not interpreted in the literal sense. Rather, it is a victory over demons, and demons are spirits that do not have blood. The same analogy was said about Christ's victory over demons: "Why is Your apparel red, And Your garments like one who treads in the winepress?" (Isaiah 63: 1-6). But this is also a prophecy of the defeat of the people of Canaan.

This prophecy is similar to that of Jacob to Judah (Genesis 49). We die with Christ and rise to defeat our enemy Satan, whom Christ made **prey**. This is the meaning of what Jacob said in his prophecy (he was bowed down, lay on the cross in weakness, but he was crouched (he was in a position like a lion ready to attack a prey = waiting on it with force to attack the prey. That is why on the cross He defeated and restrained Satan).

It shall not lie down until it devours the prey: This is similar to "and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it." (Matthew 16: 18). Hades means the kingdom of demons. And the Church, with her prayers and praises, and her rejection of the temptations of demons, defeats and brings down the kingdom of demons as prey.

a people rises: Christ died and rose, and in baptism, we die and rise with him (Romans 6). If Christ has set us free and forgiven our sins, we have risen with Him for the first resurrection. And the second resurrection will be for the one abiding in Him, at His second coming.

And lifts itself up like a lion: Christ ascended to the heaven of the heavens and went to prepare a place for us, and He will come to lift us up with Him. The apostle Paul says that the Lord Christ "and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus" (Ephesians 2: 6), which means that He raised us from the level of earthly lusts to live a heavenly life and our conduct is to be the heavens, while we are still on earth struggling, and our level rises day by day forsaking the earthly and living in the heavenly places, dying in front of sin and entering into the depths, longing for this day when He comes on the clouds, and He will raise us with Him to see Him as He is.

Behold, I have received a command to bless; He has blessed, and I cannot reverse it. 21 "He has not observed iniquity in Jacob:

Christ, by His cross, forgave our sins and turned the curse into a blessing: "Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us (for it is written, "Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree"),¹⁴ that the blessing of Abraham might come upon the Gentiles in Christ Jesus, that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith." (Galatians 3:13-14). If Christ blessed, who can curse?

Summary of the Second Prophecy

God promised and fulfilled His promise to take away the iniquity of His people. This church that Christ establishes is a church whose sins are forgiven. Christ freed his church from the slavery of Satan and blessed it, and no one can curse it, for its king is in its midst. Rather, its king is its bridegroom. This church lives, praising God for her salvation that its king has accomplished. This church will spread and grow with amazing speed and power. This church has authority over its enemies. And all this will be accomplished in the fullness of time = **It now must.**

(Verses 25-30): **Then Balak said to Balaam, "Neither curse them at all, nor bless them at all!" 26 So Balaam answered and said to Balak, "Did I not tell you, saying, 'All that the Lord speaks, that I must do'?" 27 Then Balak said to Balaam, "Please come, I will take you to another place; perhaps it will please God that you may curse them for me from there." 28 So Balak took Balaam to the top of Peor, that overlooks the wasteland. 29 Then Balaam said to Balak, "Build for me here seven altars, and prepare for me here seven bulls and seven rams." 30 And Balak did as Balaam had said, and offered a bull and a ram on every altar.**

Here we find Balak changing the place for the second time, just in case. And here he took him to Ras Peor: Balak took Balaam to **the top of Peor** = that is, the top of immorality, there was a temple for their god Baal Peor, and most likely he thought that this holy place would persuade God to change His mind. Note that the top of immorality and temporal pleasures overlooked the wilderness, for where immorality is, there is spiritual dryness.

Chapter 24

Balaam's Prophecies (continuation)

(Verses 1-2): **Now when Balaam saw that it pleased the Lord to bless Israel, he did not go as at other times, to seek to use sorcery, but he set his face toward the wilderness. 2 And Balaam raised his eyes, and saw Israel encamped according to their tribes; and the Spirit of God came upon him.**

It seems he had hope or wish that the Lord would change His mind and make him curse the people and get the reward. Therefore, he went straight forward, directing his words toward the people. When he found God's insistence on blessing, he surrendered to God to put on his mouth what he wanted, as he understood God's insistence to bless the people.

Balaam's Third Prophecy:

(Verses 3-9): **Then he took up his oracle and said: "The utterance of Balaam the son of Beor, The utterance of the man whose eyes are opened, 4 The utterance of him who hears the words of God, Who sees the vision of the Almighty, Who falls down, with eyes wide open: 5 "How lovely are your tents, O Jacob! Your dwellings, O Israel! 6 Like valleys that stretch out, Like gardens by the riverside, Like aloes planted by the Lord, Like cedars beside the waters. 7 He shall pour water from his buckets, And his seed shall be in many waters. "His king shall be higher than Agag, And his kingdom shall be exalted. 8 "God brings him out of Egypt; He has strength like a wild ox; He shall consume the nations, his enemies; He shall break their bones And pierce them with his arrows. 9 'He bows down, he lies down as a lion; And as a lion, who shall rouse him?' "Blessed is he who blesses you, And cursed is he who curses you."**

The Holy Spirit descends on the Church

Because the prophecy pertains to the Holy Spirit, we hear here that Balaam's Spirit of God came upon him to reveal the work of the Spirit, and note that the water symbolizes the Holy Spirit (John 7: 37-39 + Psalm 1 + Isaiah 44: 1-4).

The utterance of the man whose eyes are opened: While sin blinds the eyes, lust for money blinded Balaam's eyes from seeing the angel on the road. We see here that his eyes are open because the Spirit of God has come upon him, for the Holy Spirit opens the eyes to heavenly matters. In contrast, sin opens eyes to evil.

The utterance of him who hears the words of God, Who sees the vision of the Almighty, Who falls down, with eyes wide open: Just as the Spirit opens the eyes, He gives the ears to hear. The Spirit

makes the senses exercised (Hebrews 5: 14). And **Who falls down** means stunned and fallen from the power and dread of the vision.

How lovely are your tents, O Jacob! Your dwellings, O Israel! This may mean the beauty of the order of Israel's tents and their stability for the presence of God in their midst. And Balaam saw the distribution of their tents. This is the case of the Church as if she says: "I am dark, but lovely" the secret of her beauty is Christ. And compared to "Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?" (1 Corinthians 3: 16), so the beauty of the tents is due to God's dwelling in them. The Holy Spirit dwells in the Church and gives us union with each other and with God in His Son through the love that the Holy Spirit pours out in us. The love of God and the love of the brethren (Romans 5: 5 + Galatians 5: 22). "You are all fair, my love, And there is no spot in you." (Song of Solomon 4: 7). Compare with "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is ..." (Psalm 133) + "I was glad when they said to me, "Let us go into the house of the Lord." Our feet have been standing Within your gates, O Jerusalem! Jerusalem is built As a city that is compact together" (Psalm 122), or as the Septagint meaning attached to each other.

Like valleys that stretch out, Like gardens by the riverside, Like aloes planted by the Lord, Like cedars beside the waters:

Like valleys: Valleys are located under the mountains. And snow is formed on top of the mountains. The water of this snow descends into rivers that irrigate the valleys, and the trees are formed as gardens. Note how these gardens are described. God likened His people to beautiful trees that were nourished by the Holy Spirit (the water coming down from above).

Their camp extended **Like valleys that stretch out**. And they are radiant as gardens, which means they are a fruitful nation. The **aloes** trees are enormous trees that have a lovely smell and the aloe is used as incense (it may be sandalwood) = and we are the fragrance of Christ (2 Corinthians 2: 15). This tree has a very long stem and very extended branches, so it looks like a tent. The cedar is always tall, straight, and evergreen; its wood is the most valuable kind, has a long life, and has a beautiful smell. It grows at the top of the mountains of Lebanon on the highest peaks of its mountains (heavenly church), and five men with difficulty can surround its stems. Its branches grow in parallel rows like tents, having a conical shape (Psalm 92: 12). Notice the cedar here does not represent pride.

The church is here as shaded forests and gardens on a river that rejoice the human heart and restore its lost peace. The church is beautiful, for God Himself has set up her tents on the holy rivers. God planted the believers in the holy water of baptism, and every baptized person would be implanted as a member in the body of Christ and becomes a temple for the Holy Spirit, the living water. And the tree planted on the waters (a symbol of the Holy Spirit) is green and fruitful, filled with the fruits of the Spirit (Galatians 5: 22,23). To see the application, refer to the first psalm of David: "He shall be like a tree Planted by the rivers of water, That brings forth its fruit in its season, Whose leaf also shall not wither; And whatever he does shall prosper." (Psalm 1). We said that the church. And even the filled person can spread peace to those around him.

And such a person is sought by all, and they rest under his shade from the scorching sun (Song of Solomon 4: 16 + 5: 1).



But how can a suffering and depressed person rest from one filled with the Spirit?

The answer is in the following verse.

He shall pour water from his buckets, And his seed shall be in many waters. "His king shall be higher than Agag:

Illustration here is in an eastern way, as they used to get water through wells. Here, Israel is depicted with a man who came to the well carrying two buckets and filled them, and they were overflowing with water, a metaphor for blessing, success, abundance and blessings. The image may mean that God is pouring out on them = "He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water." (John 7: 37-39). Water is a symbol of the Holy Spirit. We understand from the word overflowing that there are degrees of fullness, and they are fullness and overflow. Whoever is filled to the point of overflowing, overflows on others... Like a person who is filled with peace, he does not lose his peace under any frightening circumstance, while everyone around him finds them disturbing and frightening. Whereas whoever reaches the point of overflow if he is in a place, and those in it are afraid spreads peace among them. This was depicted in the prophecy of Balaam by a bucket filled with water flowing and overflowing on others. **many waters:** "He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water." God sends the Spirit in abundance.

And his seed shall be, that is, the descendants of Israel shall dwell on the waters of Canaan, and inherit blessings, and his seed shall be abundant, and the waters are plentiful.

This prophecy came in the Septuagint, "A man will come from his seed and judge many nations." So the meaning is that the Lord Christ will incarnate from the house of Israel, and the Holy Spirit is sent abundantly to His church, "But when the Helper comes, whom I shall send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify of Me." (John 15: 26). And also, "On the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, "If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. 38He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water." (John 7: 37, 38). And He reigns spiritually over many nations through the work of the Holy Spirit in His church (Psalm 2: 8).

His king shall be higher than Agag: Agag is a name for the kings of the Amalekites such as Pharaoh of Egypt, and the Amalekites were the most powerful peoples, and Israel crushed them, and Christ our King crushed death, Satan and sin, the greatest enemies of mankind.

God brings him out of Egypt; He has strength like a wild ox: This time, the wild ox is different from the previous time, as the church has been formed and the Holy Spirit has descended upon her, and now it

has become her job to preach, and she has spread quickly and with great power. The purpose of preaching is to free the soul from slavery so that Christ may reign over it to the ends of the earth (Deuteronomy 33: 17). And since Egypt was referring to the place of the people's slavery, it was said **God brings him out of Egypt** = meaning that Christ liberated the church from the bondage of Satan, and Christianity spread in the world as fast as the wild ox.

He shall consume the nations, his enemies; He shall break their bones And pierce them with his arrows:

Nations symbolize Satan, and his weapons are evil thoughts that he cast on man's mind, thus disturbing the soul. During this preaching, the Holy Spirit destroys these thoughts. He fills the heart with " the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding" (Philippians 4: 7), meaning that the peace that the Holy Spirit gives surpasses all kinds of evil thoughts, sorrows, fears, and distresses that the enemy of good throws into the mind. Therefore, the apostle says Also, "perplexed, but not in despair" (2 Corinthians 4: 8). It gnaws at their bones, i.e., bodily lusts, and smashes the arrows of evil temptations, thus transferring a person's soul and body to the holy life, granting him the spirit of conquering and victory.

Note: The troubles we face in our lives are of two types: 1) Internal lusts. 2) Impure thoughts that Satan casts into our minds to arouse our lusts. The Holy Spirit helps our weaknesses in the face of both types (Romans 8: 26). Internal lusts were expressed by saying **break their bones** = meaning destroying the internal lust = killing the old man. External wars were expressed by saying **pierce them with his arrows**. When will this be accomplished for us? The answer is in the following verse: crucified the flesh with its passions and desires (Galatians 5: 24 + Galatians 2: 20).

Practical application: While David had many wives and concubines, he desired adultery and fell. But after God disciplined him and grace supported him, he hated this bad lust. When they brought him the beautiful girl Abishag, he did know her, that is, he did not approach her. The evil lust in his members has died ("But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members." Romans 7: 23 & "The young woman was very lovely; and she cared for the king, and served him; but the king did not know her." (1 Kings 1: 4).

He bows down, he lies down as a lion; And as a lion, who shall rouse him?' "Blessed is he who blesses you: This is the same prophecy of Jacob. who shall rouse him? (Genesis 49: 9), the Holy Spirit who inspires is the same. He put the exact words on Jacob's mouth and then on Balaam's mouth.

He talks to the bridegroom and the bride together, because they are united: the bridegroom kneeled like a lion on the cross, and his bride lay with him. The field of battle with Satan was the cross, whether for Christ or His church: "And whoever does not bear his cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple." Meaning he crucifies his passions and desires.

Whoever does this will have the power of resurrection granted by Christ. Christ gives him His capabilities, and he will be blessed.

who shall rouse him = The divinity of Christ raises His humanity. And the same power that raised Christ raises us from the death of sin, and this is the first resurrection. And raises us for eternal life in glory at the second coming of the Lord Jesus; as Saint Paul the Apostle says, "and what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of His mighty power 20 which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, " (Ephesians 1: 19,20).

Summary of the Third Prophecy

It is a prophecy about the work of the Holy Spirit in the Church of Christ: The Church of Christ is filled with an abundance of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit: 1) Opens the senses, while sin blinds the eyes and closes the senses. 2) The Holy Spirit waters the people of Christ so that they bear fruit and also have the sweet aroma of Christ. 3) The Holy Spirit establishes us in Christ and connects us with love. 4) The Church gives the Holy Spirit to her people. 5) The Holy Spirit fills believers. They even reach the point of overflowing onto others. But He also came out as a conqueror and to conquer. The Holy Spirit gives the people of the Church power to conquer sin and sinful desires (which is grace).

The Bridegroom of the Church, Christ, trampled on Satan with the cross. But the people of Christ must know that they are partners with Christ in the cross. The Church of Christ was freed by Christ from the slavery of Satan, and her work is to preach Christ. This preaching will spread and grow rapidly.

(Verse 10): **Then Balak's anger was aroused against Balaam, and he struck his hands together; and Balak said to Balaam, "I called you to curse my enemies, and look, you have bountifully blessed them these three times!**

This shows Balak's anger, extreme confusion and inability to act.

(Verse 11): **Now therefore, flee to your place. I said I would greatly honor you, but in fact, the Lord has kept you back from honor."**

And is it up to Balak to threaten Balaam = **flee to your place. I said I would greatly honor you, but in fact, the Lord has kept you back from honor**, he meant the material gifts that he would have given him.

But because Balaam was full of the Spirit, he continued his prophecies, not caring about Balak's threats.

(Verses 12-14): **So Balaam said to Balak, "Did I not also speak to your messengers whom you sent to me, saying, 13 'If Balak were to give me his house full of silver and gold, I could not go beyond the word of the Lord, to do good or bad of my own will. What the Lord says, that I must speak'? 14 And**

now, indeed, I am going to my people. Come, I will advise you what this people will do to your people in the latter days."

Is it correct for this to be the talk of a sorcerer who deals with demons? This is a person who used to deal with God and was blinded by the lust for money.

The Fourth Prophecy

(Verses 15-25): **So he took up his oracle and said: "The utterance of Balaam the son of Beor, And the utterance of the man whose eyes are opened; 16 The utterance of him who hears the words of God, And has the knowledge of the Most High, Who sees the vision of the Almighty, Who falls down, with eyes wide open: 17 "I see Him, but not now; I behold Him, but not near; A Star shall come out of Jacob; A Scepter shall rise out of Israel, And batter the brow of Moab, And destroy all the sons of tumult. 18 "And Edom shall be a possession; Seir also, his enemies, shall be a possession, While Israel does valiantly. 19 Out of Jacob One shall have dominion, And destroy the remains of the city." 20 Then he looked on Amalek, and he took up his oracle and said: "Amalek was first among the nations, But shall be last until he perishes." 21 Then he looked on the Kenites, and he took up his oracle and said: "Firm is your dwelling place, And your nest is set in the rock; 22 Nevertheless Kain shall be burned. How long until Asshur carries you away captive?" 23 Then he took up his oracle and said: "Alas! Who shall live when God does this? 24 But ships shall come from the coasts of Cyprus, And they shall afflict Asshur and afflict Eber, And so shall Amalek, until he perishes." 25 So Balaam rose and departed and returned to his place; Balak also went his way.**

The utterance of him who hears the words of God, And has the knowledge of the Most High, Who sees the vision of the Almighty, Who falls down, with eyes wide open: The more sin closes the human senses, the more the Holy Spirit opens them. And now Balaam is filled with the Spirit, and the Holy Spirit will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you.

I see Him, but not now; I behold Him, but not near; A Star shall come out of Jacob; A Scepter shall rise out of Israel, And batter the brow of Moab, And destroy all the sons of tumult. 18 "And Edom shall be a possession; Seir also, his enemies, shall be a possession, While Israel does valiantly. 19 Out of Jacob One shall have dominion, And destroy the remains of the city."

He is talking about a person who is not now in the middle of Israel. These verses may apply to David. It was David who struck the Amalekites with a severe blow, after Saul had defeated them, then Hezekiah completely wiped them out (1 Samuel 15: 1-9 + 1 Samuel 30 + 1 Chronicles 4: 41-43). David struck the Moabites (2 Samuel 8: 2). But these prophecies refer to someone beyond David. It does not refer to an ordinary person but to a person with a divine attribute, as he says, **While Israel does valiantly**, so it refers to Christ, the Son of God, who came 1500 years after these prophecies in the fullness of time to create the Church anew. This is the meaning of **does** that he creates. And St. Paul the Apostle called the Church "the Israel of God" (Galatians 6: 16).

And Christ is the Bright and Morning Star (Revelation 22: 16). Being a scepter from Israel means that He is a branch of David's family that was cut off. It indicates that He is a king who reigns and has authority. The word scepter means in the Hebrew language = (branch of). The word means a rod of discipline or a rod of judgment, so it came in English as the king's sceptre. This prophecy probably is what was interpreted by the Magi on the newborn of Bethlehem, so they understood that he would be a king in Israel. But if we understand how the word is used in Hebrew, then the meaning is that the prophecy is for Christ, the branch out of David's family, when He appears, becomes a king who reigns over Israel, that is, His church. The Church is the Israel of God, that is, the great Israel (Galatians 6: 16).

As for the phrase that he **batter the brow of Moab, And destroy all the sons of tumult** it can be understood as follows:

1. It may be that **the sons of tumult** are the devils, so the prophecy refers to Christ's destruction of the kingdom of demons fighting humans to bring them down in sins so that they will perish.
2. The phrase **the sons of tumult** may refer to humans who are fought by demons by provoking the lusts of the flesh.
3. It is more accurate that **the brow of Moab** refers to the wars of Satan against humans, and the sons of war refer to humans who are in a constant war against Satan.

Christ destroyed: a) their right-wing deceptions (self-righteousness and this is like pride and self-confidence); b) And their left-wing deceptions (sins and unclean lusts, whether in thought or deed). These are the brows of Moab.

*He destroyed them disarmed principalities and powers, He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in it. (Colossians 2: 15). The word **tumult** means war. However, the Septuagint translated the word **tumult** as "all the sons of Seth" (for the sons of Cain perished in the flood). By combining the two meanings, we conclude the original meaning: that all humans, who are the sons of Seth, live in a continuous war with demons, and their symbol here is **Moab**, who never ceases declaring war on the sons of men. And Christ, by His cross, possessed humanity that had turned away from him and became his inheritance. The reference to humanity here is **Edom** or **Seir**. And by His power, He transforms it into spiritual Israel, the Israel of God, the church (Galatians 6: 16) = **While Israel does valiantly**.

But why did he express humanity by saying Edom and Seir, while Edom is itself Seir? God created Adam incorruptible. And by sin Adam and his sons became corrupt. And all the sons of Adam inherited the sin of their father Adam. The nature of all of Adam's children became weak and vulnerable to falling into sin and, consequently, to death. But God loves Adam and his children and wants them to live. This was done by offering redemption to man. And through redemption:

1. Forgiveness of the original sin that we inherited from our father, Adam. This was expressed by the name Edom, referring to blood, as Edom refers to the red blood colour (Genesis 25: 30). We inherited

the original sin through physical birth, that is, through blood. As for our birth by baptism from God, it was said about it, "But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name: 13who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." (John 1: 12,13). The sin offering expressed the forgiveness of original sin by the blood of Christ in the Old Testament.

2. The forgiveness of the sins that each of us commits as a result of our fallen, corrupt nature. He expressed this by the name Seir. The name Seir means hair. Hair grows outside the body. Thus, the actions of man express the internal corruption that exists within man. The forgiveness of our sins, which we do by the blood of Christ, was expressed by the sin offering in the Old Testament.

How is the corruption that has befallen man repaired?

destroy all the sons of tumult = the death of the old creation.

While Israel does valiantly= He will make a new creation.

This is done through baptism = the death of the old creation, and the creation of a new creation "For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them." (Ephesians 2: 10) + "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new." (2 Corinthians 5: 17).

Out of Jacob One shall have dominion = Christ shall reign over His church.

And destroy the remains of the city = he who is outside this church shall perish.

He shall rule and reign. He even will be seen and appears in His followers. He is manifested in the lives of believers with the splendour of His glory, and the wandering devil shall flee from the city of God (the heart). When Christ enters the heart, the devil has no place within the soul. But our striving must continue so that Christ may remain in us and remain in His church. Therefore, the Lord Jesus said, "Abide in Me, and I in you." (John 15: 4).

But all **the sons of tumult** shall perish = **tumult** is the intensity of war or the sound of battles. The Septuagint says, "all the children of Seth" from whom all mankind came because the descendants of Cain were destroyed by the flood. Because of this translation of the Septuagint, we understand that the children of war are mankind. If we add the word "**While Israel does valiantly**," we see a wonderful picture of the work of Christ:

1. Baptism is a burial with Christ and a death with Him by the life of Adam (the old man) (to destroy the old man, **the sons of tumult**, or all the sons of Seth).

2. Then a resurrection with Christ, abiding in Christ. So Christ makes the new Israel. "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation" (2 Corinthians 5: 17). Who will Christ make the new Israel of? Of the peoples that were from the kingdom of Satan, that is, all of mankind from the descendants of

Seth = **Seir also, his enemies, shall be a possession. While Israel does valiantly** = Indeed, He did this with valour and great strength, for he had taken them captive from their old king, the devil, to create the new kingdom of Israel among them. That is why it is said. "When He ascended on high, He led captivity captive, And gave gifts to men. "Ephesians 4: 8) + "Or how can one enter a strong man's house and plunder his goods, unless he first binds the strong man? And then he will plunder his house."(Matthew 12: 29).

3. But the new Israel, who came out of baptism, had to fight, while it has strength that made him: to be feared as an army with brigades: "Awesome as an army with banners" (Song of Solomon 6: 10). We started to fight Satan with the power of Christ, who " went out conquering and to conquer." (Revelation 6: 2). Satan is frightened, rather, he is terrified of Christ who is in us = **While Israel does valiantly**. Concerning this war, the apostle Paul says, " You have not yet resisted to bloodshed, striving against sin" (Hebrews 12: 4). But **And destroy the remains of the city** = that is, everyone who refuses to live in the church, enjoying the blessings of redemption, abiding in Christ striving against sin, will come out of the city that is the heavenly Jerusalem and will perish.

4. Therefore, we understand the phrase "**While Israel does valiantly**" means: A) God with his mighty power = **valiantly** makes Israel (the Church) a new creation in Christ (Ephesians 2: 10). B) The Israel of God will have a mighty and great power against Satan, her enemy, to defeat him and even trample him (Luke 10: 19). The Holy Spirit helps the weaknesses of the believers (Romans 8: 26).

Summary of the Fourth Prophecy

The Messiah through whom salvation will be accomplished is not yet in the flesh. There is still time until He comes in the fullness of time. But He will come forth as a branch of the people of Israel (Jacob) to reign over His church. And with His birth, a star will emerge, and He will be this shining star. This shining star will defeat Satan and sin and restore mankind to Himself after He has forgiven them their sins (the inherited original from Adam and also their personal sins); this mankind were in a constant state of war with Satan. And this will be through the death of the old creation and the creation of a new creation. This new creation will be justified and saved, and Christ will reign over it. And whoever does not accept to believe and join the church of Christ will perish.

The Four Prophecies of Balaam

Summary of the First Prophecy of Balaam

Balaam saw from the mountain the tents of the people of Israel with Joshua as their leader. He saw in them the church that Christ creates and establishes on Him, and He is like a rock protecting her. Therefore, this church is also firm, like a rock that does not shake. The new creation was that the old

creation (taken from Adam) would die in it. She is a heavenly church different from the peoples of the world, isolated from its sins. And God blesses her. She is huge, filling the world, and no one can count her number. So he desired that his old nature would die and that he would have the same end as this new creation that Christ justified. Christ justified His church and made her heavenly in Him after He put the old creation to death in Him and established her in Him = Therefore, Balaam saw the church at the top of the rocks. The rocks are the believers and the top of the rocks is Christ.

Summary of the Second Prophecy of Balaam

God promised and fulfilled His promise to take away the iniquity of His people. This church that Christ establishes is a church whose sins are forgiven. Christ freed his church from the slavery of Satan and blessed it, and no one can curse it, for its king is in its midst. Rather, its king is its bridegroom. This church lives, praising God for her salvation that its king has accomplished. This church will spread and grow with amazing speed and power. This church has authority over its enemies. And all this will be accomplished in the fullness of time = **It now must.**

Summary of the Third Prophecy

It is a prophecy about the work of the Holy Spirit in the Church of Christ: The Church of Christ is filled with an abundance of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit: 1) Opens the senses, while sin blinds the eyes and closes the senses. 2) The Holy Spirit waters the people of Christ so that they bear fruit and also have the sweet aroma of Christ. 3) The Holy Spirit establishes us in Christ and connects us with love. 4) The Church gives the Holy Spirit to her people. 5) The Holy Spirit fills believers. They even reach the point of overflowing onto others. But He also came out as a conqueror and to conquer. The Holy Spirit gives the people of the Church power to conquer sin and sinful desires (which is grace).

The Bridegroom of the Church, Christ, trampled on Satan with the cross. But the people of Christ must know that they are partners with Christ in the cross. The Church of Christ was freed by Christ from the slavery of Satan, and her work is to preach Christ. This preaching will spread and grow rapidly.

Summary of the Fourth Prophecy

The Messiah through whom salvation will be accomplished is not yet in the flesh. There is still time until He comes in the fullness of time. But He will come forth as a branch of the people of Israel (Jacob) to reign over His church. And with His birth, a star will emerge, and He will be this shining star. This shining star will defeat Satan and sin and restore mankind to Himself after He has forgiven them their sins (the inherited original from Adam and also their personal sins); this mankind were in a constant state of war with Satan. And this will be through the death of the old creation and the creation of a new creation.

This new creation will be justified and saved, and Christ will reign over it. And whoever does not accept to believe and join the church of Christ will perish.

It is strange that Balaam, the pagan, uttered these prophecies.

But God does not leave Himself without a witness (Acts 14: 17).

And this was the best of those in his place.

Then he looked on Amalek, and he took up his oracle and said: "Amalek was first among the nations, But shall be last until he perishes:

There is more than one mention of the Amalekites; there is a group of Amalekites, Eliphaz's son, Esau's firstborn. There are also those who are much older than that, as they existed before Abraham, as Chedorlaomer struck the land of the Amalekites. In general, the Amalekites may refer to the inhabitants of valleys. They are strong peoples, including the Hyksos who ruled Egypt, and some of them founded the Nabataean Kingdom in Palestine, the state of Palmyra in Syria, and the state of Hammurabi in Babylon. Perhaps it is Balaam, who is above the top of the mountain, who saw them from afar, and he said that the first among the nations might indicate that they were the most powerful of them or that the first war that took place in the wilderness was against the Amalekites. Their wars with Israel continued until the Amalekites ended in the days of Hezekiah (1 Chronicles 4: 43).

But this Amalek, as the first people to resist God's people, represents the first fruits of resistance to God in His people, just as Christ was the first fruits of obedience to God in his people. Therefore, we understand that the prophecy against the Amalekites here is a symbol of the first kingdom that resisted God, which is the kingdom of Satan. Thus, the Lord Christ, who is the first fruit (1 Corinthians 15: 20), came to destroy the first fruits of evil, i.e. Amalekites, and the fact that this Amalek remains standing, fighting the people of God until Hezekiah destroys them, this is a sign of the continuation of the enmity between Satan and man until Christ completely eliminates him in the last days = **But shall be last until he perishes.**

Then he looked on the Kenites, and he took up his oracle and said: "Firm is your dwelling place, And your nest is set in the rock; Nevertheless Kain shall be burned. How long until Asshur carries you away captive?" Then he took up his oracle and said: "Alas! Who shall live when God does this?"

The Kenites are descendants of a man named Kain, and they were wandering people who settled in the land of Canaan in the days of Abraham. The Bible called them the Kenites (Genesis 15: 19), and from them was Jethro, a priest of Midian, and this indicates that they lived among the Midianites. The Hobab family lived among the Jews, including the Rechabites. These Kenites had a fortified homeland amid rocky places such as Edom (see Jeremiah 49). And the destruction of the Kenites was with the

destruction of Israel when the captivity of Assyria came upon both of them. As we said, the Kenites lived in the midst of Israel and were taken into captivity.

*The Kenites included the Rechabites, Moses' father-in-law. These were people who were beyond reproach. Rather, we find that God was pleased with them, and said, "therefore thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: "Jonadab the son of Rechab shall not lack a man to stand before Me forever." (Jeremiah 35: 19). Since they had fallen into Assyrian captivity with Israel, He says about them here, when will these beloved people be set free = **How long until Asshur carries you away captive?** This was the desire of the heart of all people before Christ, to be set free from slavery to Satan.

As for the symbolic interpretation: If we understand that the Kenites had a fortified home in the middle of rocky places like the fortified Edom. These fortifications symbolize Satan, who thought that God would not be able to destroy him (for the destruction of Satan was linked to the salvation of man from death! And Satan thought that there was no way for man to be saved). And the prophecy means that no matter how fortified Satan is and his nest is in a rock, the time will come when Christ will come and destroy his fortified nest and free His people from captivity. This is the same as Jeremiah's prophecy (Jeremiah 49: 16).

*But Edom, Israel, and the Kenites who lived with them were people whom God wanted to save and did not want to destroy. We saw in (verse 18) in this chapter that God will liberate Edom, and it will become God's inheritance. Therefore, he asks, "**How long until Asshur carries you away captive?**" The question here means, "When will you come, O Lord Jesus, to free people and liberate them from the captivity of Satan (whose symbol here is Assyria)?" And in his vision of the joys of that freedom, he says, "**Alas! Who shall live when God does this?**" meaning when God does that. He realized that he was talking about the work of Christ in liberating His people.

24 But ships shall come from the coasts of Cyprus, And they shall afflict Asshur and afflict Eber, And so shall Amalek, until he perishes.

This prophecy probably determines the time of Christ's coming during the Roman era. The Romans ruled the world when their ships came and carried their armies worldwide. **Cyprus** referred to the whole west, to the island of Crete, to Cyprus and Italy, and the book of the Maccabees called Macedonia, the home of Alexander, as Kittim (1 Machabees 1: 1). These Romans subjugated Assyria and Eber to them, and the descendants of Eber, included Jews and others. Assyria represented the Semites who inhabited the east of the Euphrates, and the transients were the Semites who lived and migrated to the west. The meaning is that Christ will come at this time when the Roman armies will subjugate Assyria and Eber. Rather, they have conquered almost all of the known world. **And so shall Amalek, until he perishes:** This prophecy is similar to Nebuchadnezzar's dream and Daniel's visions. (It may also refer to the Greek conquest of the world.) All nations that resisted God fell and ended "Assyria, Babylonia, Persians, Greeks, and Romans." But the prophecy here looks forward to the time of the Romans' domination over the world, not because of the love of the Romans, but because Christ will come in their days to free us from Satan, and his symbol here is Assyria = **But ships shall come from the coasts of Cyprus, And they shall afflict**

Asshur and afflict Eber. And really, everyone submitted to the Romans. But note the time of the coming of Christ is when the Hebrew Jews are subject to the Romans = **afflict Eber**. This is the same prophecy of Jacob for his children, in which he set the date of the coming of Christ, and that it will be when Judah loses its freedom. A king will rule over them and legislate for them, and they will not have the right to legislate, which is what happened in the days of the Romans:

“The scepter shall not depart from Judah, Nor a lawgiver from between his feet, Until Shiloh comes; And to Him shall be the obedience of the people.” (Genesis 49: 10)

“Then Pilate said to them, “You take Him and judge Him according to your law.” Therefore the Jews said to him, “It is not lawful for us to put anyone to death,” (John 18: 31).

From the previous verses we see the disappearance of the Jews’ ability to rule and legislate. This is what happened during the Roman colonization of the Jews.

The Hebrews' name may be because they are descendants of Eber (Genesis 11: 14-26) or because (Eber means crossed) and they crossed the Euphrates River in their migration from Ur to the Promised Land.

Note:

(Verse 14): **And now, indeed, I am going to my people. Come, I will advise you what this people will do to your people in the latter days."**

Balaam said, **And now, indeed, I am going to my people**. But he did not go to his people, but tarried and dwelt among the Midianites until he was killed, and by his evil counsels, he caused the destruction of Israel (Numbers 31: 16 + Revelation 2: 14).

Chapter 25

Falling with the Moabites and the Midianites:

As Balaam could not curse the people and take the reward that he dreamed of, he gave Balak evil advice: to throw a stumbling block to this people through the Moabites so that the wrath of God would come upon them, and they would be defeated. And this evil advice of Balaam is mentioned in the Book of Revelation: "But I have a few things against you, because you have some there who hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balak to put a stumbling block before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed to idols, and to commit fornication" (Revelation 2: 14). Saint Jude the Apostle said about it in his epistle: "Woe to them! For they have gone in the way of Cain, have run greedily in the error of Balaam for profit, and perished in the rebellion of Korah." (verse 11).

Here we see the plot between Moab and Midian on the level of the king of Moab and the elders of Midian. Rather, it extended for the daughters of Moab to conspire with the daughters of Midian to bring down the people in fornication. Pagan worship included adultery rituals in their temples, so the Jewish people loved it. Note that Sihon, Og, or Amalek could not stand before the people, but their lust brought them down. "But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed." (James 1: 14). St. Augustine says, "Behind every atheist there is lust. He tries to calm his conscience by denying the existence of God." Let us note that there is no authority against me among those who are from outside (Sihon / Og / Balaam... etc.), but the danger is from the lust hidden in me if I am attracted to it. Here we find a new phase of Satan's wars. After he failed to attack from outside to prevent them from entering the Holy Land, the war phase began from within, i.e. their lusts. The women were not satisfied with fornication but rather invited the people to worship Baal Peor (Peor means whoredom). The people accepted this to satisfy their desires: "All these things I will give You if You will fall down worship me." Among all the sufferings that fight the mind of man, nothing is stronger than the disease of pleasures. Falling with a smiling world is easier than falling with a sad world. Therefore, let's escape from the illness of pleasure (Review Numbers 31: 16 + Jude 11 + Revelation 2: 14).

(Verse 1): **Now Israel remained in Acacia Grove, and the people began to commit harlotry with the women of Moab.**

(Verse 2): **They invited the people to the sacrifices of their gods, and the people ate and bowed down to their gods.**

This is what happened with King Solomon; with all his wisdom, he was deceived because he left himself to many women.

(Verse 3): **So Israel was joined to Baal of Peor, and the anger of the Lord was aroused against Israel.**

They were joined to Baal of Peor because of their fornication in his temples.

(Verse 4): **Then the Lord said to Moses, "Take all the leaders of the people and hang the offenders before the Lord, out in the sun, that the fierce anger of the Lord may turn away from Israel."**

They are tough orders, but the elimination of the rotten organ is better than the death and destruction of a person. **out in the sun** = that is, in broad daylight, so everyone can see and learn from an example. And the provisions of the law were harsh to frighten them, so the apostle Paul said of the law: "Therefore the law was our tutor to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith." (Galatians 3: 24).

Take all the leaders of the people: The leader is a judge who has the authority to punish the wrongdoer, so why did he not prevent the wrong? And it is clear that the leaders also sinned.

hang the offenders: The hanged was first killed by a sword or stoning, then hung, announcing his sin. That is why it was said, "for he who is hanged is accursed of God." (Deuteronomy 21: 22,23). Note that their hanging out in the sun is a symbol of the day of judgment before the sun of righteousness.

(Verse 5): **So Moses said to the judges of Israel, "Every one of you kill his men who were joined to Baal of Peor."**

Every one of you kill his men: That is, everyone joined to Baal of Peor. Do not hesitate to punish and kill the wrongdoer if you discover he is one of your people. Moses certainly determined who would do the task.

(Verse 6): **And indeed, one of the children of Israel came and presented to his brethren a Midianite woman in the sight of Moses and in the sight of all the congregation of the children of Israel, who were weeping at the door of the tabernacle of meeting.**

The immorality of this man reached the extent of bringing the woman he committed adultery with, perhaps to brag about her beauty or lineage in front of his brothers, for she is the daughter of a ruler in Midian. Let us note: 1. He had no fear of God altogether. 2. He entered the camp and did not care about the law of God, the presence of Moses, the weeping of all, and he defied all; 3. He neglected worship and prayer even though everyone was praying; 4. He put a new stumbling block before the people.

(Verses 7-9): **Now when Phinehas the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron the priest, saw it, he rose from among the congregation and took a javelin in his hand; 8 and he went after the man of Israel into the**

tent and thrust both of them through, the man of Israel, and the woman through her body. So the plague was stopped among the children of Israel. 9 And those who died in the plague were twenty-four thousand.

Tent: It means a tent or a pavilion.

Phinehas here implements the previous command of God. He certainly was one of those appointed by Moses. Killing is not permissible for everyone (see verse 5): **So Moses said to the judges of Israel, "Every one of you kill his men who were joined to Baal of Peor."**

We should only pray to prevent evil. And we read here: **So the plague was stopped**, but we did not know when it began. Most likely, when the inspiration mentioned: **the anger of the Lord was aroused against Israel**. The saints, with their prayers in many places, prevent many evils. The number of those who died is 24,000 + (1 Corinthians 10: 8).

(Verse 10): **Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying:**

(Versees 11-13): **"Phinehas the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron the priest, has turned back My wrath from the children of Israel, because he was zealous with My zeal among them, so that I did not consume the children of Israel in My zeal. 12 Therefore say, 'Behold, I give to him My covenant of peace; 13 and it shall be to him and his descendants after him a covenant of an everlasting priesthood, because he was zealous for his God, and made atonement for the children of Israel.'"**

Phinehas, in his zeal, refers to Christ, who said, "Because zeal for Your house has eaten me up." And Christ in His zeal offered Himself as a sacrifice on the cross and saved mankind from death = **because he was zealous with My zeal among them, so that I did not consume the children of Israel in My zeal**. So His spiritual descendants, the Christians, had an eternal priesthood, especially since the covenant with Him was a covenant of peace = **covenant of peace**, and Christ, the King of Peace, said, "My peace I leave with you..." and He made atonement (redemption) and saved His people.

In this verse we see that Phinehas the priest became a symbol of Christ, our High Priest, who by His cross turned away God's wrath = Phinehas the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron the priest, has turned away My wrath from the children of Israel. **Phinehas the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron the priest, has turned back My wrath from the children of Israel**. And his reward was = **Therefore say, 'Behold, I give to him My covenant of peace; 13 and it shall be to him and his descendants after him a covenant of an everlasting priesthood**. This is what the prophet David also repeated about the eternal priesthood of Christ: "The Lord has sworn And will not relent, "You are a priest forever According to the order of Melchizedek." (Psalm 110: 4). This is the priesthood that exists according to God's promise in His Church until the end of days. We note that the Lord's covenant with Aaron and his sons was not eternal, as it ended in the year 70 AD when Titus the Roman destroyed the temple, and the offering of blood

sacrifices ceased. So God's covenant of eternal priesthood in this verse is a reference to the priesthood of the New Testament, the priesthood of Christ.

(Verses 14-15): **Now the name of the Israelite who was killed, who was killed with the Midianite woman, was Zimri the son of Salu, a leader of a father's house among the Simeonites. 15 And the name of the Midianite woman who was killed was Cozbi the daughter of Zur; he was head of the people of a father's house in Midian.**

(Verses 16-18): **Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying: 17 "Harass the Midianites, and attack them; 18 for they harassed you with their schemes by which they seduced you in the matter of Peor and in the matter of Cozbi, the daughter of a leader of Midian, their sister, who was killed in the day of the plague because of Peor."**

Here the Lord commands them to attack all of Midian because of the evil that they set as a snare for the destruction of the people, and we find the implementation of this command in chapter 31. As for Moab, none of them enters into the congregation of the Lord until the tenth generation (Deuteronomy 23: 3,4 + Nehemiah 13: 1-2).

Notes:

1. The disgrace that befell Simeon made Moses not utter a blessing to him (Deuteronomy 33).
2. Zimri means one who looks like a wild cow, and Cozbi means a lie. So what is required is to eradicate evil and reject it. The man was lustful like a wild cow, not thinking or reasoning, and woman was a liar and a deceiver. Thus, sin promises you joy, but you find nothing but sensual pleasure followed by bitterness, sadness, and pain. This is what is called the deception of sin.
3. Paul mentions that 23,000 died in one day: "Nor let us commit sexual immorality, as some of them did, and in one day twenty-three thousand fell;" (1 Corinthians 10: 8). And the book of Numbers mentions the total number of 24,000. The meaning is simply that the remaining thousand were infected with the plague on the first day and died on the next day. The Apostle Paul, a student of the Old Testament, would not err in the number, but the Apostle Paul was adopting the tradition and acknowledging what the Jewish fathers recorded. The inspiration would have prevented him from adopting a false tradition. Review when he mentioned, for example, the names of Jannes and Jambres from the Jewish tradition (2 Timothy 3: 8).
4. **Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying: 17 "Harass the Midianites, and attack them** = And the Lord also speaks to us: to harass the kingdom of demons who caused Adam and his children to fall, so God sentenced Adam and his children to death. And God gave the Church authority against the kingdom of

demons: - a) "Behold, I give you the authority to trample on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall by any means hurt you." (Luke 10: 19). b) "And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it." (Matthew 16: 18).

Chapter 26

(Verses 1-65): And it came to pass, after the plague, that the Lord spoke to Moses and Eleazar the son of Aaron the priest, saying: 2 "Take a census of all the congregation of the children of Israel from twenty years old and above, by their fathers' houses, all who are able to go to war in Israel." 3 So Moses and Eleazar the priest spoke with them in the plains of Moab by the Jordan, across from Jericho, saying: 4 "Take a census of the people from twenty years old and above, just as the Lord commanded Moses and the children of Israel who came out of the land of Egypt." 5 Reuben was the firstborn of Israel. The children of Reuben were: of Hanoch, the family of the Hanochites; of Pallu, the family of the Palluites; 6 of Hezron, the family of the Hezronites; of Carmi, the family of the Carmites. 7 These are the families of the Reubenites: those who were numbered of them were forty-three thousand seven hundred and thirty. 8 And the son of Pallu was Eliab. 9 The sons of Eliab were Nemuel, Dathan, and Abiram. These are the Dathan and Abiram, representatives of the congregation, who contended against Moses and Aaron in the company of Korah, when they contended against the Lord; 10 and the earth opened its mouth and swallowed them up together with Korah when that company died, when the fire devoured two hundred and fifty men; and they became a sign. 11 Nevertheless the children of Korah did not die. 12 The sons of Simeon according to their families were: of Nemuel, the family of the Nemuelites; of Jamin, the family of the Jaminites; of Jachin, the family of the Jachinites; 13 of Zerah, the family of the Zarhites; of Shaul, the family of the Shaulites. 14 These are the families of the Simeonites: twenty-two thousand two hundred. 15 The sons of Gad according to their families were: of Zephon, the family of the Zephonites; of Haggi, the family of the Haggites; of Shuni, the family of the Shunites; 16 of Ozni, the family of the Oznites; of Eri, the family of the Erites; 17 of Arod, the family of the Arodites; of Areli, the family of the Arelites. 18 These are the families of the sons of Gad according to those who were numbered of them: forty thousand five hundred. 19 The sons of Judah were Er and Onan; and Er and Onan died in the land of Canaan. 20 And the sons of Judah according to their families were: of Shelah, the family of the Shelanites; of Perez, the family of the Parzites; of Zerah, the family of the Zarhites. 21 And the sons of Perez were: of Hezron, the family of the Hezronites; of Hamul, the family of the Hamulites. 22 These are the families of Judah according to those who were numbered of them: seventy-six thousand five hundred. 23 The sons of Issachar according to their families were: of Tola, the family of the Tolaites; of Puah, the family of the [h]Punites; 24 of Jashub, the family of the Jashubites; of Shimron, the family of the Shimronites. 25 These are the families of Issachar according to those who were numbered of them: sixty-four thousand three hundred. 26 The sons of Zebulun according to their families were: of Sered, the family of the Sardites; of Elon, the family of the Elonites; of Jahleel, the family of the Jahleelites. 27 These are the families of the Zebulunites according to those who were numbered of them: sixty thousand five hundred. 28 The sons of Joseph according to their families, by Manasseh and Ephraim, were: 29 The sons of Manasseh: of Machir, the family of the Machirites; and Machir begot Gilead; of Gilead, the family of the Gileadites. 30 These are the sons of Gilead: of Jeezer, the family of the Jeezerites; of Helek, the family of the Helekites; 31 of Asriel, the family of the Asrielites; of Shechem, the family of the Shechemites; 32 of Shemida, the family of the Shemidaites; of Hopher, the family of the

Hepherites. 33 Now Zelophehad the son of Hepher had no sons, but daughters; and the names of the daughters of Zelophehad were Mahlah, Noah, Hoglah, Milcah, and Tirzah. 34 These are the families of Manasseh; and those who were numbered of them were fifty-two thousand seven hundred. 35 These are the sons of Ephraim according to their families: of Shuthelah, the family of the Shuthalhites; of Becher, the family of the Bachrites; of Tahan, the family of the Tahanites. 36 And these are the sons of Shuthelah: of Eran, the family of the Eranites. 37 These are the families of the sons of Ephraim according to those who were numbered of them: thirty-two thousand five hundred. These are the sons of Joseph according to their families. 38 The sons of Benjamin according to their families were: of Bela, the family of the Belaites; of Ashbel, the family of the Ashbelites; of Ahiram, the family of the Ahiramites; 39 of Shupham,^[1] the family of the Shuphamites; of Hupham, the family of the Huphamites. 40 And the sons of Bela were Ard and Naaman: of Ard, the family of the Ardites; of Naaman, the family of the Naamites. 41 These are the sons of Benjamin according to their families; and those who were numbered of them were forty-five thousand six hundred. 42 These are the sons of Dan according to their families: of Shuham, the family of the Shuhamites. These are the families of Dan according to their families. 43 All the families of the Shuhamites, according to those who were numbered of them, were sixty-four thousand four hundred. 44 The sons of Asher according to their families were: of Jimna, the family of the Jimnites; of Jesui, the family of the Jesuites; of Beriah, the family of the Beriites. 45 Of the sons of Beriah: of Heber, the family of the Heberites; of Malchiel, the family of the Malchielites. 46 And the name of the daughter of Asher was Serah. 47 These are the families of the sons of Asher according to those who were numbered of them: fifty-three thousand four hundred. 48 The sons of Naphtali according to their families were: of Jahzeel, the family of the Jahzeelites; of Guni, the family of the Gunites; 49 of Jezer, the family of the Jezerites; of Shillem, the family of the Shillemites. 50 These are the families of Naphtali according to their families; and those who were numbered of them were forty-five thousand four hundred. 51 These are those who were numbered of the children of Israel: six hundred and one thousand seven hundred and thirty. 52 Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying: 53 "To these the land shall be divided as an inheritance, according to the number of names. 54 To a large tribe you shall give a larger inheritance, and to a small tribe you shall give a smaller inheritance. Each shall be given its inheritance according to those who were numbered of them. 55 But the land shall be divided by lot; they shall inherit according to the names of the tribes of their fathers. 56 According to the lot their inheritance shall be divided between the larger and the smaller." 57 And these are those who were numbered of the Levites according to their families: of Gershon, the family of the Gershonites; of Kohath, the family of the Kohathites; of Merari, the family of the Merarites. 58 These are the families of the Levites: the family of the Libnites, the family of the Hebronites, the family of the Mahlites, the family of the Mushites, and the family of the Korathites. And Kohath begot Amram. 59 The name of Amram's wife was Jochebed the daughter of Levi, who was born to Levi in Egypt; and to Amram she bore Aaron and Moses and their sister Miriam. 60 To Aaron were born Nadab and Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar. 61 And Nadab and Abihu died when they offered profane fire before the Lord. 62 Now those who were numbered of them were twenty-three thousand, every male from a month old and above; for they were not numbered among the other children of Israel, because there was no inheritance given to them among the children of Israel. 63 These are those who were numbered by Moses and Eleazar the priest, who numbered the children of Israel in the plains of Moab by the Jordan, across from Jericho. 64 But among these there was not a

man of those who were numbered by Moses and Aaron the priest when they numbered the children of Israel in the Wilderness of Sinai. 65 For the Lord had said of them, "They shall surely die in the wilderness." So there was not left a man of them, except Caleb the son of Jephunneh and Joshua the son of Nun.

The Second Census:

1. Moses does not take a census of the people except by order of God.
2. We note that the numbers have increased dramatically in Egypt because God blessed them in the time of persecution (Exodus 1: 12). Being amid the humiliation of slavery did not allow them to think about sin. But during the wilderness journey between the first and second census (i.e. 39 years), the increase was about a thousand people. Because of the many strikes against them because of their sins. Why did the sins increase? Because there is no fear of external persecution. It was supposedly a reason for the people to live feeling grateful and praising God. But unfortunately, when the outer peace increases, people think about the world's pleasures, and they sin, and God becomes angry, and the plagues begin. Thus we found that the church grew rapidly in the world at the time of Roman persecution.
3. Refer to (Hebrews 3: 7 + 4: 2) so we understand that lack of faith is the cause of everything that happened, and those who remain in faith are few, and these enter the promised land. What kind of faith is required? 1) It is to believe God's warning that there is a punishment if they sin, which is what our mother Eve and our father Adam did not do, so death entered the world. 2) Also, faith is to believe God's promises that there is a promised land if they obey. So they obey God and refrain from sinning, which is living faith, and this is what we saw in the daughters of Zelophehad in the next chapter.
4. This census aims mainly to determine the numbers and names of the clans that enter to inherit. In verse 53, the land is divided among these. God did not say that they would overcome their enemies with these. As God increased their number, He will help them overcome their enemies, but what is meant here is that God will give them the land according to His promise.
5. The land was to be divided by lot, but God alone is behind determining the portion and thus in eternity. And identifying the names here (which did not happen in the first lot) is for the lot to tell the names. Thus is the one whose name is written in the book of eternal life (Revelation 3: 5).
6. Now the period of chastisements and the destruction of sinners is over, and the plague has ceased. Whoever remains will inherit the Promised Land. So, the people were ready to enter, and the order was issued for a census. And when our chastening period ends, we will be among the numbered who will enter the heavenly Jerusalem.
7. We note that all the tribes under the banner of the camp of Judah, namely Judah, Issachar and Zebulun, have increased in number. And Judah is the one from whom Christ came in the body. The meaning is that whoever takes refuge in the shadow of Christ grows and increases and does not perish. The Church of Christ is a growing church.

8. No other tribe like Simeon decreased from (59300) to (22000) because this is due to the last pestilence, as Zimri is from this tribe. Let us note that lust is fatal.

9. It is mentioned here those who died because of their sins (Dathan and Abiram – Er and Onan - Nadab and Abihu) as if evil was the cause of destruction.

10. Moses begins by enumerating and preparing the method of distribution, but entering the land is with Joshua (a symbol of Jesus).

11. The excellent men of the armies used to take their portions without lots, which is what happened with Caleb (Joshua 14: 6-15). Let us note that "one star differs from another star in glory." (1 Corinthians 15: 41).

12. The Levites will not inherit in the land, for God is their portion, but Moses counts them here for the same concept of who enters the promised land. Their names are determined and known by number and by name, and there is no greater portion than the Lord being their portion.

13- Verses 64, 65: Indicate that there is no place in eternity for the wicked, and refer to the words of the Apostle Paul, "Moreover, brethren, I do not want you to be unaware that all our fathers were under the cloud, all passed through the sea, all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea, all ate the same spiritual food, and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them, and that Rock was Christ. 5 But with most of them God was not well pleased, for their bodies were scattered in the wilderness." (1 Corinthians 10:1-12).

Chapter 27

The Daughters of Zelophehad and Joshua, the next leader (Strong Faith)

The daughters of Zelophehad are an excellent example of strong faith. Let us compare the position of the people's disbelief in many situations in which they doubted their entry into the land, with the confidence of the daughters of Zelophehad in this matter and their request to have a share. Also, we find here an example of faith in Moses' interest in appointing his successor to complete the journey to the promised land. They all have a living faith that God's promise will be fulfilled.

Referring to (Numbers 26: 33), we find that Zelophehad did not have sons but daughters, so he did not enter the census. His daughters came presenting their case with the strength of argument and courage, but with dignity and humility. They announced that their father died a natural death, as all the previous generation had died. Still, he was not from the group of Korah who tried to usurp the priesthood, and their question was why his name should be deleted from among the inheritors of the new land. Their words were full of faith and adherence to God's promises, which opened the heavens to respond. A new law was that if the deceased had no son, his daughter inherited him, and if he did not have a daughter, then his brothers or uncles or those closest to him in his clan, and note:

1. God promised us the inheritance, but He wants us to strive in seeking for it and to pray with firmness and faith.
2. These girls represent the wise virgins, for they filled their vessels with the oil of faith.
3. The fact that God agreed to their request to keep for their father Zelophehad a name despite his natural death, i.e. the result of original sin, opens the door of hope that everyone who dies a natural death has a share in the heavenly inheritance. Our ordinary sins, for which we offer repentance, do not prevent us from our heavenly inheritance but defying God and rejecting repentance. Review (Galatians 3: 28, 29). We have an inheritance.
4. As a result of the insistence of the daughters of Zelophehad to obtain their share, the blessing was that they brought a new inheritance law.
5. The meanings of the names Zelophehad = Zel Phe Had = Stay in fear. This is our condition as we were all born in the shadow of sin, afraid of death. We were before Christ in bondage (Hebrews 2: 15). We note in the names of the daughters of Zelophehad the growth in grace with Christ: 1) **Mahlah** = Incapacity / weakness / feebleness 2) **Noah** = wandering 3) **Hoglah** = dancing in joy 4) **Milcah** = queen 5) **Tirzah** = acceptable, and the meaning is that in the light of our birth under sin, we were in the sadness of heart because of our sins and we were wandering as if looking for a solution, consolation and aid which we found in Christ, so our sorrow turned to joy, and He made us kings and priests, and we will be accepted before Him and without blemish in Him (Ephesians 1: 4).

(Verses 1-11): **Then came the daughters of Zelophehad the son of Hopher, the son of Gilead, the son of Machir, the son of Manasseh, from the families of Manasseh the son of Joseph; and these were the names of his daughters: Mahlah, Noah, Hoglah, Milcah, and Tirzah. 2 And they stood before Moses, before Eleazar the priest, and before the leaders and all the congregation, by the doorway of the tabernacle of meeting, saying: 3 "Our father died in the wilderness; but he was not in the company of those who gathered together against the Lord, in company with Korah, but he died in his own sin; and he had no sons. 4 Why should the name of our father be removed from among his family because he had no son? Give us a possession among our father's brothers." 5 So Moses brought their case before the Lord. 6 And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying: 7 "The daughters of Zelophehad speak what is right; you shall surely give them a possession of inheritance among their father's brothers, and cause the inheritance of their father to pass to them. 8 And you shall speak to the children of Israel, saying: 'If a man dies and has no son, then you shall cause his inheritance to pass to his daughter. 9 If he has no daughter, then you shall give his inheritance to his brothers. 10 If he has no brothers, then you shall give his inheritance to his father's brothers. 11 And if his father has no brothers, then you shall give his inheritance to the relative closest to him in his family, and he shall possess it.'" And it shall be to the children of Israel a statute of judgment, just as the Lord commanded Moses.**

(Verses 12-23): **Now the Lord said to Moses: "Go up into this Mount Abarim, and see the land which I have given to the children of Israel. 13 And when you have seen it, you also shall be gathered to your people, as Aaron your brother was gathered. 14 For in the Wilderness of Zin, during the strife of the congregation, you rebelled against My command to hallow Me at the waters before their eyes." (These are the waters of Meribah, at Kadesh in the Wilderness of Zin.) 15 Then Moses spoke to the Lord, saying: 16 "Let the Lord, the God of the spirits of all flesh, set a man over the congregation, 17 who may go out before them and go in before them, who may lead them out and bring them in, that the congregation of the Lord may not be like sheep which have no shepherd." 18 And the Lord said to Moses: "Take Joshua the son of Nun with you, a man in whom is the Spirit, and lay your hand on him; 19 set him before Eleazar the priest and before all the congregation, and inaugurate him in their sight. 20 And you shall give some of your authority to him, that all the congregation of the children of Israel may be obedient. 21 He shall stand before Eleazar the priest, who shall inquire before the Lord for him by the judgment of the Urim. At his word they shall go out, and at his word they shall come in, he and all the children of Israel with him—all the congregation." 22 So Moses did as the Lord commanded him. He took Joshua and set him before Eleazar the priest and before all the congregation. 23 And he laid his hands on him and inaugurated him, just as the Lord commanded by the hand of Moses.**

God commanded Moses to go up to the mountain to see the Promised Land from above, as he would not enter it. Moses did not implement this command immediately but rather made some arrangements and left some sermons that continued throughout the book of Deuteronomy (Numbers 28 - Deuteronomy 33). Here God asks him to go up the mountain, as happened with Aaron, and this is the death of the saints, an ascent to the top. On the ascent, we see and Moses saw the Promised Land, and

he rested that he finally saw what he had struggled for so many years. This is a reward for Moses. But note that Moses, as a representative of the law, does not enter the promised land. There is no salvation through the law, and the maximum that the law reaches is viewing the glories from afar. And who enters the people is Joshua (who has the same name as our Savior Jesus, because the letter "S" is pronounced in the Hebrew "Sh"). We will enter heaven if we are abiding in Christ Jesus. But from all aspects, Moses is the greatest, and there is no one like Moses. This is what God said about him "So the Lord spoke to Moses face to face, as a man speaks to his friend. And he would return to the camp, but his servant Joshua the son of Nun, a young man, did not depart from the tabernacle." (Exodus 33: 11) . But as a representative of the law, he who is under the law has no salvation if he erred in the smallest slip (Leviticus 18: 5). Moses' slip was the subject of hitting the rock. But let us note the greatness of Moses in his appearance with Christ on the Mount of Transfiguration.

(Verse 13): **And when you have seen it, you also shall be gathered to your people, as Aaron your brother was gathered.**

as Aaron your brother was gathered: Therefore, death is not perishing, as his people still exist somewhere.

(Verse 16): **"Let the Lord, the God of the spirits of all flesh, set a man over the congregation,**

The greatness of Moses appears here, for he did not ask God for himself, but for the people, so that they would not continue without a shepherd and be scattered. This is the care, and this is the love that the servant forgets himself for the sake of the congregation. It is also great that he did not recommend that his sons occupy positions of leadership. Rather, he lets the Lord choose whom he sees. Thus the church, in selecting a shepherd, should pray a lot.

(Verses 18): **And the Lord said to Moses: "Take Joshua the son of Nun with you, a man in whom is the Spirit, and lay your hand on him;**

Joshua, the right arm of Moses, and his disciple, who did not depart from the tabernacle (Exodus 33: 11). This is discipleship. He is the one who entered the Promised Land to spy on it and came to offer his brothers a token of new life. **and lay your hand on him** = that is why the laying on of hands was associated with the ordination of God's servants, the delivery of a divine blessing (Jacob and the children of Joseph) and the healing of the sick. In the church, it is used in the ordination, the descent of the Holy Spirit, and the prayer of absolution for confessors (Matthew 9: 18, 19 :13, 15 + Mark 6: 5, 8: 23 + Luke 4: 40, 13: 13 + Acts 6: 6, 13: 3 + 1 Timothy 5: 22 + 2 Timothy 1: 6).

(Verse 19): **set him before Eleazar the priest and before all the congregation, and inaugurate him in their sight.**

set him before Eleazar the priest and before all the congregation: Here we see the positive role of the priests and the people in the ordination. The people, like priests, do not stand by and watch, but are committed to contributing to this work and cooperating with them.

(Verse 20): **And you shall give some of your authority to him, that all the congregation of the children of Israel may be obedient.**

And you shall give some of your authority to him: If Moses laid his hands. But God, who gave Moses his Spirit and authority, is the one who bestows upon Joshua the same gifts. Moses had to speak about Joshua and his glorious qualities in front of the people so that the people would have reverence for him as they had for Moses. He had to share with him in the care during his life so that no one disagrees with him after Moses' death.

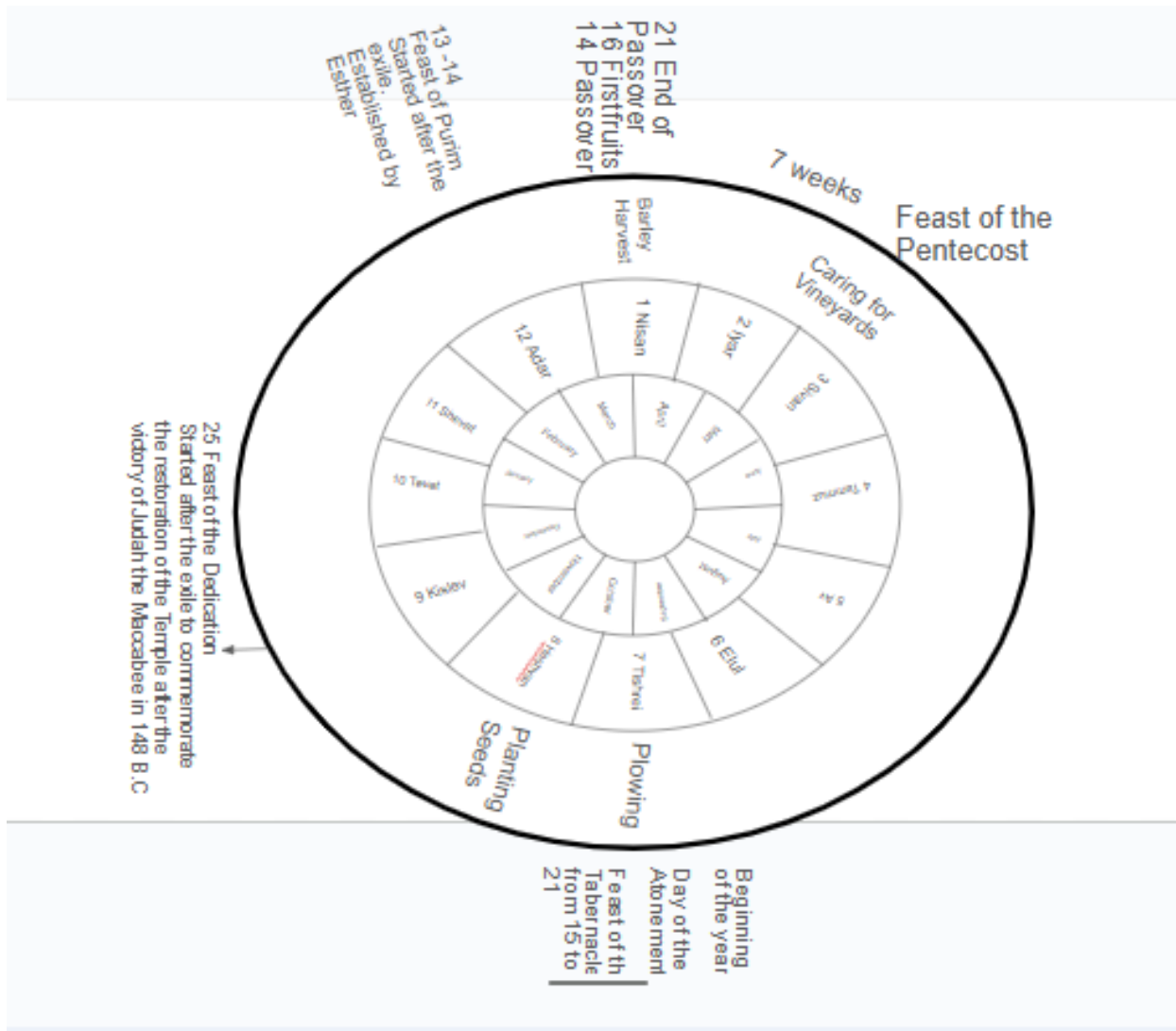
(Verse 21): **He shall stand before Eleazar the priest, who shall inquire before the Lord for him by the judgment of the Urim. At his word they shall go out, and at his word they shall come in, he and all the children of Israel with him—all the congregation."**

Joshua must cooperate with the high priest, who asks with the Urim and the Thummim (lights and perfections), a reference to the work of the Holy Spirit that gives man enlightenment and perfection. As for Moses alone, he was speaking to God without a high priest, but face to face.

We see in this chapter that whoever cares about the heavenly inheritance gets it, as happened with the daughters of Zelophehad. As for the one who disobeys God, he will be deprived of the Promised Land. This is for us, but the great Moses has a different situation, as we said, but this is the lesson of this chapter.

Chapter 28

Quick Summary of Jewish Holidays (Please see Lao 23)



1- Passover

The word Passover = Pesach in Hebrew or Pascha means crossing. It is a memorial of the passing of the destroying angel in the land of Egypt and the salvation of the firstborn of the Jews and then their crossing from the land of slavery to freedom. They used to take the lamb on the 10th of Nisan, keep it under preservation until the 14th of Nisan, and slaughter it on the fourteenth day between the two evenings (between 3 and 5 pm.. or between 3 and the time of darkness). Many Jews used to come from the diaspora and set up their tents on the Mount of Olives, and from here we realize the huge celebration of the people when Christ entered Jerusalem. The month of Nisan became the first month of the year because the second Adam, that is, Christ, with His cross, began everything new (2 Corinthians 5: 17). (It is clear that Passover refers to the cross). The Jewish historian Josephus estimated that the number of those celebrating Passover was about 2-3 million people from all over the world.

2- The Feast of Unleavened Bread:

Christ, through his cross, established His church to be pure, without blemish or wrinkle (Ephesians 5: 25, 27). As believers for whom Christ died, we must spend the days of our sojourn having separated ourselves from evil (1 Corinthians 5: 13 + Exodus 12: 15). A symbol of this was that every Jewish man would come on the eve of the Passover and search his house for any piece of leavened bread to separate it from his house. This means that after Christ was sacrificed for me, how could I accept and allow sin to exist in my life? This is for a lifetime (7 days symbolizing perfection, all life), and the Jews understood it as them leaving Egypt and carrying their unleavened dough (Exodus 12: 34). Thus, if we want to pass from slavery to freedom, we must not put any evil in our hearts or separate it if it exists and abandon it.

3- The Feast of Firstfruits

Refer to the feasts map to find that this feast coincides with the barley harvest. 1* The Feast of Firstfruits was associated with the Feasts of Passover, Unleavened Bread, and Pentecost. The Feast of Firstfruits is celebrated during the Feast of Unleavened Bread 2* The Feast of Pentecost comes fifty days after it. It is considered the first of the agricultural feasts. The feast ritual was to offer thanks to God, the Giver of blessings. Three elders from the Sanhedrin would go out to the neighboring fields to bring the first sheaf of the crop and present it to the temple. By presenting it to the temple, the entire harvest is sanctified. By presenting the firstfruits, God comes first. This sheaf represents the person of Jesus Christ, who offered His life as a joyful offering to the Father in order to bless the entire harvest, that is, the Church. He was the grain of wheat that fell to the ground to bear much fruit (John 12: 24). We note that the firstfruits were offered from barley to feed the poor and needy, for Christ came to lift up the poor. As we will see, Christ was crucified on Friday, which coincided with the offering of the Passover lamb. Rather, they crucified Him and left Him under the guard of the Roman soldiers, and went to eat the Passover (Nisan 14). On the third day (Nisan 16), while the Jews were exchanging congratulations on the Feast of Firstfruits, the disciples were exchanging congratulations on the resurrection of Christ, the firstfruits of those who had fallen asleep or the firstfruits of those who had risen from the dead. Christ,

by His resurrection, showed that he was the true firstfruits, for he rose on the Feast of Firstfruits. We note that the people celebrated the Feast of Passover and Unleavened Bread in the wilderness, but they celebrated the Feast of Firstfruits for the first time after they had entered the Promised Land. The Feast of Firstfruits, that is, the Resurrection, must be in the new earth and the new heaven. The death of Christ was symbolized by the Passover. He is our Passover who died to save us from our old man, or the yeast of corruption that has crept into us, and to transform us into unleavened bread. He rose from the dead to grant us also the resurrection in Him (Colossians 1: 15 + 1 Corinthians 15: 20) and to raise us up to the bosom of His Father to live in the heavenly places (Ephesians 2: 6). We notice that this feast is also the third of the feasts. It is the third day of the Passover, as the number 3 refers to the resurrection.

4- Pentecost:

This group of feasts is one unit (Passover/ Unleavened Bread/ Firstfruits/ Fifty) symbolizing another unit which is (Crucifixion/ Resurrection/ Sanctification of the Church/ Descent of the Holy Spirit). This feast was called the Feast of Weeks because it comes 7 weeks after the Firstfruits (Exodus 34: 22 + Deuteronomy 16: 10). It was also called the Feast of Pentecost in Greek (Acts 2: 1). The Holy Spirit actually descended upon the disciples on the day of Pentecost (see also Acts 20: 16). This feast is also an agricultural feast like the Firstfruits and is called the Feast of Harvest (Exodus 23: 16) because it comes at the end of the harvest season after the wheat ripens. We call it the Feast of the Foundation of the Church. On this day, the Holy Spirit descended upon the Church to establish her, and through Peter's sermon, 3000 souls believed and the harvest began. The grain of wheat died, rose and began to bear much fruit (John 12: 24). For the Jews, the purpose of this feast was to offer thanks to God on the occasion of the wheat harvest.

5- The Feast of the Trumpets:

It is the beginning of the civil year, and the beginning of the seventh month of the religious year. They celebrated it by shouting trumpets from morning to sunset. The trumpet is used to warn or call for war. The church uses God's word to warn and call for striving against sin. Whoever hears and repents begins a new life (symbolized by the new year), so repentance is a second baptism.

6- The Feast of Atonement (Day of Atonement):

A symbol of the Day of the Cross. Its details are found in (Leviticus 16). It is a day of humiliation and tears.

7- The Feast of Tabernacles:

It is a joyful and cheerful feast. Whoever sows with tears (Day of Atonement) will reap with joy. And whoever humbles himself before God and lives in exile in this world (7 Days of Tabernacles). Lives in joy, which is a pledge of eternal joy (the eighth day and the number 8 refers to eternity).

The First Set of Feasts

Feast	Meaning to the Jews	Meaning to the Christians
The Passover	Freedom from Pharaoh's slavery	Christ's crucifixion to set us free from Satan
The Unleavened Bread	Get rid of the leaven of Egypt (the love of the world and its lusts and its symbol of meat and onions, which they clung to and wanted to return to Egypt)	Taking off the old man (new life).
The Firstfruit	Starting a new life (entering the Promised Land)	Resurrection / Enjoy the risen Christ by being united with Him.
The Fifty	Enjoy the full bounty of the Promised Land	The Holy Spirit gives us the joy of Christ the Firstborn through communion.

The Second Set of Feasts

Feast	Meaning to the Jews	Meaning to the Christians
The Trumpets	Warning to prepare for the following feasts	A wake-up call to prepare for eternity
The Atonement	Humility and fasting	A life of humility and striving in the sojourn of this world
The Tabernacles	The memory of their exile in Sinai	We are sojourners in this world
The Eighth Day	The joy of their entry into the Promised Land.	It is our joy in heaven in the bosom of the Father.

Sacrifices and Offerings of the Feasts:

This chapter and the following chapter tell us about feasts and sacrifices, which fits perfectly with its place, as it comes after the census was completed, and God gave orders to divide the land, and the people were divided into their clans. And the daughters of Zelophehad, with faith, confident that they would enter and inherit, asked about their rights. And Moses appointed the march's leader, so what prevents them from being happy, for God's promise will never return. As they are definitely entering the promised land, therefore, "Rejoice in the Lord always. Again I will say, rejoice!" (Philippians 4: 4). God created Adam to rejoice, as He created him in the Garden of Eden. Eden is a Hebrew word meaning joy and happiness). Adam and Eve were in this garden of joy as long as the love was mutual between them and God. God is love, and Adam was created in the image of God, and he loved God. After sin, Adam hid from God, and love was lost, so joy disappeared, and this is the meaning of Adam being expelled from Paradise. It was God who loves man and wants joy to return to him again, and the divine intention cannot fail, that he prepared the economy of salvation. Several sacrifices symbolized the sacrifice of Christ on the cross.

While it was expected that news of wars would come here, but God would like to emphasize that Christ, our true sacrifice, is the secret of our joy during the sojourn of this world, and with faith, we live in joy until we enter the heavenly Jerusalem. Therefore, he repeats the feasts previously mentioned in the Book of Leviticus and mentions with them the sacrifices that were offered during these feasts, which were not mentioned in the Book of Leviticus. The meaning is that the slain Christ is our life and the secret of our joy. The most joyful thing for God's heart is Christ the Redeemer, who is a sweet aroma to Him. In Him, people return to the bosom of the Father, which is God's offerings and sacrifices. This is what satisfies the Father and makes Him happy: " This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." This is what satisfies the Son also, " He shall see the labor of His soul, and be satisfied." (Isaiah 53: 11) + "My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me, and to finish His work." (John 4: 34). Therefore, on every occasion, the Church holds Liturgy, to present to the Father His Son, Christ, in the sacrifice of the Eucharist. We have nothing else to offer and nothing more valuable than Him to offer. Through the sacrifice of the Eucharist, our sins are forgiven, and we are confirmed in Christ, who brings us back to the bosom of the Father.

Feasts are joys, and burnt offerings increase in them:

There are two types of sacrifices: burnt offerings and sin offerings.

The burnt offering is mentioned first: Because it belongs to the Father, it is a sweet aroma to the Lord, announcing the Father's joy in the obedience of His people and their trust in Him and their surrender to Him with all their capabilities (which was to be done in Christ who obeyed unto the death of the cross, but it was partially or symbolically accomplished in their offering of burnt sacrifices). And we heard when Noah offered his burnt offering that " And the Lord smelled a soothing aroma." (Genesis 8: 21). Why did the Lord smell contentment? And why was it said about burnt offerings that they are " a sweet aroma to the Lord" (Leviticus 1: 9)? The burnt offerings express complete obedience, so Isaiah the prophet said about obedience to Christ, " He was oppressed and He was afflicted, Yet He opened not His mouth; He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, And as a sheep before its shearers is silent, So He opened not His mouth." (Isaiah 53: 7). And the prophet Jeremiah prophesied about Christ with the same

meaning: "But I was like a docile lamb brought to the slaughter" (Jeremiah 11:19). This is what Christ did, who became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross." (Philippians 2: 8). Review what He said to Peter when Judas and the soldiers came to arrest him: "Or do you think that I cannot now pray to My Father, and He will provide Me with more than twelve legions of angels?" (Matthew 26: 53). But He did not rather, He surrendered quietly and without resistance, for this is the will of the Father, and thus He said to Peter, "Put your sword into the sheath. Shall I not drink the cup which My Father has given Me?" (John 18: 11). The Father's joy was that in Christ we would be counted obedient and even perfect (Colossians 1: 28). Thus, we return as children to the bosom of the Father. God created man because He loves man, and He was a friend to him, saying, "And my delight was with the sons of men." (Proverbs 8: 31). God wanted to exchange love with man. The sign of God's love for man was the beautiful creation that God created for man. The sign of a man's love for God was his obedience to God. Obedience is a sign of trust and love. But man did not obey, and sin was the penalty for which was death.

Then comes the sin offering: which is concerned with removing sin from humans. These chapters talk about feasts, and the focus in them was on burnt offerings. The feasts, just as they are a joy for the people, are the joy of God with His people. We notice that the joy is mutual between God and His people (Isaiah 65: 17-19). We understand from this verse that God rejoices when His people rejoice, and God's people rejoice when God rejoices. And if the feasts are occasions for joy, God commanded His people to rejoice; this is His will. We saw that God's joy is in man's obedience, by which we return to the bosom of the Father, and this will be accomplished by Christ offering Himself as a burnt sacrifice on the cross. We find God commanding Moses to celebrate feasts, in which he presents burnt offerings symbolizing the sacrifice of Christ, and in which God rejoices because He sees in them that through Christ, mankind will return to His bosom. When God rejoices, His people rejoice, and their feasts will be all joys. In standard cases for the sinful individual, he would initially offer a sin offering and then a burnt offering. It will not be acceptable and a cause of joy for the Father if his sin is not forgiven first. As for the feasts, the attention was paid to the burnt offerings as we are on feast days and joy. In chapters (28 and 29), we find 71 verses that talk about continuous sacrifices and offerings, 58 of them talking about a pleasing aroma to the Lord. At the same time, there are only 13 numbers that talk about the sin offering. The sin offering speaks of the forgiveness of sin, and this is important. But the most important thing is the Father's satisfaction and pleasure, for He rejoiced in the sacrifice of Christ in which people are united with Christ, the Son of God through baptism, so that they become perfect, i.e. also obedient (Colossians 1: 28), so they return as children to the bosom of the Father. So we hear the Father's voice on the day of Christ's baptism saying in joy, " This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." Also, in Christ, we were transferred from the state of enmity to the state of the Father's joy in us and His pleasure and satisfaction with us through His Son. This is what God wants us to rejoice in and not with the fleeting joys of the world.

Refer to Amos (Amos 5: 25), which was repeated in (Acts 7: 42, 43). It seems that the people neglected to offer sacrifices during their wanderings in the wilderness. Here, the Lord stresses its importance in their land, whether during wars or settlement in a land flowing with milk and honey. There is no exemption or excuse. Therefore, He reminds them of this before entering, for the rest they are entering

is not the comfort of idleness and slackness but the convenience of continuous joy through the sacrifices of reconciliation and love, which are offered daily, weekly, monthly, and annually. God wanted their lives to be feasts without interruption, a sign of permanent joy.

The libation of wine is new here, as it symbolizes Christ's work in pouring out His blood. By pouring out His blood, He restored eternal life and joy to human beings. This is the secret of the Father's joy in the return of life to His children, and wine symbolizes joy in the Holy Bible. After the redemption, the Holy Spirit, the spirit of power and joy, was poured out on His people by the merits of His spilled blood, so joy returned to the people of God again after they had lost the joys of the Garden of Eden (Eden means joy). It symbolizes the blood of the martyrs who shed their blood in love for Christ and the saints who poured out their lives in strength and joy.

(Verse 1): **Now the Lord spoke to Moses, saying,**

(Verse 2): **"Command the children of Israel, and say to them, 'My offering, My food for My offerings made by fire as a sweet aroma to Me, you shall be careful to offer to Me at their appointed time.'**

'My offering = the sacrifices that you offer to me, so that you may draw near to me. (The offering is from the word to draw near).

My offerings made by fire = the fat of these sacrifices that light the fire of the altar = **made by fire**. And the burning fire of the altar that consumes these fats indicates God's acceptance of these sacrifices.

My food = this is what will be explained below.

Perhaps the reminder here is because the generation that received the commandments died. Note the repetition of **My food - My offering - and My offerings made by fire**. Christ is the food of God and His pleasure and joy. Or were not the blood sacrifices a symbol of the sacrifice of Christ by which man returned to the bosom of God? Then we understand that these expressions reveal God's longing for man, and His pleasure with him through His beloved sacrificed Son. This is on the one hand, and on the other hand, what man offers is not from his own resources but from God's gifts to him. The animal that a person offers as a sacrifice was a gift from God's hand, given to this man previously.

My food: What does it mean that Christ is God's food? Food is what satisfies a person. And Christ was God's food as He did the will of the Father who sent him "Jesus said to them, "34Jesus said to them, "My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me, and to finish His work. 35Do you not say, 'There are still four months and then comes the harvest'? Behold, I say to you, lift up your eyes and look at the fields, for they are already white for harvest!" (John 4: 34), meaning that what satisfies Christ is that He obeys the Father in complete obedience, up to the cross, to bring people as children of God as obedient in Him. This is what satisfies . As the inspiration says, "He shall see the labor of His soul, and be satisfied. By His knowledge My righteous Servant shall justify many, For He shall bear their iniquities." (Isaiah 53: 11).

In the same sense, what satisfies the Father is the obedience of Christ. By His obedience to the cross (Philippians 2: 8), people will return to the bosom of the Father. This is what makes the Father happy. The burnt offering was the sacrifice that expresses the obedience of Christ, through which we become obedient and even perfect in Him (Colossians 1: 28). That is why it was said about the sacrifices offered on the altar: "an offering made by fire to the Lord." (Leviticus 3: 11) + "They shall be holy to their God and not profane the name of their God, for they offer the offerings of the Lord made by fire, and the bread of their God; therefore they shall be holy." (Leviticus 21: 6). The fat of the sacrifices is what kindles the fire of the altar. If the fat refers to the energy of the animal. It is as if what truly satisfies God and makes Him happy is the willingness of the burner to offer all his energies to the account of God's glory. It is as if the one who offered the burnt offering was saying to God, "Make me offer myself to you obedient, like this animal, so that you rejoice in me as you rejoice in it, saying about it, "offering of a sweet aroma to the Lord."

Thus the expression **"My offering, My food for My offerings made by fire as a sweet aroma to Me"** = refers to the Father's pleasure in the return of his children through the sacrifice of His Son Christ, obedient even to the death of the cross (Philippians 2). And in His Son we are considered obedient. Also, what pleases the Father is that we pour out all our energies for what glorifies Him, so his saying **"My offering"** refers to the fat of the animal that lights the fire of the altar. Fat is what gives energy to the animal. So the meaning becomes that what pleases God is not the fat of the animal, but the offering of the animal with all his energies to serve God. This is the meaning of the wise man's saying, "My son, give me your heart, And let your eyes observe my ways." (Proverbs 23: 26). God wants me to give Him everything with all my heart, so He will bestow His blessings upon me. When God gives, He rejoices, for His nature is to be a giver, "who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him." (James 1: 5).

(Verses 3-8): **"And you shall say to them, 'This is the offering made by fire which you shall offer to the Lord: two male lambs in their first year without blemish, day by day, as a regular burnt offering. 4 The one lamb you shall offer in the morning, the other lamb you shall offer in the evening, 5 and one-tenth of an ephah of fine flour as a grain offering mixed with one-fourth of a hin of pressed oil. 6 It is a regular burnt offering which was ordained at Mount Sinai for a sweet aroma, an offering made by fire to the Lord. 7 And its drink offering shall be one-fourth of a hin for each lamb; in a holy place you shall pour out the drink to the Lord as an offering. 8 The other lamb you shall offer in the evening; as the morning grain offering and its drink offering, you shall offer it as an offering made by fire, a sweet aroma to the Lord.**

The Perpetual Offering:

God did not start with the Passover or the Sabbath. Rather, He started with the continuous burnt offering, morning and evening. God wants for us:

1- That this be the daily worship: day and evening. And blood sacrifices are offered in it.

2- That the blood of the sacrifices remain before the eyes of the people of the Old Testament, declaring that sins are forgiven by blood, so that they are acceptable before God. This would be: a) Daily, even morning and evening. b) Weekly. c) Monthly. d) Annually. So that it would be imprinted in their minds, and consequently - in our minds - that there is no forgiveness of sins except by blood, and consequently we are not acceptable to God except by blood. This is what Saint Paul the Apostle said, "And according to the law almost all things are purified with blood, and without shedding of blood there is no remission." (Hebrews 9: 22). This is what the Lord Jesus wanted from our daily Eucharistic worship in the Church, to keep the image of the crucified Christ always before us. And why? So that the image of Christ's love that appeared on the cross will always shine before our eyes, so that the enemy of goodness will not make us doubt His love.

3- This is what the Lord Jesus said, "Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends." (John 15: 13). This is the meaning of the Lord Jesus' saying, "This is My body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of Me." (Luke 22: 19). In our constant worship in the Liturgies, we see Christ on the altar "stood a Lamb as though it had been slain" (Revelation 5: 6). A living sacrifice, but His blood was separated from His body, His blood in the cup and His body broken in the paten, a declaration of His amazing love. This is what the Apostle said to the Galatians, "before whose eyes Jesus Christ was clearly portrayed among you as crucified?" (Galatians 3: 1). He repeated this statement to the Corinthians, "but we preach Christ crucified" (1 Corinthians 1: 23). That is, the focus of his preaching to them was on the crucified Christ. Thus the angel said to the Marys after the resurrection, "But the angel answered and said to the women, "Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified. He is not here; for He is risen, as He said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay." (Matthew 28: 5-6). Although Christ had risen, the angel used the term "crucified Christ" to declare the amazing love of Christ.

4- What the Lord Jesus wants from the clarity of the image of love is for us to rejoice. In the Garden of Eden - and Eden is a Hebrew word meaning joy and happiness - God created Adam to rejoice. Adam was in joy when he was exchanging love with God. If there is love, there is joy. Joy disappeared because love disappeared after sin, and this is the meaning of Adam's expulsion from Paradise. And here is the Lord Jesus restoring love and showing it so that we may rejoice. God created us to rejoice. And this is the daily Eucharistic worship that God wants in His Church, a joy for Him and a joy for His people.

5- God began with the daily burnt offering in the morning and evening so that there would be permanent joy in the morning and evening. God wants us to have permanent joy in the morning and evening. As for Passover, it is celebrated once a year, and the Sabbath once a week, and so on.

Offering two male lambs in their first year every day, one in the morning and another in between dinners, as though we need an uninterrupted burnt offering to reconcile with God day and night without ceasing. We note that the offering of morning and evening burnt offerings refers to the sacrifices of the Old and New Testaments. The Old Testament was the evening of our relationship with God, while the New Testament was the morning of this relationship, after the light of the sun of our righteousness, Christ, shone upon us. Therefore, we find that the Book of Ezekiel in chapters 40-48, which talks about the Church of Christ, that is, His body, says in (Ezekiel 46: 13) "You shall daily make a burnt offering to

the Lord of a lamb of the first year without blemish; you shall prepare it every morning." Now there is no evening burnt offering after Christ was offered on Friday evening as an evening sacrifice. And currently, the church holds Liturgies in the morning only in this sense. **Morning** is a sign of Christ, the light and the sun of righteousness who is always present in his church. In order not to cancel the rite of the evening sacrifice, the church prays the evening incense-raising prayer as a symbol of this rite. Offering incense in the morning is a symbol of the morning sacrifice, and the priest prayed it in black clothes and outside the altar, as if he is still in the Old Testament and does not enter the altar without a lamb.

God asked Moses to offer daily a morning and evening offering at the altar. Each of them is a burnt lamb + flour + wine (Numbers 28: 1-8). This was a symbol of Christ's sacrifice on the cross. But why offer one in the morning and one in the evening? Because Christ was offered on the cross in the evening, and as we know, the Eucharist is an extension of the sacrifice of the cross. The Eucharistic sacrifice is offered during the day. We note that with the offering of the lamb, flour and wine are offered (the Eucharist is bread and wine). God calls the offering in (verse 2) **My food**, as if He says My body, so the Eucharist is food that God offers us to live. We also note that we now live on the seventh day of creation. This seventh day began with Adam's fall into sin, and the seventh day ends with the Lord Christ's second coming to begin the eighth (eternal) day. The night of the seventh day ends with the appearance of Christ, the Sun of Righteousness, to begin the day of the seventh day. And Christ offered Himself a blood sacrifice on the cross - according to the Aaronic rite - at the end of the evening of the seventh day, to be an evening sacrifice. With the beginning of the day of the seventh day, we find Christ offering Himself a living sacrifice - according to the rite of Melchizedek - in the form of bread and wine, that is, the Eucharist. He offered Himself as a living and perpetual sacrifice. This is how Saint John saw him in his vision, " stood a Lamb as though it had been slain" (Revelation 5: 6). The first Eucharistic sacrifice was offered on the morning of the seventh day, and Christ offered it to the two disciples of Emmaus. Their eyes were opened and they recognized Him, but He disappeared from them – and why did He disappear? This was to announce that they would no longer see Him in human form, but would see Him in the form of bread and wine (Luke 24: 30-35).

The Morning Offering:

Lamb + and one-tenth of an ephah of fine flour as a grain offering mixed + one-fourth of a hin of pressed oil + one-fourth of a hin of pressed wine

The lamb refers to Christ who offered Himself as a burnt offering, and **the flour** refers to the life that Christ brought back to us, which is His resurrected life. It is an eternal life as Christ will not die again (Romans 6: 9), and the Holy Spirit (**oil**) sent to all the world (**4**) confirms it in us. So God rejoices as His children have returned to Him (**wine**). God asks for a **drink offering**, i.e. strong wine, so God rejoiced in us with strong joy, and thus we rejoice in God, and we rejoice in our return to God (**wine**). The repetition of the number $\frac{1}{4}$ with oil and wine is because the more we are filled with the Holy Spirit, the more is joy. The fact that the flour was mixed with oil indicates the hypostatic unity between the Son and the Holy Spirit, which is inseparable. As for the number $\frac{1}{40}$, it indicates that whoever is united with Christ and the

life of Christ, becomes complete in Christ (Colossians 1: 28). Rather, the whole Church has become one unit in the one body of Christ, and this is the meaning of number (1) and number (10) referring to the perfection of the law, as the commandments are ten.

The evening offering is a repetition of the morning offering.

Now let us see the meanings of the word "**My food**":

1. Food is what satisfies man. What satisfies God is man's salvation, as it was said about Christ, "He shall see the labor of His soul, and be satisfied. By His knowledge My righteous Servant shall justify many, For He shall bear their iniquities." (Isaiah 53: 11). And the Lord Christ said about Himself, "My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me, and to finish His work." (John 4: 34). Christ's work was redemption on the cross, and through it He saved man. Therefore, redemption was the will of the Father and the will of the Son as well. The work of redemption satisfied the Father and satisfied the Son. The return of mankind to the bosom of the Father is God's food, which He rejoices in and is satisfied with. Therefore, it was said about the sacrifices offered on the altar that the priest burns them on the altar, food, an offering made by fire to the Lord. We hear Christ say to the Father, "I have glorified You on the earth. I have finished the work which You have given Me to do." (John 17: 4). Everyone who believes in Christ has glorified the name of the Father.

2. His saying, "**My food**", indicates that what a person offers to God is not from himself, but from God. The animal that a person offers as a sacrifice was a gift from God's hand. David expressed this when he said, "For all things come from You, And of Your own we have given You." (1 Chronicles 29: 14).

3. Christ is God's food and His joy. Through His obedience to death, even the death of the cross, man returned to the bosom of the Father. These are expressions that reveal God's longing for man and His joy in him through His beloved sacrificed Son.

4. **My food**: This is said about the burnt offering, which refers to the obedience of Christ even to the cross. What pleases the heart of God most is Christ the Redeemer, who is a sweet aroma to Him: for He was obedient unto death, even the death of the cross, and in Him we are considered obedient and perfect (Colossians 1: 28). Christ carries us to the bosom of the Father, and the Father says, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." This is God's food and His guides.

5. The burnt offering, its fat is burned entirely on the altar, and this indicates that what pleases the heart of God is that we exert all our energies to please Him, and whoever offers a burnt offering must understand this, and stand before his burnt offering, expressing his readiness with his heart to serve God with all his energies. This is what the Bible says, "My son, give me your heart, And let your eyes observe my ways." (Proverbs 23: 26). God is happy when I give Him from my energies, but He is even more happy and satisfied when He gives us from His goodness. When we offer God a little, He bestows upon us according to His riches. The nature of God is that He is a giver; He loves to create and give good things to His creation. And He is happy when He gives. Let us notice what we give God in the mystery of the

Eucharist, “bread and wine and some prayers and hymns,” and what God returns to us, “His body and blood, in which is forgiveness of our sins and eternal life for us. “who gives to all liberally and without reproach” (James 1: 5).

6. Here God asks them to make feasts so that they may rejoice. God, who loves man, wants joy to return to him again after he lost it by falling into sin. The divine purpose cannot fail. This was through the plan of redemption. The most important thing they do in the feasts is to present burnt offerings, which He says are “a sweet aroma to the Lord.” And we heard when Noah presented his burnt offering that “the Lord smelled a pleasing aroma.” God wants His people to rejoice because our joy is a reason for His joy and satisfaction. God pours joy upon them, so that He may rejoice in their joy, “But be glad and rejoice forever in what I create; For behold, I create Jerusalem as a rejoicing, And her people a joy. I will rejoice in Jerusalem, And joy in My people; The voice of weeping shall no longer be heard in her, Nor the voice of crying.” (Isaiah 65: 18-19). The cross transformed the curse into a blessing. It moved us from a state of enmity to a state of joy.

7. Burnt offerings are a symbol of obedience, and God rejoices in the obedience of His people. Therefore, burnt offerings declare the Father’s joy in the obedience of His people, their trust in Him, and their surrender of themselves to Him with all their energies. This was to be accomplished in Christ, who obeyed even to the point of death on the cross, and was symbolized by their offering burnt offerings. At the end of days, St. Paul the Apostle says, “Now when all things are made subject to Him, then the Son Himself will also be subject to Him who put all things under Him, that God may be all in all.” (1 Corinthians 15: 28). In eternity, we will be in Christ, the head of the body of the Church, utterly obedient to the Father. This obedience gladdens the heart of the Father, for obedience to the Father is a symbol of trust in Him. This obedience is what gladdens the heart of God because it is a sign of trust in God. The joy of the Father is reflected in the Church, the body of Christ, so we all rejoice as St. Peter the Apostle said, “whom having not seen you love. Though now you do not see Him, yet believing, you rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory,” (1 Peter 1: 8).

8. Therefore, on every occasion the Church holds liturgies, to present to the Father His Son Christ in the Eucharistic sacrifice. We have nothing else to offer, and there is nothing more precious than Him to offer. Through the Eucharistic sacrifice, our sins are forgiven and we are established in Christ, so He returns us to the bosom of the Father. This is what makes the Father happy, that His children return to His bosom. His saying “**My food**” is a reference to the mystery of the Eucharist, the food that God gives us so that we may live and be satisfied, and He rejoices in us as His children, for what makes us happy makes God happy. His saying “My food” is as if he is saying “My body.” The Eucharist is food that God offers us so that we may live. This is the daily worship that God wants in His Church, a joy for Him and a joy for His people.

(Verses 9-10): '**And on the Sabbath day two lambs in their first year, without blemish, and two-tenths of an ephah of fine flour as a grain offering, mixed with oil, with its drink offering— 10 this is the burnt offering for every Sabbath, besides the regular burnt offering with its drink offering.**

It is said: "Thus the heavens and the earth, and all the host of them, were finished. 2 And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had done, and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had done. 3 Then God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because in it He rested from all His work which God had created and made." (Genesis 2: 1-3). God does not get tired of the work of creation. So, what is the meaning of the Bible saying He rested = God's rest on the seventh day means His rest and joy that He completed the redemption of man to fulfill all righteousness for him (Matthew 3: 15), and save him from death and destruction. And that was in the middle of the seventh day when Christ "the Sun of Righteousness" completed His redemption on the cross. So, what was before the incarnation of Christ is the evening of the seventh day, and what was after Christ is the morning of the seventh day. And as the Prophet Isaiah said (65: 17-19) that when a person rejoices, God rejoices, and the Lord of Glory says, "Therefore you now have sorrow; but I will see you again and your heart will rejoice, and your joy no one will take from you." (John 16: 22). So, joy is mutual between God and man.

The Sabbath Day:

God wants all our days to be feasts for Him in which He rejoices in us through the sacrifice of His only Son. Also, he sets for us a weekly feast, which is the Sabbath, or the Feast of Rest, which is the token of true rest in the eternal feast, "There remains therefore a rest for the people of God." (Hebrews 4: 9) and also sacrifices are offered every Sabbath.

Two lambs + twenty flour mixed with oil + drink offering

The same idea as the previous one, with the addition that when we find the number 2 this is to refer to the Incarnation in which the Father reconciled with mankind (2 Corinthians 5: 18). As a result of this reconciliation, God rested, and man rested. God rested when He comforted man. Christ in His body made the two into one body, indeed this is for the one who is abiding in Christ (Ephesians 2: 14-16). This is the Father's rest (the rest) is the return of mankind into unity as one body in Christ, which was the divine purpose in the first place. At the same time, this is man's comfort when he gathers with his brothers in one body, bound by love. This is the meaning of Christ's words to John the Baptist: "Permit it to be so now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness." (Matthew 3: 15). The number 2 may indicate that we will have rest on earth as a pledge of another eternal rest in heaven. That is why St. Paul the Apostle says, "For if Joshua had given them rest, then He would not afterward have spoken of another day. There remains therefore a rest for the people of God." (Hebrews 4: 8-9). So there was rest for them in the promised land, and they had another rest in heaven.

(Verses 11-15): **'At the beginnings of your months you shall present a burnt offering to the Lord: two young bulls, one ram, and seven lambs in their first year, without blemish; 12 three-tenths of an ephah of fine flour as a grain offering, mixed with oil, for each bull; two-tenths of an ephah of fine flour as a grain offering, mixed with oil, for the one ram; 13 and one-tenth of an ephah of fine flour, mixed with oil, as a grain offering for each lamb, as a burnt offering of sweet aroma, an offering made by fire to the Lord. 14 Their drink offering shall be half a hin of wine for a bull, one-third of a hin for a ram, and one-fourth of a hin for a lamb; this is the burnt offering for each month throughout the**

months of the year. 15 Also one kid of the goats as a sin offering to the Lord shall be offered, besides the regular burnt offering and its drink offering.

Feast of the beginning of the months:

Sabbath refers to God's creation of the world and rest. As for the sacrifice of the beginning of the month, it considers the providence of God. The moon determines the successive seasons. The moon, in its cycle, determines the seasons. Therefore, while we are observing the moon's cycle, we must not forget the works and cares of God that pass from generation to generation just as the moon cycles go through every month, and we thank Him for them. As if the moon is a faithful witness in heaven to God's care and providence (Psalm 89: 37).

This is the monthly feast, and also sacrifices are offered in it. And because the Sabbath is a symbol of rest, God says My Sabbaths. But here He says the beginning of your months because the month refers to the changing time from month to month, and this will end at the end of the world where nothing remains except the day of the sun that does not set, an unbroken Sabbath is a day of eternal rest.

This reminds us of what the inspiration says in Ezekiel the Prophet, Chapter 1, Verses (15-21) and refer to the interpretation in its place. We hear about the wheels and these turn, referring to the events that take place in our lives. But thanks be to God, these wheels are moved by angels under the guidance of the Spirit of God. We hear this verse: "Now as I looked at the living creatures, behold, a wheel was on the earth beside each living creature with its four faces. 16The appearance of the wheels and their workings was like the color of beryl, and all four had the same likeness. The appearance of their workings was, as it were, a wheel in the middle of a wheel." (Ezekiel 1: 15-16). Were they wheels or one wheel? There are so many events in life that they seem contradictory according to our limited human thinking. But they are according to one wisdom and one divine plan and its goal: 1) The glory of God (Isaiah 43: 7). 2) The salvation and happiness of man. This is the meaning of the presence of the color beryl here, which is a green color, and the color green refers to life, and this is God's will for us: "Do I have any pleasure at all that the wicked should die?" says the Lord God , " and not that he should turn from his ways and live?" (Ezekiel 18: 23). This is also one of the plans of the good God to be glorified and give life to His church.

The moon symbolizes the Church, for Christ is the Sun of Righteousness, whose light is reflected on His Church. She is filled of His light as if the monthly celebration of this feast refers to the church's celebration of putting on the new man and leaving the old one.

God wants us always to celebrate and be happy. God asks for burnt offerings every day (and these burnt offerings are for contentment and joy). And so every week (Sabbath). And every month. And every year. And every seven years. (the sabbatical year) and every seven seven years (the jubilee in the fiftieth year). With every shining of the sun, we rejoice at the beginning of a new day. With every new week, we rejoice at the beginning of a new week.

Thus we rejoice at every beginning. This is a new beginning in our lives, so we rejoice because God gave us a new opportunity in life. This always reminds us that our true joy will be with the beginning of our

life in heaven in eternity. God wants us to always look forward to this happy eternity and not get attached to the earthly ephemerals. With every new beginning, burnt offerings are offered, which indicates offering the whole life to God with all our energies, and this includes continuous repentance and offering our life and all our energies to God. God will return it to us with true joy. And the repetition of the number 7 is a sign of perfection, meaning that God wants all, and wants joy for all, and always wants it for all. He always wants the whole heart, " My son, give me your heart, And let your eyes observe my ways." (Proverbs 23: 26) = Give your heart to Me, and you will not regret, and notice what I will give you.

Beginning of the month Offering

Two young bulls + 3/10 flour mixed with oil + ½ hin drink offering

Ram + 2/10 flour mixed with oil + ½ hin drink offering

7 lambs + 1/10 flour mixed with oil + ¾ hin drink offering

Sin offering

One kid of the goats.

Two young bulls: These are the same offerings that are offered on Passover and Firstfruits Day. As for the day of blowing the trumpet, at the beginning of the seventh month, on the tenth of the month (the Atonement), and the day of the Feast of Tabernacles, the same offerings are offered, with one difference: one bull is offered instead of two bulls (Leviticus 29). So why the difference?

The feasts in Numbers 28 are related to the work of Christ on earth (the cross, the resurrection until the coming of the Holy Spirit, that is, the church's foundation on the day of Pentecost). Before Christ completed His work, there were Jews and Gentiles, which is indicated by the presentation of **two bulls**, for Christ presented Himself on behalf of the Jews and the Gentiles.

As for the feasts in Numbers 29 (trumpets, atonement, and tabernacles) talk about the church's struggle after Christ completed His work and made the two into one. The bride of Christ, whom the Holy Spirit is now preparing on earth to go to her Bridegroom Christ in heaven, is one Church, only, holy, catholic and apostolic. So with the second group, **one bull** is offered.

In the same way, we find that when Saint Matthew the Evangelist spoke about Christ's entry into Jerusalem, he said, "Now when they drew near Jerusalem, and came to Bethphage, at the Mount of Olives, then Jesus sent two disciples, 2 saying to them, "Go into the village opposite you, and immediately you will find a donkey tied, and a colt with her. Loose them and bring them to Me."

(Matthew 21: 1-2). Because Matthew, writing to the Jews, mentioned that the Lord used a donkey (which was often used as a symbol of God's leadership of the Jews for a long time). As for Saints Mark, Luke, and John, he said, "Now when they drew near Jerusalem, to Bethphage and Bethany, at the Mount of Olives, He sent two of His disciples; 2 and He said to them, "Go into the village opposite you; and as soon as you have entered it you will find a colt tied, on which no one has sat. Loose it and bring it." (Mark 11: 1-2). St. Luke said, "And it came to pass, when He drew near to Bethphage and Bethany, at the mountain called Olivet, that He sent two of His disciples, 30 saying, "Go into the village opposite you, where as you enter you will find a colt tied, on which no one has ever sat. Loose it and bring it here." (Luke 19: 29-30). Here he says, "no one has ever sat." The colt is a reference to the nations who did not know God before, or that this one colt is a symbol of the one church that Christ formed from Jews and Gentiles.

The ram: It is usually presented as a trespass offering, but here we are talking about burnt offerings and that they are a sacrifice of sweet aroma. What is the meaning behind that? Christ offered Himself for the forgiveness of our sins so that we might be counted perfect and blameless in Him (Ephesians 1: 4 + Corinthians 1: 28). This is the meaning of the Father's saying, " This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." The Father said this on the day of Christ's baptism, in which the sacrament of baptism was established and through which we receive forgiveness of sins. Baptism is based on the death of Christ as a trespass offering (Isaiah 53: 10) and His resurrection. And note the words of Isaiah in the same verse that "Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise Him" He became a trespass offering, which the Lord was pleased with. See the interpretation of verses (Leviticus 4: 27-35) to see that the sin offering was mentioned once as a sweet aroma to the Lord. The meaning is that God rejoiced in solving the problem of sin and that there was hope for the worst of sinners.

The seven lambs: Lambs symbolize complete obedience. Therefore, it was said about Christ, the Lamb of God. The sheep is a symbol of Christ who obeyed unto death: The death of the cross " He was oppressed and He was afflicted, Yet He opened not His mouth; He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, And as a sheep before its shearers is silent, So He opened not His mouth." (Isaiah 53: 7). + " But I was like a docile lamb brought to the slaughter" (Jeremiah 11: 19). This is Christ, and in Him, we are considered perfect obedient and note the number 7 is the number of perfections. And once again, this is for the one who is steadfast in Christ, " who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit." (Romans 8: 1). Therefore, the Lord says to us, " Abide in Me, and I in you" (John 15: 4). Thus, the one ram becomes a symbol of Christ, the Bridegroom of the Church, and the 7 sheep become a symbol of the one complete Church that Christ, her Bridegroom, has perfected through its steadfastness and union in Him. The number 7 refers to perfection, and what is meant is the entire Church, the Body of Christ. This is just as the Church of Christ in the whole world is referred to as 7 churches in the Book of Revelation (Chapters 2,3).

One kid of a goat: He is a leader of the herd of goats and presents a sin offering, especially on the Day of Atonement. Here he talks about Christ who offered Himself as a sin sacrifice. As a leader, he calls us to present ourselves as a living sacrifice and consider ourselves dead in front of sin, and crucify the body with its passions and lusts (Romans 6: 11, 12:1 + Galatians 5: 24 + Colossians 3: 5). The goat loves to climb high places, so whoever follows Christ and considers himself dead in front of sin, Christ leads him to heaven, for he is the way.

Flour mixed with oil: a sign of the hypostatic union between the Son and the Holy Spirit, and the Holy Spirit is the one who abides us in Christ so that the life of Christ is confirmed in us.

Numbers 3/10, 2/10, 1/10: The number 10 represents the law's perfection, and in heaven, the true perfection, so the number that represents the heavens and the heavenly people is $1000 = 10 \times 10 \times 10$. Therefore, the angels are thousands of thousands and myriads of myriads. But we are on earth, we are in Christ, but because we sin in the body, the perfection is in heaven. As for the number 3, it refers to the first resurrection from the death of sin. The number 2 refers to the reconciliation that Christ made through His incarnation, for there is no salvation except through love between God and us and between us and others. The number 1 refers to the one Christ person in whom we abide, so we have eternal life in Christ (**the flour**).

Wine: It is a sign of joy, the joy of the Father in us and our joy of returning to the bosom of the Father.

Numbers 1/2, 1/3, 1/4: They refer to God's joy in this reconciliation and the love that Christ made through His incarnation (No. 2). God's joy in mankind's victory over sin and their resurrection from the death of sin (No. 3). This has become available to everyone who wants from the people all over the world (No. 4).

If we are talking about the joy of God, then God rejoices that His church has returned to Him as He wanted this from the beginning, one church. God created Adam, and from Adam, He formed the body of Eve, and the children came from them, meaning all are the body of one Adam. The meaning is that God wanted humanity to be in unity, and when the division occurred because of sin, Cain was divided against Abel. Christ came to make the two into one (Ephesians 2: 14-16 + John 17: 20-23), and this unity is referred to as Number 1 here. God rejoices in this one church in which Christ reconciled the two (Jews and gentiles / meaning two in enmity / heaven and earth as our Coptic Church understood and chanted it), and this becomes the meaning of number 1/2. This one church rose from death and became alive, for God created man to live eternally and not die, and this is the meaning of number 1/3. This life and unity is available to everyone who wants from all the world and this is the meaning of the number 1/4.

without blemish: These sacrifices refer to Christ who is without sin or blemish.

(Verses 16-25): '**On the fourteenth day of the first month is the Passover of the Lord. 17 And on the fifteenth day of this month is the feast; unleavened bread shall be eaten for seven days. 18 On the first day you shall have a holy convocation. You shall do no customary work. 19 And you shall present an offering made by fire as a burnt offering to the Lord: two young bulls, one ram, and seven lambs in their first year. Be sure they are without blemish. 20 Their grain offering shall be of fine flour mixed with oil: three-tenths of an ephah you shall offer for a bull, and two-tenths for a ram; 21 you shall offer one-tenth of an ephah for each of the seven lambs; 22 also one goat as a sin offering, to make atonement for you. 23 You shall offer these besides the burnt offering of the morning, which is for a regular burnt offering. 24 In this manner you shall offer the food of the offering made by fire daily for seven days, as a sweet aroma to the Lord; it shall be offered besides the regular burnt offering and its drink offering. 25 And on the seventh day you shall have a holy convocation. You shall do no customary work.**

Passover and Unleavened Bread:

He started here with the annual feasts. And this is the first feast in the first month of the year. It refers to the seven days of unleavened bread, that is, let us begin a new year that is not connected with the old leaven (1 Corinthians 5: 8) + (Ephesians 4: 22,24) so that we will have a new life and new praise, rejecting the evil that has passed, and the evil symbolized by leaven. (Matthew 16: 6, 11).

unleavened bread shall be eaten for seven days: The leaven symbolizes evil. After the Passover, that is, the crucifixion of Christ, it is not right for a Christian to return to evil again. The number 7 is a sign of all the days of life, so it numbered 7 as a complete number (1 Corinthians 5: 6-8). Throughout the week, the same sacrifices and offerings are presented as a sign that the work and effectiveness of Christ's sacrifice are for all time.

The offerings and sacrifices are the same as those offered at the beginning of the months (see the interpretation of verses 11-15).

(Verses 26-31): '**Also on the day of the firstfruits, when you bring a new grain offering to the Lord at your Feast of Weeks, you shall have a holy convocation. You shall do no customary work. 27 You shall present a burnt offering as a sweet aroma to the Lord: two young bulls, one ram, and seven lambs in their first year, 28 with their grain offering of fine flour mixed with oil: three-tenths of an ephah for each bull, two-tenths for the one ram, 29 and one-tenth for each of the seven lambs; 30 also one kid of the goats, to make atonement for you. 31 Be sure they are without blemish. You shall present them with their drink offerings, besides the regular burnt offering with its grain offering.**

The day of the firstfruits:

The Feast of Firstfruits is the day on which the bundle of barley is waved. But we note that the inspiration here combined the Feast of Firstfruits with the Feast of Weeks or the day that comes fifty days after the firstfruits (the day of harvesting wheat) = **Also on the day of the firstfruits, when you bring a new grain offering to the Lord at your Feast of Weeks, you shall have a holy convocation.** It is clear here that the two feasts are joined together. On this feast, the Feast of Weeks (the fiftieth) is presented to the Lord on the occasion of the Feast of Wheat.

Practical application: The day of firstfruits was sufficient to celebrate the presentation of the first fruits of the barley harvest to the temple, but without religious rituals. As for the religious rituals, they were on the day of the Feast of Weeks with the presentation of the first fruits of wheat, and these religious rituals are mentioned in these verses. If the day of firstfruits symbolizes the resurrection of Christ, and if the Feast of Weeks symbolizes the resurrection of the Church, then the fact that the rituals and burnt offerings are performed on Pentecost, that is, the Feast of Weeks, is a declaration of the Father's joy in the resurrection of the Church that arose in Christ. This is the reason for merging the two feasts together. Note that the measure of the drink offerings of wine was not specified here because the Father's joy in the resurrection of the Church cannot be expressed.

without blemish = meaning that the sacrifices are without blemish, as they are a symbol of Christ who is without sin.

Now we are in the harvest of wheat. Note that for the sake of sanctifying time, so that all the days of man would be sacred to the Lord, the Lord made the seventh day for the Jews a sabbath for the Lord, so by sanctifying the seventh day, the whole week is sanctified, because the word week comes from the number seven, especially in Hebrew, when it is called (Shabu'), meaning Seven.

Then the Lord sanctified the weeks, by establishing the Feast of Weeks, which is the Feast of Pentecost, because it is after 7 weeks from the beginning of the harvest, and it counts the Sabbath of the Lord. It was a festival associated with agriculture.

Since it was difficult to determine the beginning of the day of the harvest, it was decided to count it from the Passover, so it became the fiftieth day of the Passover. In it, they offer to God from the new harvest. (Like someone who does not go to church unless he has his brothers with him). On this day, Peter offered 3000 souls. He brought the tired souls to rest in the arms of the Lord. Likewise, the Lord sanctified the seventh month filled with feasts, and the Lord sanctified the seventh year, which is after 7 years, and the fiftieth year after 7 x 7 years, so that the whole life would be sanctified.

But here is an important question... Why did the inspiration combine the Feasts of the Firstfruits and the Fiftieths into one day, which he called the Firstfruits Day?

The Feast of Firstfruits, on the third day of the Passover, is a symbol of the day of Christ's resurrection on the third day of the crucifixion (and its symbol is Passover day). This firstfruits day was the resurrection of Christ, the firstborn of those who had fallen asleep.

The day of Pentecost is a symbol of the day of the foundation of the Church, the day St. Peter baptized 3000 souls, and it was the firstfruit, the first of human beings who rose in Christ from the death of sin, which we call the first resurrection.

We note that whoever rose from the death of sin through the first resurrection has a share in the second resurrection in the second coming of Christ with a glorified body. Therefore, we read in the Book of Revelation, " Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection. Over such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years." (Revelation 20: 6).

For this reason, the revelation combined the Feast of Firstfruits with the Feast of Weeks or the Feast of Pentecost on one day:

The resurrection of Christ was the resurrection of the church in Him.

The eternal life of Christ, who rose from the dead, became for the Church.

The life of Christ is one life for the one and only holy Church

And the offerings and sacrifices are the same as the offerings and sacrifices that are offered at the beginning of the months. See the interpretation of verses (11-15).

Chapter 29

The Feasts, their sacrifices and their offerings:

(Verses 1-6): **'And in the seventh month, on the first day of the month, you shall have a holy convocation. You shall do no customary work. For you it is a day of blowing the trumpets. 2 You shall offer a burnt offering as a sweet aroma to the Lord: one young bull, one ram, and seven lambs in their first year, without blemish. 3 Their grain offering shall be fine flour mixed with oil: three-tenths of an ephah for the bull, two-tenths for the ram, 4 and one-tenth for each of the seven lambs; 5 also one kid of the goats as a sin offering, to make atonement for you; 6 besides the burnt offering with its grain offering for the New Moon, the regular burnt offering with its grain offering, and their drink offerings, according to their ordinance, as a sweet aroma, an offering made by fire to the Lord.**

The feast of the blowing the trumpets:

From here, we start the feasts of the year's second half, and during the seventh month, we celebrate three feasts. And this period was a rest period for those working in agriculture, between harvest and sowing seeds, as if God wanted to clear them for joyful worship during this period (therefore, we should sanctify our holidays to God).

one young bull, one ram: See the interpretation in the previous chapter (verses 11-15). Two bulls were offered in the feasts that represent the work of Christ on earth (the cross, the resurrection, and until the descending of the Holy Spirit, i.e. the foundation of the church on the day of Pentecost). Here only one bull is offered. The reason is that Christ made the two into one by His work that He accomplished on earth. That is why we find that one bull is offered on these last feasts. We see this in the Feast of Tabernacles, for during the first seven days, two rams and 14 lambs are offered daily. The first seven days they dwell in tabernacles, a symbol of their sojourn in Sinai, which also symbolizes the sojourn of the Church now on earth before we reach heaven. On the feast, i.e. the eighth day (and the eighth day represents eternity), one ram and 7 sheep are offered. In eternity there is only one Church. This is what we saw with Isaac and Jacob. Jacob represents Christ, who left His father's house to marry two (Leah symbolizes the Jews and Rachel symbolizes the Gentiles). In contrast, Isaac symbolizes Christ, who is in the glory of His Father and awaits the arrival of His one and only bride, the Church.

Thus, when one ram and seven lambs are offered on the eighth day of Tabernacles, this eighth day is a sign of eternity. The one ram becomes a symbol of Christ, the Bridegroom of the Church, and the seven lambs become a symbol of the one complete Church that Christ, her Bridegroom, has perfected. The number seven indicates perfection. This is just as the Church of Christ in the whole world was referred to as seven churches in the Book of Revelation (chapters 2 and 3).

Note in verse 6 **besides the burnt offering with its grain offering for the New Moon, the regular burnt offering with its grain offering, and their drink offerings, according to their ordinance, as a sweet aroma, an offering made by fire to the Lord.**

Offering the sacrifices on the day of chanting does not exempt them from the sacrifices of the New Moon and the daily burnt offering. Doing something sacred does not exempt me from the rest of my sacred duties. For example, if I go to church, this does not exempt me from my home prayers on this day. The Feast of Trumpets, in which they blow the trumpets, as if God announces to His people that they are preparing for the two great feasts, the Feast of Atonement and the Feast of Tabernacles.

(Verses 7-11): **'On the tenth day of this seventh month you shall have a holy convocation. You shall afflict your souls; you shall not do any work. 8 You shall present a burnt offering to the Lord as a sweet aroma: one young bull, one ram, and seven lambs in their first year. Be sure they are without blemish. 9 Their grain offering shall be of fine flour mixed with oil: three-tenths of an ephah for the bull, two-tenths for the one ram, 10 and one-tenth for each of the seven lambs; 11 also one kid of the goats as a sin offering, besides the sin offering for atonement, the regular burnt offering with its grain offering, and their drink offerings.**

Day of Atonement:

In it, they humble themselves and they offer a burnt offering to the Lord, a sweet aroma (verse 8) Thus, their humiliation is mixed with joy, as God is pleased with them, not because of their humiliation, but for the sake of reconciliation that is achieved between Him and them through the burnt offering. Humbling ourselves before God leads to humility and contrition, so God dwells with this humble and contrite (Isaiah 57: 15). As for the arrogant, how can he meet with the humble Christ?

We note here that the sacrifice of the atonement is a sin offering. Still, another sin offering is offered beside it, and the reason is that in presenting the sacrifice of the atonement, they may err and need something to atone for this. And let us ask ourselves whether when we offer repentance, is it real repentance or is it repentance that is reckless, and this is a new sin that requires repentance.

And they offer burnt offerings on the Day of Atonement because in everything (even in our repentance), our eyes should be on the glory and pleasure of God.

(Verses 12-38): **'On the fifteenth day of the seventh month you shall have a holy convocation. You shall do no customary work, and you shall keep a feast to the Lord seven days. 13 You shall present a burnt offering, an offering made by fire as a sweet aroma to the Lord: thirteen young bulls, two rams, and fourteen lambs in their first year. They shall be without blemish. 14 Their grain offering shall be of fine flour mixed with oil: three-tenths of an ephah for each of the thirteen bulls, two-tenths for each of the two rams, 15 and one-tenth for each of the fourteen lambs; 16 also one kid of the goats as a sin offering, besides the regular burnt offering, its grain offering, and its drink offering. 17 'On the second day present twelve young bulls, two rams, fourteen lambs in their first year without blemish, 18 and their grain offering and their drink offerings for the bulls, for the rams, and for the lambs, by their number, according to the ordinance; 19 also one kid of the goats as a sin offering, besides the regular**

burnt offering with its grain offering, and their drink offerings. 20 'On the third day present eleven bulls, two rams, fourteen lambs in their first year without blemish, 21 and their grain offering and their drink offerings for the bulls, for the rams, and for the lambs, by their number, according to the ordinance; 22 also one goat as a sin offering, besides the regular burnt offering, its grain offering, and its drink offering. 23 'On the fourth day present ten bulls, two rams, and fourteen lambs in their first year, without blemish, 24 and their grain offering and their drink offerings for the bulls, for the rams, and for the lambs, by their number, according to the ordinance; 25 also one kid of the goats as a sin offering, besides the regular burnt offering, its grain offering, and its drink offering. 26 'On the fifth day present nine bulls, two rams, and fourteen lambs in their first year without blemish, 27 and their grain offering and their drink offerings for the bulls, for the rams, and for the lambs, by their number, according to the ordinance; 28 also one goat as a sin offering, besides the regular burnt offering, its grain offering, and its drink offering. 29 'On the sixth day present eight bulls, two rams, and fourteen lambs in their first year without blemish, 30 and their grain offering and their drink offerings for the bulls, for the rams, and for the lambs, by their number, according to the ordinance; 31 also one goat as a sin offering, besides the regular burnt offering, its grain offering, and its drink offering. 32 'On the seventh day present seven bulls, two rams, and fourteen lambs in their first year without blemish, 33 and their grain offering and their drink offerings for the bulls, for the rams, and for the lambs, by their number, according to the ordinance; 34 also one goat as a sin offering, besides the regular burnt offering, its grain offering, and its drink offering. 35 'On the eighth day you shall have a sacred assembly. You shall do no customary work. 36 You shall present a burnt offering, an offering made by fire as a sweet aroma to the Lord: one bull, one ram, seven lambs in their first year without blemish, 37 and their grain offering and their drink offerings for the bull, for the ram, and for the lambs, by their number, according to the ordinance; 38 also one goat as a sin offering, besides the regular burnt offering, its grain offering, and its drink offering.

Feast of Tabernacles:

Following the day of Atonement. And in the day of Atonement, we see them humble themselves. As for the Feast of Tabernacles, it is all joys. Those who sow in tears Shall reap in joy. We note that the days of joy must be days of sacrifice. And our days of joy should be days of spiritual joy, in which we rejoice that we have a relationship with God, for this is the real joy, and this increases the joy. And here, we find them offering sacrifices all the days of their stay in booths (and the booths refer to the days of our sojourning in the body). Thus, the church performs continuous liturgies.

The day of Atonement refers to the cross, which is why it is associated with fasting and contrite. As for the Feast of Tabernacles refers to the fruits of the cross, which include:

- The power of resurrection and eternal life.
- And ascension = life here on earth in the heavenly places as a pledge of eternal life in the heavenly glory.
- Enjoying the Holy Spirit. Whoever has experienced this can live a life of sojourn in this world, despising all its vanities (7 days they dwell in booths) and looking forward to the day of ascension to heaven (the eighth day of the Feast of Tabernacles).

And the continuation of the feast for 8 days refers to the life resurrected in Christ, that is, the eternal life. It is the feast of joy and departure towards the heavenly places.

There are several observations on the sacrifices and offerings of this feast:

1. We notice the large number of sacrifices and offerings. Within seven days, 70 bulls are offered. On the first day, they offer 13 bulls, and on the second day, they offer 12 bulls and so on, until the seventh day, they offer 7 bulls. Therefore, the total is $(13 + 12 + 11 + 10 + 9 + 8 + 7 = 70)$, which is a whole (perfect) number.

2. $70 = 7 \times 10$. This number refers to Christ, the perfect man alone, who fully abided by the law. He said, "Which of you convicts Me of sin?" Therefore, He offered himself as a ransom for man.

3. Note that the sacrifices begin with 13, which is the number of sin, and end with 7, which is the number of perfection. These sacrifices refer to Christ, who transferred His church from a state of sin (13) to a state of perfection (7). Christ who became sin (13) so that we may become the righteousness of God in Him (7) (2 Corinthians 5: 21).

4. We notice that the number of rams and sheep has doubled over the regular holidays. This was explained previously in the interpretation of verses (1-5). And we add that during the seven days (which refers to the days of the Church's sojourn on earth), two rams are offered daily + 14 lambs instead of one ram and seven lambs. If the number 2 refers to the incarnation, and this number appeared during the 7 days of sojourn, then this means that the days of sojourn on earth from the day of redemption until the second coming are the days in which the body of Christ, that is, the church, is complete. During the days of our sojourn on earth, Christ works to unite His Church and to make the two into one in love. This is the meaning of what was said in the Book of Revelation: " Then a white robe was given to each of them; and it was said to them that they should rest a little while longer, until both the number of their fellow servants and their brethren, who would be killed as they were, was completed." (Revelation 6: 11). There are those who have not yet been born and by whom the body of Christ, that is, the Church, is complete. See the interpretation of the verse (Colossians 1: 24), as it refers to the same concept. Note that in the genealogy of Christ in the Gospel of Matthew, there are three periods, each of which is 14 generations. $14 = 2 \times 7$. Number 2 refers to the incarnation, and number 7 refers to the fully human Christ. And this is what the Holy Spirit is doing, forming one church that will be perfect in Christ (Colossians 1: 28).

5. The large number of sacrifices indicates that true joy stems from the work of the true sacrifice of Christ. In other words, we enjoy heavenly joy whenever we discover the power of the sacrifice.

6. We find on the eighth day that they offer the same sacrifices as usual in the previous feasts (Chapters 28, 29) after many sacrifices were offered. The meaning is that the many sacrifices of the Old Testament ends with the one sacrifice of Christ on the cross. The number (8) is the number of the eternal life as the eighth day of the creation is a day without an end. By calculating the number of the name of Jesus, we find 888, for Jesus is the resurrection and the life (John 11: 25). The name number is calculated by placing the number corresponding to the name Jesus in Greek, which is **Ihcouc**. Before the invention of

numbers (1, 2, 3...), they used letters instead of numbers, for example (A = 1, B = 2). In the same way, we find that the number of the Antichrist is 666 (Revelation 13: 18). If Christ is the life and the resurrection, then this Antichrist who Satan moves is death, and those who follow him are condemned to death (Revelation 19: 20). Rather, the number 666 refers to Satan, who gave all his power and authority to the Antichrist, and with them, he kills and dies (Revelation 13: 2). Note that the human number is 6, as he was created on the sixth day and fell on the sixth day, and at the sixth hour, he was sentenced to death, so the number 6 was associated with the man sentenced to death.

7. We notice the decrease of the sacrifices from day to day, as evidence of the decreasing importance of the sacrifices of the Old Testament until they disappear entirely and remains only the sacrifice of Christ.

(Verses 39-40): **'These you shall present to the Lord at your appointed feasts (besides your vowed offerings and your freewill offerings) as your burnt offerings and your grain offerings, as your drink offerings and your peace offerings.'** 40 So Moses told the children of Israel everything, just as the Lord commanded Moses.

Personal Offerings:

Beside these communal sacrifices and offerings on the level of every day, every week, every month, and every year, there are vows, offerings, drink offerings, and sacrifices that a person offers by his personal will to complete the collective work with the individual, and the worship of the group with the worship of each member. For us, this means that after all that Christ gave us, we have to ask. What do we offer Him in return for what He gave us? Are these offerings, sacrifices and drink offerings sufficient? So it is nothing less than: "that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your [b]reasonable service." (Romans 12: 1), and our life as a drink offering, as our fathers the martyrs did, "For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure is at hand." (2 Timothy 4: 6).

Notice God's insistence that we give, so why? Simply, when we give to God, He gives us so much that He does not remain in debt. We give Him bread and wine so that the body and blood of His Son will restore to us forgiveness of sins and eternal life. Giving expresses love. That is why it was said, "My beloved is mine, and I am his. He feeds his flock among the lilies." (Song of Solomon 2: 16). Also, "I am my beloved's, And my beloved is mine." (Song of Solomon 6: 3). It was said: "It is more blessed to give than to receive." (Acts 20: 35). Giving is what gives a person true joy, not receiving. Therefore, God rejoices when He gives to His children, and He "gives to all liberally and without reproach" (James 1: 5). God wants us to experience this kind of joy, the joy of giving.

Rather, when we give, God, who "gives to all liberally and without reproach," He pours out His generosity on the one who gives, for God does not remain in debt. By applying the principle of "It is more blessed to give than to receive" to God, we understand that God is very happy when He gives, for this is His nature to give. And when God's joy increases when He gives, this joy is reflected in the one who gives to God. And this is God's will for us to rejoice.

Chapter 30

Vows:

In concluding his talk about offerings and sacrifices with personal offerings, he wanted to clarify the extent of the believer's commitment to his vows, distinguishing between a mature man and a daughter who is under her father's guardianship and a wife who is obedient to her husband.

We note here that God cares about maintaining family relations, as the woman and children are subject to the head of the family. Rather, God cares about this more than vows, despite the importance of vows. Although the book says: "Better not to vow than to vow and not pay." (Ecclesiastes 5: 5), God gives the right to the husband or the father to dissolve his wife from her vow if he sees this appropriate, for the man is responsible for the household financially and socially, and he may find that the financial means do not allow them to fulfill the vow made by the woman or the girl. However, if a man makes a vow, he must fulfill it. The same applies to the divorced woman if she is free and not under another man's authority.

We note that there are 4 cases for a woman if she vows:

- 1- The woman is unmarried and is still in her father's house. (verses 3-5).
- 2- The woman had made a vow before she got married and then got married before fulfilling her vow (verses 6-8).
- 3- The woman being divorced or widowed (verse 9).
- 4- The woman being married (verses 10-12).

What is the vow that the Lord requires?: God wants the whole heart, our depths and our love "My son, give me your heart, And let your eyes observe my ways." (Proverbs 23: 26). God wants our depths, our love, and all our energies. This is what the bride of the Song of Solomon expressed when she said, "I am my beloved's, And my beloved is mine." (Song of Solomon 6: 3). And that we fear God, walk in His ways, love and worship Him (Deuteronomy 10: 12 + 1 Samuel 2: 30). And we do not have any goal in any work except what glorifies His name (Matthew 5: 16).

Christ is the Man: who promised to offer salvation and provided it by sacrificing Himself.

We also: as we carry this unique vow within us, accept the features of His vow in us, so we carry His cross within us, and offer our entire life to God in love for Him; since He loved us first, so we no longer live for ourselves, but for God who redeemed us. Thus we say with the bride of the Song of Solomon, "My beloved is mine, and I am his." (Song of Solomon 2: 16). We cannot give ourselves entirely to God unless we first abide in Christ. Whoever abides in Christ has the Holy Spirit dwelling in him. The Holy

Spirit pours out the love of God into our hearts (Romans 5: 5). Without this love, no one can sacrifice himself and give himself entirely to God.

This is what the Lord asked: "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me." The cross of Christ is a sacrificial love until the last drop of blood. So what Christ asks of us is mutual love and sacrifice between us and Him. Our vow signifies our acceptance of the cross (Galatians 2: 20). Only those who love God accept the cross in joy "So when they had eaten breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me more than these?" He said to Him, "Yes, Lord; You know that I love You." He said to him, "Feed My lambs."16 He said to him again a second time, "Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me?" He said to Him, "Yes, Lord; You know that I love You." He said to him, "Tend My sheep."17 He said to him the third time, "Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me?" Peter was grieved because He said to him the third time, "Do you love Me?" And he said to Him, "Lord, You know all things; You know that I love You." Jesus said to him, "Feed My sheep. 18 Most assuredly, I say to you, when you were younger, you girded yourself and walked where you wished; but when you are old, you will stretch out your hands, and another will gird you and carry you where you do not wish." (John 21: 15-18). Christ's question to Peter, "Do you love me?" We find its answer in the rest of the Lord's words. Then Christ completed His words to Peter that he would be martyred on the cross (John 21: 18). The proof of love is sacrifice. And in martyrdom is the pinnacle of love for Christ, as he sacrificed his entire life for the love of Christ. Martyrdom is the practical implementation of the bride's saying, "My beloved is mine, and I am his." Christ sacrificed His life for His bride (us), so what can we offer Him except our souls?

As for the woman, she refers to the church: and the Church of the Old Testament refers to the girl in her father's house. She vowed to keep the commandments, and she failed. But the Christian Church, the bride, is the bride in her groom's house. Christ dwells in us, and through Him, we can fulfill our vows. Rather, he is the one who fulfilled the vow and performed our obligations.

(Verses 1-12): **Then Moses spoke to the heads of the tribes concerning the children of Israel, saying, "This is the thing which the Lord has commanded: 2 If a man makes a vow to the Lord, or swears an oath to bind himself by some agreement, he shall not break his word; he shall do according to all that proceeds out of his mouth. 3 "Or if a woman makes a vow to the Lord, and binds herself by some agreement while in her father's house in her youth, 4 and her father hears her vow and the agreement by which she has bound herself, and her father holds his peace, then all her vows shall stand, and every agreement with which she has bound herself shall stand. 5 But if her father overrules her on the day that he hears, then none of her vows nor her agreements by which she has bound herself shall stand; and the Lord will release her, because her father overruled her. 6 "If indeed she takes a husband, while bound by her vows or by a rash utterance from her lips by which she bound herself, 7 and her husband hears it, and makes no response to her on the day that he hears, then her vows shall stand, and her agreements by which she bound herself shall stand. 8 But if her husband overrules her on the day that he hears it, he shall make void her vow which she took and what she uttered with her lips, by which she bound herself, and the Lord will release her. 9 "Also any vow of a**

widow or a divorced woman, by which she has bound herself, shall stand against her. 10 "If she vowed in her husband's house, or bound herself by an agreement with an oath, 11 and her husband heard it, and made no response to her and did not overrule her, then all her vows shall stand, and every agreement by which she bound herself shall stand. 12 But if her husband truly made them void on the day he heard them, then whatever proceeded from her lips concerning her vows or concerning the agreement binding her, it shall not stand; her husband has made them void, and the Lord will release her.

(Verse 12): **But if her husband truly made them void on the day he heard them, then whatever proceeded from her lips concerning her vows or concerning the agreement binding her, it shall not stand; her husband has made them void, and the Lord will release her.**

truly made them void: Means he objected and nullified her vow.

(Verse 13): **Every vow and every binding oath to afflict her soul, her husband may confirm it, or her husband may make it void.**

to afflict her soul: Any fasting or abstaining from something that the soul desires.

(Verses 14-16): **Now if her husband makes no response whatever to her from day to day, then he confirms all her vows or all the agreements that bind her; he confirms them, because he made no response to her on the day that he heard them. 15 But if he does make them void after he has heard them, then he shall bear her guilt." 16 These are the statutes which the Lord commanded Moses, between a man and his wife, and between a father and his daughter in her youth in her father's house.**

Chapter 31

A war against the Midianites and the division of spoils:

The Midianites are the descendants of Abraham from Keturah, and they were several tribes; some of them lived in the south of Canaan, and from them was Jethro, the father-in-law of Moses, and these remained in their worship of the Lord. Otherwise, Moses would not have accepted that his father-in-law would offer a sacrifice of burnt offering to the Lord, and to eat with him, along with Aaron and the elders of Israel (Exodus 18: 12). Jethro's priesthood was what is called the priesthood of the patriarchs. This was before God chose Aaron and his sons for the priesthood. The priesthood of the patriarchs means that the head of the family was the priest of the family, and he was the one who offered sacrifices on behalf of his family. This is what Job did, for example. But there was a part that lived in the east of Canaan, and these descended to paganism, so they were enemies of God, and they are probably the owners of the unclean alliance with the Moabites against God's people. They are the ones who allied and plotted to carry out the advice of Balaam. In this war, the people struck a part of these tribes. The Midianites appeared after that and harassed God's people. That is why the word Kings of Midian here means the princes of Midian as it came in (Joshua 13: 21).

This war against Midian was not in the plan of the wars that the people would enter to possess the land, but rather it was a war that the Lord commanded in (Numbers 25: 17) as a result of sin. And thus we go through unnecessary battles because of our lusts. Because this war is a spiritual war, it was not mentioned that Joshua was the leader of the people in it, but it was mentioned that the one who led this war was Phinehas. As long as the leader is a priest, the goal of the war is to cleanse every trace of sin and to remove the shame that arose from sin. Although Joshua, who succeeded Moses, may have been the leader of this war, the mention of Phinehas and the absence of Joshua gives an idea that this war is against sin. We also do not hear about weapons of swords and spears...etc., but the weapons used are the belongings of the Holy place. Although there is no war without swords, but not mentioning them also gives this concept that it is a spiritual war. Phinehas was the one who was zealous for the Lord. It is a war for the Lord, and He is the real leader of this war because we find that Phinehas took the Urim with him to know the counsel of the Lord. And because the Lord is the leader of this war, none of them was killed (verse 49), "Those whom You gave Me I have kept; and none of them is lost except the son of perdition" (John 17: 12). And the war was not simple, for the captive virgins were 32,000.

We stumble a lot in the world and need priestly service (Phinehas' leadership) in our war against these stumbling blocks. Of course, it would have been preferable to live separated from the world and its stumbling blocks, but in practice, this does not happen while in this world, we immerse ourselves in the currents and desires of the world. As a result of this war, we find the people who came out with spoils. In our spiritual wars, after every victory we find spoils. Thus, In our spiritual wars, after every victory we find spoils. Incredibly, God brings out sweetness from the strong.

Note that this war was not traditional, as Moses did not send to the Midianites any peace offering, and the Midianites rejected it. The Midianites here are wicked, against whom we declare war, and there is no peace with the wicked (see Deuteronomy 20: 10). We should not negotiate with evil, rather we must declare war against it, as it will not have mercy on us.

And note that God said to Moses to **take vengeance on the Midianites** for the children of Israel, and Moses said to **take vengeance for the Lord** (verses 2, 3), so it is one revenge because of God's unity with His people. God will not be silent on those who harm His children.

Therefore, it is a war of sanctification aimed at exterminating the stumbling block that broke the people. The aim of the war was neither offensive nor plunder but the killing of those who obeyed Balaam's words, and caused God's people to stumble, so 24,000 of them perished. This is an indication of the necessity of amputating the stumbling block in the life of the believers.

(Verse 1): **And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying:**

(Verse 2): **"Take vengeance on the Midianites for the children of Israel. Afterward you shall be gathered to your people."**

you shall be gathered to your people: Certainly not in the tomb, as the tomb of Moses, no one knows where it is. The dead have their souls in a place known only to God, who attributes Himself to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and they are alive and not dead (Matthew 22: 32).

(Verse 3): **So Moses spoke to the people, saying, "Arm some of yourselves for war, and let them go against the Midianites to take vengeance for the Lord on Midian."**

(Verse 4): **A thousand from each tribe of all the tribes of Israel you shall send to the war."**

The number of warriors was 12,000, while the army of Israel was more than 600,000. But the number refers symbolically to the people of God who live a heavenly life (3 = those who believe in God, 4 = the whole world. So 12 are the people of God who live in the heavenly places, 1000 is the number of the heavenly). When the people fell into sin, 24,000 of them died without war or apparent warriors, but now that the people have been sanctified, there is no need for the 600,000 to go out to war. It is not a war of great number or weapons but rather the war of holiness, the war of the heavenly life that rises above all the temptations of the world. The strength of the army of God's people is in the presence of God in their midst, and this is the meaning of "he went out conquering and to conquer." (Revelation 6: 2). All what we have to do is obey the commandment and hand over the leadership to him, so that we

will be like the white horse on which Christ, sitting on the horse, rides in the same verse (Revelation 6: 2). In our wars against Satan, Christ is the one who fights on our behalf, and He is the one who conquers.

Comment

This war was a spiritual war that represents the war of God's people as long as we are in this world against sin to maintain our purity and be saved. The people of God are symbolized by the number 12 (3 is the number of those who believe in God, and it is the number of resurrection from the death of sin, 4 = the whole world). Therefore, the people of God in the Old Testament were 12 tribes, and the Church of Christ in the New Testament was founded by 12 disciples. The number 1000 refers to the heavenly nature of the Church of Christ. Thus, the number 12000 refers to the Church, the people of God, those who believe in Him, who have risen from the death of sin, and live a heavenly life. And Christ, who “went out conquering and to conquer.” (Revelation 6: 2), is always present amid His people to give them victory, “and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” Amen.” (Matthew 28: 20), and He is in the midst of any two or three who gather in His name (Matthew 18: 20) (and this is symbolized here by the holy vessels, including the Ark of the Covenant, and Eleazar the priest with them). And in such a war no one is lost (verse 49), “Those whom You gave Me I have kept; and none of them is lost except the son of perdition, that the Scripture might be fulfilled.” (John 17: 12).

(Verses 5-6): **So there were recruited from the divisions of Israel one thousand from each tribe, twelve thousand armed for war. 6 Then Moses sent them to the war, one thousand from each tribe; he sent them to the war with Phinehas the son of Eleazar the priest, with the holy articles and the signal trumpets in his hand.**

Phinehas, the zealous, is the leader, and the holy articles, especially the ark, refers to the presence of God as a secret to our sanctification and victory. The trumpets signal are an indication of the word of God (Hebrews 4: 12). Therefore, the real preparation for spiritual warfare is living with a heavenly thought, feeling the continuous presence of God, and adhering to the word of God.

(Verses 7-8): **And they warred against the Midianites, just as the Lord commanded Moses, and they killed all the males. 8 They killed the kings of Midian with the rest of those who were killed—Evi, Rekem, Zur, Hur, and Reba, the five kings of Midian. Balaam the son of Beor they also killed with the sword.**

It seems that Balaam did not return to his people in Mesopotamia but went to Midian, following the consequences of his evil counsels, and to receive the reward. So his reward was death, and his wish was not fulfilled, which was the death of the righteous. There is another possibility that when the Midianites felt that the people would fight them, they summoned Balaam to help them, which is unlikely since the distance between Midian and Mesopotamia is huge. The five kings refer to the five senses that must die from sin to enjoy the holy life (see Matthew 5: 29-30).

When the five kings die, Satan has no power over our senses. There are symbolic meanings for the names of the Five Kings: King **Evi** = his name refers to one of two possibilities: desire or a predatory animal, and what is required is to make our desires sacred and not wild animal desires. And the second king is **Rekem** = colouring, so it is required not to have different colours by imitating the world's people; we do not falter between the two groups. And the third king **Zur** = a rock, which means that we must remove from within us the heart of stone (Ezekiel 36: 26) and have a heart of flesh. And the fourth king, **Hur** = a child, which means that we are men in our spiritual life (1 Corinthians 16: 13) and do not practice our worship recklessly. The fifth king is a **Reba** = the fourth, and the number 4 refers to the temporal life that we should not be attracted to.

(Verse 9): **And the children of Israel took the women of Midian captive, with their little ones, and took as spoil all their cattle, all their flocks, and all their goods.**

They were supposed to kill the women who were the cause of their downfall. The Jews were allowed to have maidservants and could marry them.

(Verse 10): **They also burned with fire all the cities where they dwelt, and all their forts.**

Burning cities and fortresses so that they can no longer inhabit them. And the spiritual meaning is to thoroughly cleanse the heart from evil so that we do not return to it.

(Verses 11-15): **And they took all the spoil and all the booty—of man and beast. 12 Then they brought the captives, the booty, and the spoil to Moses, to Eleazar the priest, and to the congregation of the children of Israel, to the camp in the plains of Moab by the Jordan, across from Jericho. 13 And Moses, Eleazar the priest, and all the leaders of the congregation, went to meet them outside the camp. 14 But Moses was angry with the officers of the army, with the captains over thousands and captains over hundreds, who had come from the battle. 15 And Moses said to them: "Have you kept all the women alive?"**

(Verse 16): **Look, these women caused the children of Israel, through the counsel of Balaam, to trespass against the Lord in the incident of Peor, and there was a plague among the congregation of the Lord.**

According to the law, the harlot and the adulterer are both to be killed, and God killed the adulterers of the men of Israel with a plague. It was necessary to kill the harlots who were the cause of stumbling to the people, so Moses commanded the killing of every woman who offered her body to do evil with the people and stumbled them. Compare with the words of the Book of Revelation: "But I have a few things

against you, because you have there those who hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balak to put a stumbling block before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed to idols, and to commit sexual immorality." (Revelation 2: 14).

(Verse 17): **Now therefore, kill every male among the little ones, and kill every woman who has known a man intimately.**

They kill the male because he will fight God's people when he grows up. The killing of males and adulterous women and the burning of cities has the same meaning: killing everything that could be a cause for war against man, i.e. his rejection.

(Verses 18-19): **But keep alive for yourselves all the young girls who have not known a man intimately. 19 And as for you, remain outside the camp seven days; whoever has killed any person, and whoever has touched any slain, purify yourselves and your captives on the third day and on the seventh day.**

What is meant by saying **the young girls** are little girls, so that God's people would not be polluted by taking the pagan women who lived in uncleanness with their husbands as their wives, God forbade them not to take from them but to kill them (verse 17). But keep the little girls who are not as polluted as the older ones.

Note: These girls were not kept for sex, as God does not allow His people to have any sexual relationship outside the boundaries of marriage. If he likes the girl, he may marry her or give her in marriage to his son. "11and you see among the captives a beautiful woman, and desire her and would take her for your wife, 12then you shall bring her home to your house, and she shall shave her head and trim her nails. 13She shall put off the clothes of her captivity, remain in your house, and mourn her father and her mother a full month; after that you may go in to her and be her husband, and she shall be your wife. 14And it shall be, if you have no delight in her, then you shall set her free, but you certainly shall not sell her for money; you shall not treat her brutally, because you have humbled her." (Deuteronomy 21: 11-14).

(Verse 20): **Purify every garment, everything made of leather, everything woven of goats' hair, and everything made of wood."**

All these things must be purified as they were used by pagans or came into contact with the dead of the war. Here we see a wonderful symbolic picture of the spiritual army of God who conquered sin and are walking to heaven (the symbol of the camp in which they brought the spoils) to rest with their bridegroom, carrying with them their spoils of gold (heavenly life), silver (preaching the word of God) and clothes (our bodies that were sanctified in the blood of Christ)). The strange thing is that the law considered the army who struggled with sin and conquered it to be in a state of uncleanness, as they

must wash their clothes on the seventh day to enter the camp. It is as if the Lord wanted to confirm that all the fighters, regardless of their spiritual stature, are exposed to weakness and need to be covered in the blood of Christ, the cleanser from every sin. Although they are considered heroes, their entry into the camp (heaven) will not be legal except through Christ, who purifies.

Plunder distribution method:

675,000 Sheep	→ 337,500 for those who went to war	God's Portion - 675
	→ 337,500 for the people	Levites' portion from the people - 6750
72,000 Cattle	→ 36,000 for those who went to war	God's Portion - 72
	→ 36,000 for the people	Levites' portion from the people – 720
61,000 donkeys	→ 30,500 for those who went to war	God's Portion - 61
	→ 30,500 for the people	Levites' portion from the people – 610
32,000 persons	→ 16,000 for those who went to war	God's Portion - 32
	→ 16,000 for the people	Levites' portion from the people – 320

1. Half of the plunder is distributed to the men of war (12,000), and the other half is distributed to the rest of the people (600,000), meaning that the man who fought and struggled receives 50 times more than the one who did not fight, thus crowning the victorious fighters with special privileges (1 Corinthians 15: 41).

2. Whoever receives something must give to God from what he received, i.e. alms or gifts to the Lord. The army gives 1:500 of what they took, while the people give 1:50 of what they took. The number 50 and 500 reminds us of the parable of Christ (Luke 7: 41, 42) as those two numbers point to freedom. What they pay gives them the freedom to dispose of what is left to them.

(Verses 21-47): **Then Eleazar the priest said to the men of war who had gone to the battle, "This is the ordinance of the law which the Lord commanded Moses: 22 Only the gold, the silver, the bronze, the iron, the tin, and the lead, 23 everything that can endure fire, you shall put through the fire, and it shall be clean; and it shall be purified with the water of purification. But all that cannot endure fire you shall put through water. 24 And you shall wash your clothes on the seventh day and be clean, and afterward you may come into the camp." 25 Now the Lord spoke to Moses, saying: 26 "Count up the plunder that was taken—of man and beast—you and Eleazar the priest and the chief fathers of the congregation; 27 and divide the plunder into two parts, between those who took part in the war, who**

went out to battle, and all the congregation. 28 And levy a tribute for the Lord on the men of war who went out to battle: one of every five hundred of the persons, the cattle, the donkeys, and the sheep; 29 take it from their half, and give it to Eleazar the priest as a heave offering to the Lord. 30 And from the children of Israel's half you shall take one of every fifty, drawn from the persons, the cattle, the donkeys, and the sheep, from all the livestock, and give them to the Levites who keep charge of the tabernacle of the Lord." 31 So Moses and Eleazar the priest did as the Lord commanded Moses. 32 The booty remaining from the plunder, which the men of war had taken, was six hundred and seventy-five thousand sheep, 33 seventy-two thousand cattle, 34 sixty-one thousand donkeys, 35 and thirty-two thousand persons in all, of women who had not known a man intimately. 36 And the half, the portion for those who had gone out to war, was in number three hundred and thirty-seven thousand five hundred sheep; 37 and the Lord's tribute of the sheep was six hundred and seventy-five. 38 The cattle were thirty-six thousand, of which the Lord's tribute was seventy-two. 39 The donkeys were thirty thousand five hundred, of which the Lord's tribute was sixty-one. 40 The persons were sixteen thousand, of which the Lord's tribute was thirty-two persons. 41 So Moses gave the tribute which was the Lord's heave offering to Eleazar the priest, as the Lord commanded Moses. 42 And from the children of Israel's half, which Moses separated from the men who fought— 43 now the half belonging to the congregation was three hundred and thirty-seven thousand five hundred sheep, 44 thirty-six thousand cattle, 45 thirty thousand five hundred donkeys, 46 and sixteen thousand persons— 47 and from the children of Israel's half Moses took one of every fifty, drawn from man and beast, and gave them to the Levites, who kept charge of the tabernacle of the Lord, as the Lord commanded Moses.

(Verse 48): **Then the officers who were over thousands of the army, the captains of thousands and captains of hundreds, came near to Moses;**

This is a divine miracle. The fact that no one was lost from them shows that God's hand fought with them. Therefore, they offered all that is gold to God, as gold refers to the heavenly life.

(Verses 49-50): **and they said to Moses, "Your servants have taken a count of the men of war who are under our command, and not a man of us is missing. 50 Therefore we have brought an offering for the Lord, what every man found of ornaments of gold: armlets and bracelets and signet rings and earrings and necklaces, to make atonement for ourselves before the Lord."**

Armlets: Anklets which women used to wear for adornment.

(Verses 51-54): **So Moses and Eleazar the priest received the gold from them, all the fashioned ornaments. 52 And all the gold of the offering that they offered to the Lord, from the captains of thousands and captains of hundreds, was sixteen thousand seven hundred and fifty shekels. 53 (The**

men of war had taken spoil, every man for himself.) 54 And Moses and Eleazar the priest received the gold from the captains of thousands and of hundreds, and brought it into the tabernacle of meeting as a memorial for the children of Israel before the Lord.

We find here that the captains were more generous than the men of war, as they gave all they could to the Lord while the men of the war kept what they got.

Chapter 32

The lands east of Jordan

The tribe of Reuben and Gad were under one banner; that is, they had the same camp. When they came to the land of Gilead, which was owned by Og and Sihon, kings of the Amorites, they saw that it was a place for livestock, and they owned much livestock, so they asked to reside there instead of crossing the Jordan. It was a good land, but the problem is that they are the ones who chose and did not leave the choice to God. They were like Lot when he decided on the land of Sodom and Gomorrah for their quality. It was a human choice according to the scenery, while God had prepared for them a land across the Jordan. Most likely, the half-tribe of Manasseh made the same request with them. If crossing the Jordan refers to our crossing to heaven, then let our choice be heaven, and we ought not to ask for an earthly share, but to have a desire to depart and be with Christ, that is much better (Philippians 1: 23). Gilead is all of Transjordan, a land of forests, fields, valleys, and streams. Suitable for grazing (Song of Solomon 4: 1, 6: 5). It is famous for a type of tree from which a resinous substance comes out called balm of Gilead, which has medicinal properties. It was said that its juice was used as a remedy for inflammation (Genesis 37: 25 + Jeremiah 8: 22 + 46: 11).

It was as though when the tribes of Reuben and Gad chose for themselves according to the human perspective, they lost their share in the land flowing with milk and honey. They obtained a land without natural boundaries that would protect them from the enemies' attacks until their brothers intervened to save them (1 Samuel 11: 1-11 + 1 Kings 22: 3). Besides the wide distance of their land from the congregation, which kept them as if in solitude. Rather, they were the first to be captured by the king of Assyria (1 Chronicles 5: 26). Moreover, their separation from their brothers almost caused a war between them and the rest of their brothers (Joshua 22). This, then, is the reward for the lust of the eyes and the arrogance of life (1 John 2: 16). By referring to (Isaiah 15: 2 + Jeremiah 48: 18, 19), we find that some of the cities mentioned here have fallen into the hands of Moab.

It is said that there is a psychological reason for the two tribes choosing this land of Gilead, which is the feeling of Reuben, the son of Jacob, that he lost his birthright, Gad as the firstborn of Zilpah, the maidservant, and Manasseh feeling that his brother Ephraim surpasses him in blessing. So they felt their share would be small, as they were not in the power of others, although they felt they had the right as firstborns to choose for themselves.

The scholar Origen has a nice contemplation, for he sees: The two and half-tribes who did not cross the Jordan River are a sign of the Old Testament Church, and it is one Church with the Church of the New Testament, but it is not in the richness of the blessings of the New Testament Church, which crossed the waters of baptism and carried in its midst the holy things. It is a beautiful picture of the believing human race; a part that gained a share through the law (Moses), where the victory was achieved by his hands (that is, during the days of his leadership) over Og and Sihon, and he distributed their possessions over the two and a half tribes. As for the more significant part was achieved by Joshua (Jesus), who brought

them into the land that flows with milk and honey. The first is firstborn, but they received the inheritance of Moses, while the others received the inheritance of Joshua (Christ our Lord).

However, this means that those of them who were worthy of salvation have been saved in Christ (Romans 3: 25, 26). As for what Origen means, it is the share of the righteous Jew in the joy and peace while he was on earth before the coming of Christ.

The reason they chose this land was that they had many livestock. "But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." (1 Corinthians 2: 14). Therefore, these people chose for themselves and became strangers to the Holy Land. The large number of livestock indicates the connection of the people of the Old Testament with tangible, bodily matters.

(Verses 1-4): **Now the children of Reuben and the children of Gad had a very great multitude of livestock; and when they saw the land of Jazer and the land of Gilead, that indeed the region was a place for livestock, 2 the children of Gad and the children of Reuben came and spoke to Moses, to Eleazar the priest, and to the leaders of the congregation, saying, 3 "Ataroth, Dibon, Jazer, Nimrah, Heshbon, Elealeh, Shebam, Nebo, and Beon, 4 the country which the Lord defeated before the congregation of Israel, is a land for livestock, and your servants have livestock."**

(Verses 5-15): **Therefore they said, "If we have found favor in your sight, let this land be given to your servants as a possession. Do not take us over the Jordan." 6 And Moses said to the children of Gad and to the children of Reuben: "Shall your brethren go to war while you sit here? 7 Now why will you discourage the heart of the children of Israel from going over into the land which the Lord has given them? 8 Thus your fathers did when I sent them away from Kadesh Barnea to see the land. 9 For when they went up to the Valley of Eshcol and saw the land, they discouraged the heart of the children of Israel, so that they did not go into the land which the Lord had given them. 10 So the Lord's anger was aroused on that day, and He swore an oath, saying, 11 'Surely none of the men who came up from Egypt, from twenty years old and above, shall see the land of which I swore to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, because they have not wholly followed Me, 12 except Caleb the son of Jephunneh, the Kenizzite, and Joshua the son of Nun, for they have wholly followed the Lord.' 13 So the Lord's anger was aroused against Israel, and He made them wander in the wilderness forty years, until all the generation that had done evil in the sight of the Lord was gone. 14 And look! You have risen in your fathers' place, a brood of sinful men, to increase still more the fierce anger of the Lord against Israel. 15 For if you turn away from following Him, He will once again leave them in the wilderness, and you will destroy all these people."**

Notice in Moses' reproach to them for this choice that he cares about their entering the promised land, although he knows that he is deprived of it. What saddened the heart of Moses was their saying, **Do not take us over the Jordan**. He who lived for 40 years longing to cross it, how hard it was for his heart to

feel that they despise the Promised Land, abandoning God's inheritance for the sake of their hearts' temporal lust, caring for their livestock and not caring about God's promises nor about supporting their brothers.

(Verses 16-19): **Then they came near to him and said: "We will build sheepfolds here for our livestock, and cities for our little ones, 17 but we ourselves will be armed, ready to go before the children of Israel until we have brought them to their place; and our little ones will dwell in the fortified cities because of the inhabitants of the land. 18 We will not return to our homes until every one of the children of Israel has received his inheritance. 19 For we will not inherit with them on the other side of the Jordan and beyond, because our inheritance has fallen to us on this eastern side of the Jordan."**

This is a new offer from them that Moses accepted. Rather, they offered to be at the forefront of their brothers, and in this, they became representatives of the Old Testament Church, which did not set out to the Promised Land but instead supported their brothers through their books, prophecies and faith. Of them, 40,000 went to Canaan, while their number is greater than 100,000.

(Verse 20): **Then Moses said to them: "If you do this thing, if you arm yourselves before the Lord for the war,**

Moses here confirms that they are **before the Lord**, as they are fighting as a declaration of their submission and strife before the Lord. It also means that the Lord is a witness to your promises.

(Verses 21-38): **and all your armed men cross over the Jordan before the Lord until He has driven out His enemies from before Him, 22 and the land is subdued before the Lord, then afterward you may return and be blameless before the Lord and before Israel; and this land shall be your possession before the Lord. 23 But if you do not do so, then take note, you have sinned against the Lord; and be sure your sin will find you out. 24 Build cities for your little ones and folds for your sheep, and do [b]what has proceeded out of your mouth." 25 And the children of Gad and the children of Reuben spoke to Moses, saying: "Your servants will do as my lord commands. 26 Our little ones, our wives, our flocks, and all our livestock will be there in the cities of Gilead; 27 but your servants will cross over, every man armed for war, before the Lord to battle, just as my lord says." 28 So Moses gave command concerning them to Eleazar the priest, to Joshua the son of Nun, and to the chief fathers of the tribes of the children of Israel. 29 And Moses said to them: "If the children of Gad and the children of Reuben cross over the Jordan with you, every man armed for battle before the Lord, and the land is subdued before you, then you shall give them the land of Gilead as a possession. 30 But if they do not cross over armed with you, they shall have possessions among you in the land of Canaan." 31 Then the children of Gad and the children of Reuben answered, saying: "As the Lord has said to your servants, so we will do. 32 We will cross over armed before the Lord into the land of Canaan, but the**

possession of our inheritance shall remain with us on this side of the Jordan." 33 So Moses gave to the children of Gad, to the children of Reuben, and to half the tribe of Manasseh the son of Joseph, the kingdom of Sihon king of the Amorites and the kingdom of Og king of Bashan, the land with its cities within the borders, the cities of the surrounding country. 34 And the children of Gad built Dibon and Ataroth and Aroer, 35 Atroth and Shopan and Jazer and Jogbehah, 36 Beth Nimrah and Beth Haran, fortified cities, and folds for sheep. 37 And the children of Reuben built Heshbon and Elealeh and Kirjathaim, 38 Nebo and Baal Meon (their names being changed) and Shibmah; and they gave other names to the cities which they built.

their names being changed: They took the cities and changed their pagan names to other names.

(Verse 39): **And the children of Machir the son of Manasseh went to Gilead and took it, and dispossessed the Amorites who were in it.**

Perhaps when the half-tribe of Manasseh saw that Gad and Reuben possessed lands, they were encouraged and conquered some countries, and they became theirs, or they were within the agreement but were mentioned later.

(Verses 40-42): **So Moses gave Gilead to Machir the son of Manasseh, and he dwelt in it. 41 Also Jair the son of Manasseh went and took its small towns, and called them Havoth Jair. 42 Then Nobah went and took Kenath and its villages, and he called it Nobah, after his own name.**

Chapter 33

(Verses 1-56): These are the journeys of the children of Israel, who went out of the land of Egypt by their armies under the hand of Moses and Aaron. 2 Now Moses wrote down the starting points of their journeys at the command of the Lord. And these are their journeys according to their starting points: 3 They departed from Rameses in the first month, on the fifteenth day of the first month; on the day after the Passover the children of Israel went out with boldness in the sight of all the Egyptians. 4 For the Egyptians were burying all their firstborn, whom the Lord had killed among them. Also on their gods the Lord had executed judgments. 5 Then the children of Israel moved from Rameses and camped at Succoth. 6 They departed from Succoth and camped at Etham, which is on the edge of the wilderness. 7 They moved from Etham and turned back to Pi Hahiroth, which is east of Baal Zephon; and they camped near Migdol. 8 They departed from before Hahiroth and passed through the midst of the sea into the wilderness, went three days' Journey in the Wilderness of Etham, and camped at Marah. 9 They moved from Marah and came to Elim. At Elim were twelve springs of water and seventy palm trees; so they camped there. 10 They moved from Elim and camped by the Red Sea. 11 They moved from the Red Sea and camped in the Wilderness of Sin. 12 They journeyed from the Wilderness of Sin and camped at Dophkah. 13 They departed from Dophkah and camped at Alush. 14 They moved from Alush and camped at Rephidim, where there was no water for the people to drink. 15 They departed from Rephidim and camped in the Wilderness of Sinai. 16 They moved from the Wilderness of Sinai and camped at Kibroth Hattaavah. 17 They departed from Kibroth Hattaavah and camped at Hazeroth. 18 They departed from Hazeroth and camped at Rithmah. 19 They departed from Rithmah and camped at Rimmon Perez. 20 They departed from Rimmon Perez and camped at Libnah. 21 They moved from Libnah and camped at Rissah. 22 They journeyed from Rissah and camped at Kehelathah. 23 They went from Kehelathah and camped at Mount Shepher. 24 They moved from Mount Shepher and camped at Haradah. 25 They moved from Haradah and camped at Makheloth. 26 They moved from Makheloth and camped at Tahath. 27 They departed from Tahath and camped at Terah. 28 They moved from Terah and camped at Mithkah. 29 They went from Mithkah and camped at Hashmonah. 30 They departed from Hashmonah and camped at Moseroth. 31 They departed from Moseroth and camped at Bene Jaakan. 32 They moved from Bene Jaakan and camped at Hor Hagidgad. 33 They went from Hor Hagidgad and camped at Jotbathah. 34 They moved from Jotbathah and camped at Abronah. 35 They departed from Abronah and camped at Ezion Geber. 36 They moved from Ezion Geber and camped in the Wilderness of Zin, which is Kadesh. 37 They moved from Kadesh and camped at Mount Hor, on the boundary of the land of Edom. 38 Then Aaron the priest went up to Mount Hor at the command of the Lord, and died there in the fortieth year after the children of Israel had come out of the land of Egypt, on the first day of the fifth month. 39 Aaron was one hundred and twenty-three years old when he died on Mount Hor. 40 Now the king of Arad, the Canaanite, who dwelt in the South in the land of Canaan, heard of the coming of the children of Israel. 41 So they departed from Mount Hor and camped at Zalmonah. 42 They departed from Zalmonah and camped at Punon. 43 They departed from Punon and camped at Oboth. 44 They departed from Oboth and camped at Ije Abarim, at the border of Moab. 45 They departed from [c]Ijim

and camped at Dibon Gad. 46 They moved from Dibon Gad and camped at Almon Diblathaim. 47 They moved from Almon Diblathaim and camped in the mountains of Abarim, before Nebo. 48 They departed from the mountains of Abarim and camped in the plains of Moab by the Jordan, across from Jericho. 49 They camped by the Jordan, from Beth Jesimoth as far as the Abel Acacia Grove[d] in the plains of Moab. 50 Now the Lord spoke to Moses in the plains of Moab by the Jordan, across from Jericho, saying, 51 "Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: 'When you have crossed the Jordan into the land of Canaan, 52 then you shall drive out all the inhabitants of the land from before you, destroy all their engraved stones, destroy all their molded images, and demolish all their high places; 53 you shall dispossess the inhabitants of the land and dwell in it, for I have given you the land to possess. 54 And you shall divide the land by lot as an inheritance among your families; to the larger you shall give a larger inheritance, and to the smaller you shall give a smaller inheritance; there everyone's inheritance shall be whatever falls to him by lot. You shall inherit according to the tribes of your fathers. 55 But if you do not drive out the inhabitants of the land from before you, then it shall be that those whom you let remain shall be irritants in your eyes and thorns in your sides, and they shall harass you in the land where you dwell. 56 Moreover it shall be that I will do to you as I thought to do to them.'"

Summary of the Journey:

The Journey according to the book of Numbers, Chapter 33:

1	Rameses	2	Succoth	3	Etham	4	Pi Hahiroth
5	Marah	6	Elim	7	Red Sea	8	Wilderness of Sin
9	Dophkah	10	Alush	11	Rephidim	12	Wilderness of Sinai
13	Kibroth Hattaavah	14	Hazeroth	15	Rithmah	16	Rimmon Perez
17	Libnah	18	Rissah	19	Khelathah	20	Mount Shepher
21	Haradah	22	Makheloth	23	Tahath	24	Terah
25	Mithkah	26	Hashmonah	27	Moseroth	28	Bene Jaakan
29	Hor Hagidgad	30	Jotbathah	31	Abronah	32	Ezion Geber
33	Wilderness of Zin/Kadesh	34	Mount Hor	35	Zalmonah	36	Punon
37	Oboth	38	Ije Abarim	39	Dibon Gad	40	Almon Diblathaim
41	Mountains of Abarim	42	Plains of Moab				

The Journey, according to the Books Exodus and Numbers:

- 1) 1- **Rameses**: (Exodus 12: 37) The plague of the firstborns / the Passover.
- 2) 2- **Succoth**: (Exodus 12: 37) The plague of the firstborns / the Passover.
- 3) (...) **The Road to the Red Sea**: (Exodus 13:18).
- 4) 3- **Etham**: (Exodus 13: 20) The Lord goes before them: by day in a pillar of cloud and by night in a pillar of fire.
- 5) 4- **Pi Hahiroth** between Migdol and the sea: (Exodus 14: 2) to mislead Pharaoh and say that they are confused, and here the sea was split (Exodus 14: 21) (note that they had to go north to Palestine).
- 6) (...) **The Wilderness of Shur**: (Exodus 15: 22) They walked for 3 days and found no water.
- 7) 5- **Marah**: (Exodus 15: 23) They found bitter water and complained. Moses threw a tree in it, and it became sweet.
- 8) 6- **Elim**: (Exodus 15: 27) They found 12 springs of water + 70 palm trees and went down to the water.
- 9) 8- **The Wilderness of Sin**: (Exodus 16: 1) It is between Elim and Sinai. The people grumbled about the lack of bread. And God gives them manna (Exodus 16: 4, 13).
- 10) 11- **Rephidim**: (Exodus 17: 1) The people did not find water, and the people grumbled, and Moses hit the rock with a stick to bring out water, calling the place Massah and Meribah (temptation and contention). Amalek comes to fight Israel (Exodus 17: 8), Joshua leads the people in war, and Moses prays. Jethro, the father-in-law of Moses, brings him his wife Zipporah and his two sons, Gershom and Eliezer, and advises Moses to choose elders to help him.
- 11) 12- **The Wilderness of Sinai**: (Exodus 19: 1) Israel descends against the mountain (Exodus 19: 2), Moses ascends to God and the people are sanctified so that God may speak to them. There were thunders and lightnings, thick clouds on the mountain, and the sound of a very loud trumpet, so the people trembled (Exodus 19: 16), and the mountain was smoking because the Lord descended to the top of the mountain. Then God called Moses and gave him the Ten Commandments and some laws. The people, in their fear, ask Moses to speak to God and to convey to them God's laws, and God does not speak to them lest they die. Then God called Moses, Aaron, Nadab, Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel to go up and worship from afar, and Moses alone approached. The people agree to obey God's laws, and Moses offers sacrifices. Then Moses, Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and with them 70 elders saw the God of Israel, and they eat and drink on top of the mountain (Exodus 24: 1-11). Then God called Moses to go up to the mountain by himself to give him the tablets of the law, but Aaron and those with him were judging the people (Exodus 24: 14). The sight of the Lord was like a consuming fire on the top of the mountain. Moses spent 40 days on the mountain. And God gives Moses the details of the tent of meeting. The people fall into the sin of the golden calf (Exodus 32: 1), and God gives Moses the two tablets of testimony to bring them down (Exodus 32: 15). Moses broke the tablets (Exodus 32: 19) and burns the calf and orders the sons of Levi to strike the sinful people (3000 men), then intercedes for the people before God (Exodus 32: 31). Moses asked God for several requests, the last of which was to see

His glory (Exodus 33: 18) Moses carved two tablets (Exodus 34: 1) and God wrote on them. Moses' face shines (Exodus 34: 35). Setting up the tabernacle and the book of the Levites: All the events and laws of the journey were in the Sinai desert. The first census (Numbers 1: 2) and some of the laws end in (Numbers 10: 10).

12) (...) **The Wilderness of Paran:** (Numbers 10: 12) Moses asks Hobab to stay with him. They journeyed 3 days.

13) (...) **Taberah:** (Numbers 11: 1) The people complain of evil. And the fire is burning at the edge of the camp.

14) 13- **Kibroth Hattaavah:** (Numbers 11: 4, 34) The lust for meat and the Lord gives them quails and then struck them. Choosing elders to help Moses and the Spirit descend upon them (Numbers 11: 25).

15) 14- **Hazereth:** (Numbers 11: 35) Mary and Aaron speak of Moses, and God strikes Mary with leprosy for 7 days.

16) The wilderness of Paran: (Numbers 12: 16) and it is Kadesh (Numbers 13: 26). From there, they sent spies, and the people grumbled, and the punishment was wandering for 40 years, then their defeat when they insisted on going up to Canaan and had some laws, and stoning the man who profaned the Sabbath. The misery of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram. Then the rod of Aaron blossomed (Numbers 15-19).

17) 33- **The Wilderness of Zin / Kadesh:** (Numbers 20: 1) Here Miriam died. Here also the people grumbled because of the water, and Moses disobeyed God and struck the rock twice. And calling the water "water of Meribah" and the punishment of Moses and Aaron by not entering the land, then Edom refused their passage through his land (Numbers 20: 18).

18) 34- **Mount Hor:** (Numbers 20: 22) the death of Aaron. Eliezer became a high priest. The war with the king of Arad the Canaanite (Numbers 21: 1). The place is called Hormah (Numbers 21: 3).

19) (...) **Turning around in Edom on the way to the Red Sea:** (Numbers 21: 4) Their murmuring and the fiery serpents.

20) 37- **Oboth:** (Numbers 21: 10).

21) 38- **Ije Abarim:** (Numbers 21: 11).

22) (...) **Valley of Zered:** (Numbers 21: 12).

23) (...) **Arnon:** (Numbers 21: 13).

24) (...) **Beer:** (Numbers 21: 16) where the Lord said to Moses, "Gather the people together, and I will give them water."

25) (...) **Mattanah:** (Numbers 21: 18).

26) (...) **Nahaliel:** (Numbers 21: 19).

27) (...) **Bamoth**: (Numbers 21: 19).

28) (...) **The valley in the desert of Moab** at the tip of Pisgah that overlooks the face of the wilderness. Victory over Sihon and Og, kings of the Amorites, taking their land and establishing Israel in it.

29) 42- **The plains of Moab on the side of the Jordan across from Jericho**: (Numbers 22: 1) The story of Balaam (Numbers 22-24). Then the people committed harlotry with the daughters of Moab (Numbers 25: 1), and the plague was against them, and the destruction of 24,000, then the second census (Numbers 26: 2). The appointment of Joshua as successor to Moses (Numbers 27: 18). The struck of Midian (Numbers 31: 2). Gad, Reuben and the half-tribe of Manasseh take East Jordan (the land of Gilead) as their inheritance (Numbers 32: 5).

The journey can be divided into the following sections:

1. **From Egypt to Sinai**: The numbers refer to the verse number in (Number 33) if no other reference is mentioned. Rameses (Numbers 33: 3) - Succoth (Numbers 33: 5) - Etham (Numbers 33: 6) – Pi Hahiroth (Numbers 33:7) - They crossed the Red Sea and their journey for 3 days in the wilderness of Etham (Numbers 33: 8) - Marah (Numbers 33: 8) - Elim (Numbers 33: 9) - On the Red Sea (Numbers 33: 10) - Wilderness of Sin (Numbers 33: 11) - Dophkah (Numbers 33: 12) - Alush (Numbers 33: 13) - Rephidim (Numbers 33: 14) - the wilderness of Sinai (Numbers 33: 15).

2. **From Sinai to Kadesh**: Before wandering in the wilderness.

From the wilderness of Sinai (Numbers 33: 16), Taberah (Numbers 11: 3), Kibroth Hattaavah (Numbers 33: 16), Hazereth (Numbers 33: 17), Kadesh in the wilderness of Paran (Numbers 12:16 + 13: 26). Hence the wandering journey began.

3. **The wandering journey**: about 39 years.

Rithmah (Numbers 33: 18), Rimmon Perez (Numbers 33: 19), Libnah (Numbers 33: 20), Rissah (Numbers 33: 21), Kehelathah (Numbers 33: 22), Mount Shepher (Numbers 33: 23), Haradah (Numbers 33: 24), Makheloth (Numbers 33:25), Tahath (Numbers 33:26), Terah (Numbers 33: 27), Mithkah (Numbers 33: 28), Hashmonah (Numbers 33: 29), Moseroth (Numbers 33: 30), Bene Jaakan (Numbers 33: 31), Hor Hagidgad (Numbers 33: 32), Jotbathah (Numbers 33: 33), Abronah (Numbers 33: 34), Ezion Geber (Numbers 33: 35), Kadesh (Numbers 33: 36).

4. **From Kadesh to Jordan**

From Kadesh (Numbers 33: 37), wells of Bene Jaakan (Deuteronomy 10: 6), Mount Hor (Numbers 33: 37), Moserah (Deuteronomy 10: 6) and there Aaron died, Gudgodah (Deuteronomy 10: 7) and Jotbathah (Deuteronomy 10: 7).) By the Red Sea (Numbers 21: 3) to Elath and Ezion Geber (Deuteronomy 2: 8), Zalmonah (Numbers 33: 41), Punon (Numbers 33: 42), Oboth (Numbers 33: 43), Ije Abarim or Ijim (Numbers 33: 44, 45), Valley of Zered (Numbers 21: 12), Side of the Arnon (Numbers 21: 13), Dibon Gad

(Numbers 33: 45), Almon Diblathaim (Numbers 33: 46), Beer (Numbers 21: 16, 18). :21), Mattanah (Numbers 21: 18), Nahaliel (Numbers 21: 19), Bamoth (Numbers 21: 19), and Pisgah, which is one of the tops of the Abarim mountains (Numbers 21: 20) and it is in front of the Nebo (Numbers 33: 47). Then on the Bashan road to the plains of Moab from across the Jordan to Jericho (Numbers 21: 33; 33: 48).

Reflections and comments on the journey:

1. The Book of Numbers is the first journey book.
2. Moving a people (2-3 million people). All this journey in the wilderness is a miracle by all standards.
3. Their lack of stability in a particular place, but we see them in a different place every period indicates our instability in this life, "For here we have no continuing city." But rather we are on a sojourning journey.
4. The wandering of the people with Moses is their wandering under the law. As for the stability and entry into the Promised Land is with Joshua (a symbol of Jesus).
5. The exodus of the Jews as a people of God from Egypt and then their lives in this journey symbolizes the life of the Christian from his first birth in baptism (crossing the Red Sea), his liberation from Satan (Pharaoh symbolizes the devil), the sacrament of communion (manna), the Holy Spirit is dwelling in us (water from the rock) and the constant wars against us from Satan (multiple wars from the Amalekites and the Canaanites...etc.). Christ is amid His Church (the tabernacle in their midst). And all this began with the Passover lamb (the cross). We must cast off our old man by death to enter the heavenly Jerusalem (crossing the Jordan River). This is our journey of sojourn. However, there is another journey that also refers to the journey of our life or the life of the Church, which begins with the people entering the Promised Land and ends with the first coming of Christ as a symbol of the Church, which was founded on the day of Pentecost and continues until the second coming of Christ. We see among the people after they entered the land some pagan peoples. They left them without annihilating them, and they were the cause of countless problems for the people. These refer to the sin that dwells in me (Romans 7), which always causes conflict between the spirit and the flesh (Galatians 5: 17). And as God used to allow some pagan peoples to discipline His people, so now also there are multiple punishments for the church and for the individual, and these have one purpose, which is chastisement. And it may reach to deprive the people of their land (the captivity), as the Apostle Paul asks to put away the evil person until he is reformed, and he returns (1 Corinthians 5: 5, 11, 13 + 2 Corinthians 2: 6-8). We notice at the beginning of the people's residence on the land that they are looking for war (Judges 1: 1). We are in a constant war against the devil (the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places where the church lives on earth). This period of chastening ended with the first coming of Christ, and for the church it ends with the second coming of Christ. We note that those who returned from captivity were few (few are those who are saved (Matthew 7: 14 + Luke 13: 23, 24) and we also note that those who remained in the land and did not go into captivity are the poor (for the humble are not punished by God).

6. The people's wars indicate spiritual wars from spiritual enemies and from the flesh. The many gifts to the people and God's help symbolize God's gifts and his endless love. Temptations are a symbol of the sufferings and trials with which we must be saved (Acts 14: 22 + 2 Corinthians 1: 5).

7. There are different places the trip went through: As long as God is the leader, they will surely arrive in safety.

a. Some of them are narrow, such as Pi Hahiroth, and some are crooked roads, in which the enemy pursues them and besieges them (Exodus 14: 2-10).

b. Some of them are as large as the plains of Moab.

c. They were hungry and thirsty in some places, such as Rephidim.

d. Some places were refreshing and rejuvenating, such as Elim and Beer.

e. Some places were wars, such as Rephidim.

f. In some places, they had rest, such as Mount Sinai.

g. In some places, they were walking in a straight line, for example, from Sinai to Kadesh Barnea.

h. Sometimes they returned back like from Kadesh Barnea to the sea.

i. Sometimes they went to the mountain, such as Sinai / Shepher / Hor Hagidgad.

J. Sometimes they used to go to valleys like Tahath.

K. Sometimes they would go to places of bitter water (Marah).

l. Sometimes they would go to places with fresh water.

8. **The sins of the people were many**, for example: - (Psalm 78: 41) (They grieved God).

a. Pagan worship like the golden calf and Baal of Peor (Numbers 25).

b. They complained about everything (eating / drinking / manna that they hated while it was sweet).

c. They longed to return to the land of slavery, Egypt.

d. They rebelled against God and Moses.

e. Lack of trust in God's power and the faithfulness of His promises.

f. All grieved God: - Aaron / Mary / the Levites like Korah / the chiefs like Dathan and Abiram, and the crowd in their midst, the spies, the whole people, and even Moses grieved God.

g. Adultery with the daughters of Moab.

9. **The punishments** against them were numerous: (Psalm 78: 33) " Therefore their days He consumed in futility, And their years in fear."

- a. The sword of the enemy (Amalek / Canaanites...).
- b. The sword of their brothers (Leviticus / Phinehas).
- c. Some were burned with fire (Korah / Nadab and Abihu...).
- d. Some may have died of overeating from eating meat.
- e. Some people died by fiery serpents.
- f. Some died of the plague.
- g. The earth swallowed some alive (Dathan and Abiram...).

10. And God that His name might be glorified **gave them much**, that His mercies might be magnified for them and their offspring:

- a. Split the sea and drowned their enemies.
- b. He led them with a cloud and a pillar of fire.
- c. He gave them manna daily, then quail.
- d. He split the rock to give them water.
- e. Turn bitter water into fresh water.
- f. He saved them from the sword of enemies.
- g. They did not need anything (Deuteronomy 8: 4).
- h. He saved them from serpents.
- i. He saved them from Balaam's curse but rather turned it into a blessing.
- j. Spoke to them from Mount Sinai.
- k. He gave them the law and the commandments.
- l. During His wrath, His mercies encompassed them, and He did not destroy them.

m. He gave them nations, lands, and kingdoms to possess.

n. Their descendants were as numerous as the stars of heaven.

11. We note that there is a difference in the description of the journey as it came in the book of Numbers (Number 33) with the description of the journey as it came in the books of Exodus, Numbers and Deuteronomy. The reason is that in some places, details were mentioned that other places did not mention but rather summarized.

12. (Verse 2): **Now Moses wrote down the starting points of their journeys at the command of the Lord. And these are their journeys according to their starting points:**

at the command of the Lord: It means that all their movements were according to the word of the Lord, and it also means that Moses recorded this record according to the Lord's words to write. The importance of this is to remember all that the Lord has done for us in the history of our lives of His goodness and chastisement (Deuteronomy 8: 2). God, who accompanied them, led them, and helped them in every step, records their journeys in which He accompanied them, to record for them that it was He who preserved them, and in all their affliction He was afflicted.

13. (Verse 1): **These are the journeys of the children of Israel, who went out of the land of Egypt by their armies under the hand of Moses and Aaron**

who went out of the land of Egypt by their armies: That is, they came out as spiritual men of war led by Moses and Aaron, and not as fugitives, but under the leadership of God Himself. They went out with all their possessions.

14. The journey stations, according to this chapter, "42 stations" end when they enter the Promised Land. This reminds us that the generations from our father Abraham to Christ are "42 generations". As if these stations represent salvation and its history during humanity. The exodus of the Children of Israel from Egypt represents Abraham's exit from Ur of the Chaldeans. The 42 generations ended with Christ, and the 42 stations ended with the people entering the land.

15. There is a meditation by the scholar Origen on the meanings of the stations, where he tried to prove that the meanings of the words for the stations refer to the spiritual stations that the believer passes through during his sojourn journey in which he grows from one stage to another, from glory to glory, and from strength to strength (Psalm 84: 7):

1. **Rameses** = Most likely, it is one of the warehouse cities that they built in slavery, as it refers to the place of slavery.
2. **Succoth** = a Hebrew name that means tents. He who has been freed from slavery lives as a stranger who does not rest except in Christ.
3. **Etham** = means a strait. We are in our exile in permanent wrestling.
4. **Pi Hahiroth** = means the harsh ascent. It is located between Migdol (the tower) and the sea with its waves and salty water, for we ascend in our struggle from the sea level to the heavens.
5. **Marah** = bitter. They reached it after 3 days, in which a piece of wood turns the bitter water into sweet water, a sign of the believer's enjoyment of the resurrected life in Christ (3 days) during his burial in baptism.
6. **Elim** = Hebrew name meaning huge trees. It had 12 springs of water, indicating the preaching of the Gospel by the 12 disciples, and 70 palm trees, indicating the seventy apostles, so it is the journey of the soul that enjoys a spiritual understanding of the Gospel.
7. **Shores of the Red Sea** = The Hebrew name for the Red Sea is the Souf Sea. It will mean the reeds of the jungle, as the northern region of the sea is full of swamps. Here they mention God's work with them in splitting the sea.

16. (Verse 55): **But if you do not drive out the inhabitants of the land from before you, then it shall be that those whom you let remain shall be irritants in your eyes and thorns in your sides, and they shall harass you in the land where you dwell.**

If we do not drive out sin (even the so-called little foxes) from our lives, sin will drive us out [for The little foxes that spoil the vines (Song of Solomon 2: 15)]. If we do not surrender our lusts to death, our lusts surrender us to death.

Chapter 34

(Verses 1-29): **Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, 2 "Command the children of Israel, and say to them: 'When you come into the land of Canaan, this is the land that shall fall to you as an inheritance—the land of Canaan to its boundaries. 3 Your southern border shall be from the Wilderness of Zin along the border of Edom; then your southern border shall extend eastward to the end of the Salt Sea; 4 your border shall turn from the southern side of the Ascent of Akrabbim, continue to Zin, and be on the south of Kadesh Barnea; then it shall go on to Hazar Addar, and continue to Azmon; 5 the border shall turn from Azmon to the Brook of Egypt, and it shall end at the Sea. 6 'As for the western border, you shall have the Great Sea for a border; this shall be your western border. 7 'And this shall be your northern border: From the Great Sea you shall mark out your border line to Mount Hor; 8 from Mount Hor you shall mark out your border to the entrance of Hamath; then the direction of the border shall be toward Zedad; 9 the border shall proceed to Ziphron, and it shall end at Hazar Enan. This shall be your northern border. 10 'You shall mark out your eastern border from Hazar Enan to Shepham; 11 the border shall go down from Shepham to Riblah on the east side of Ain; the border shall go down and reach to the eastern side of the Sea of Chinnereth; 12 the border shall go down along the Jordan, and it shall end at the Salt Sea. This shall be your land with its surrounding boundaries.'" 13 Then Moses commanded the children of Israel, saying: "This is the land which you shall inherit by lot, which the Lord has commanded to give to the nine tribes and to the half-tribe. 14 For the tribe of the children of Reuben according to the house of their fathers, and the tribe of the children of Gad according to the house of their fathers, have received their inheritance; and the half-tribe of Manasseh has received its inheritance. 15 The two tribes and the half-tribe have received their inheritance on this side of the Jordan, across from Jericho eastward, toward the sunrise." 16 And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, 17 "These are the names of the men who shall divide the land among you as an inheritance: Eleazar the priest and Joshua the son of Nun. 18 And you shall take one leader of every tribe to divide the land for the inheritance. 19 These are the names of the men: from the tribe of Judah, Caleb the son of Jephunneh; 20 from the tribe of the children of Simeon, Shemuel the son of Ammihud; 21 from the tribe of Benjamin, Elidad the son of Chislon; 22 a leader from the tribe of the children of Dan, Bukki the son of Jogli; 23 from the sons of Joseph: a leader from the tribe of the children of Manasseh, Hanniel the son of Ephod, 24 and a leader from the tribe of the children of Ephraim, Kemuel the son of Shiphtan; 25 a leader from the tribe of the children of Zebulun, Elizaphan the son of Parnach; 26 a leader from the tribe of the children of Issachar, Paltiel the son of Azzan; 27 a leader from the tribe of the children of Asher, Ahihud the son of Shelomi; 28 and a leader from the tribe of the children of Naphtali, Pedahel the son of Ammihud." 29 These are the ones the Lord commanded to divide the inheritance among the children of Israel in the land of Canaan.**

Boundaries of the Promised Land:

Why does God determine the boundaries of the Promised Land?

1. To encourage them so that they would not be sluggish to own it because it is their land (let us strive for our share in heaven).
2. God declares that the time has come to chastise these peoples for their terrible evils.
3. So that Israel does not fight peoples whom God does not want to strike. Israel does not go beyond its borders and fight its neighbours but rather expels only the peoples whose places God has designated for them.
4. God sets limits for what we have on the earth. Therefore, let us be content with what God has decreed for us and not desire what is not ours.
5. This is the land in which the name of God has been glorified for many centuries while the whole world is immersed in its paganism. God accepts the little share. But He fills it with a blessing (milk and honey) which are the gifts of the Lord. (Milk = correct education / and honey = joy in God).
6. It indicates that the few who worship the Lord will be in joy and blessing (Psalm 37: 16).
7. God is concerned with defining the boundaries of the land, as it is a shadow of the heavenly Jerusalem, and this is the secret of its importance, and refer to (Revelation 11: 1,2 + Revelation 21: 15,16). So the heavenly Jerusalem is also specific. The meaning of the measurement is that the Lord governs this land. Note that the land was not entirely subject to Israel except during the reign of David and then Solomon, both of which symbolize Christ. Therefore, the secret of the greatness of this land is that it is the center of divine worship, and God is in its midst (Psalm 76: 1).
8. There are boundaries to the land, and this means that there are certain conditions for those entering it because God is in the midst of it. He does not accept uncleanness or defilement in His land (Revelation 21: 27). This is about the heavenly Jerusalem, and He says about the Promised Land, which is a symbol of heaven (Numbers 35: 33, 34). And whoever defiles the land will be punished (Jeremiah 16: 18). There is no fellowship of light with darkness. And these are the limits; it is God's land and His dwelling. Whoever enters it with impurity breaks into God's kingdom and land and is punished or destroyed.
9. We note that the land has natural boundaries that are easy to defend (sea / river / mountains) and this symbolizes God's protection for His people, for the Church has a wall of fire, and He will be glory in her midst (Zechariah 2: 5). The borders of the land are the Mediterranean Sea in the west, the Dead Sea and the Jordan River in the east, and the Wilderness of Sin in the south.
10. The land's inheritors are the nine tribes and the half-tribe. As for the two tribes of Reuben and Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh, they will not inherit anything in it, as it is said of them that they have received their inheritance. They took their inheritance across the Jordan to the east. (See verses 14, 15) to see the repetition that they received three times. They chose for themselves and did not enjoy what God chose for His people. Unfortunately, this is similar to what was said about wealth: "Son, remember that in your lifetime you received your good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things; but now he is comforted and you are tormented." (Luke 16: 25).

11. Other than military protection, it is a land with natural protection and full of bounties. The fertile Jordan River waters it, and to the south of it, a group of mountains protect the Holy Land from the hot Arab winds, in addition to natural protection. The Lebanon Mountains protect the Holy Land from the cold north wind in the north. It is a fertile land surrounded by deserts (what is outside the church is a ruin). It has natural limits (God is a wall of fire for us), and God, the Creator of nature, is the protector of His people. The borders of the land start from the Salt Sea (Mediterranean Sea) and end with the Dead Sea, whose salinity bears testimony to the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah after it was the most fertile land. And whether the Mediterranean Sea or the Dead Sea, they are called the Sea of Salt. This gives them a feeling that their whole land is a blessing, and if they get out of it, they will come out to ruin and be without protection. (Refer to Deuteronomy 7: 8-9). The Dead Sea is called the Dead Sea here, and the Mediterranean Sea is called the Salt Sea. The Promised Land is located between two salty seas, but it flows with milk and honey.

12. The Dividing Authority: God designated the group that divides the land by name.

a. High Priest Eleazar = God helped.

b. Joshua the son of Nun = God saves.

c. Caleb the son of Jephunneh = Heart (referring to the loyal and jealous heart).

Joshua and Caleb tasted the land's fruit and testified to their brothers about its sweetness. They are no strangers to it.

d. Shemuel = God has heard.

e. Elidad = He who is loved by my God.

f. Bukki = who is tested by the Lord.

g. Hanniel = God is compassionate.

h. Kemuel = the congregation of God.

i. Elizaphan = My God is hidden.

j. Paltiel = God has saved.

K. Ahihud = my great brother.

l. Pedahel = God redeemed.

12. We notice the disappearance of names such as my brother is evil, serpent, .. etc., as the ones we encountered at the beginning of the trip. Rather, all the names carry meaning and reveal the characteristics of those who enjoy the inheritance and support their brothers in enjoying it. God heard

us in His Son, He saved and redeemed us, and He made us His body (God's assembly), and we became hidden in Him (My God is hidden). In this journey, each of us sees the other as a great brother, rejoices with him and is pleased with the glories of others.

13. We do not hear here about military leadership but rather about those who distribute the land. Entering this land is by the grace of God, and the leaders are Eleazar and Joshua the leader. They represent Jesus, the high priest and the king, the leader of the journey to enter the heavenly Canaan, and Jesus is the one who divides for us the heavenly Canaan.

We notice in the distribution the placement of the understanding tribes next to each other, that is, neighbours to cooperate:

1. Judah and Simeon (sons of Leah).
2. Manasseh and Ephraim (sons of Joseph).
3. Zebulun and Issachar (sons of Leah).
4. Asher and Naphtali (sons of the two maids).
5. Benjamin and Dan (sons of Rachel and her maidservant).

Note that Dan had one part east of the Jordan and another part west of the Jordan.

Chapter 35

The Levites cities and the Refuge Cities:

The previous chapter explained the boundaries of the land, that it is fertile land and that what is around it is a ruin. In this chapter, we see that God resides in this land and that there are cities of refuge that protect from death. The meaning is that in our abiding in Christ, we have a blessing and deliverance from death, that is, eternal life (Acts 4: 12), and this chapter is an implementation of the promise of the Lord (Exodus 21: 12-14).

The previous chapter identified the Holy Land and who would divide it. Here, God declares His caring for His servants, the Levites, who do not inherit the land but live in certain cities. Some of those cities are designated as a refuge for those who kill a human being unintentional. Cities include common-land for beasts, as God does not want his children to live in nothingness. And Jacob's prophecy about Levi was, "I will divide them in Jacob" We see that the prophecy was fulfilled, but God turned the prophecy into a blessing. We see what Jacob said here: the Levites' cities are divided into all tribes. The blessing of this is that the Levites teach the people (Deuteronomy 33: 10). They are judges amid the people, just as the presence of the murderer among the Levites praising and chanting and explaining the law and teaching is very comforting to him.

God's view of sin through this chapter:

1. God does not absolve the deliberate killer, "For the wages of sin is death" (Romans 6: 23).
2. God understands the position of the sinner. If he did it intentionally, he was killed, and if it was unintentionally, then God is preparing a refuge for him.
3. Even the murderer unintentionally is punished by banishing him from his family and home (let us beware even of oversight).
4. Ransom by money is not acceptable as a person's life is very precious, and a bribe with money cannot redeem it. The blood of Christ only redeems it. Why did God allow the murderer to be killed? This is so that there is no revenge against the murderer's entire clan or family, and wars erupt between them.
5. Just as there is a murder that is punishable by death and a murder for which there is hope in the cities of refuge. Thus, there are sins for death and sins that are not for death (1 John 5: 16).
6. God does not protect the intentional murderer = God does not protect the willful sinner.
7. Whoever kills unintentionally and goes and confesses = Whoever sins because of weakness, repents and confesses, and God accepts him.

(Verse 1): **And the Lord spoke to Moses in the plains of Moab by the Jordan across from Jericho, saying:**

(Verse 2): **"Command the children of Israel that they give the Levites cities to dwell in from the inheritance of their possession, and you shall also give the Levites common-land around the cities.**

If God asks His servants to have their thoughts directed toward heavenly matters, He still does not forget their temporal needs, "But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you." (Matthew 6: 33). God did not give them an earthly inheritance, but He did not leave them without cities to live in (Acts 6: 4).

common-land around the cities: They are places around the cities or the outskirts of these cities, which are for their beasts.

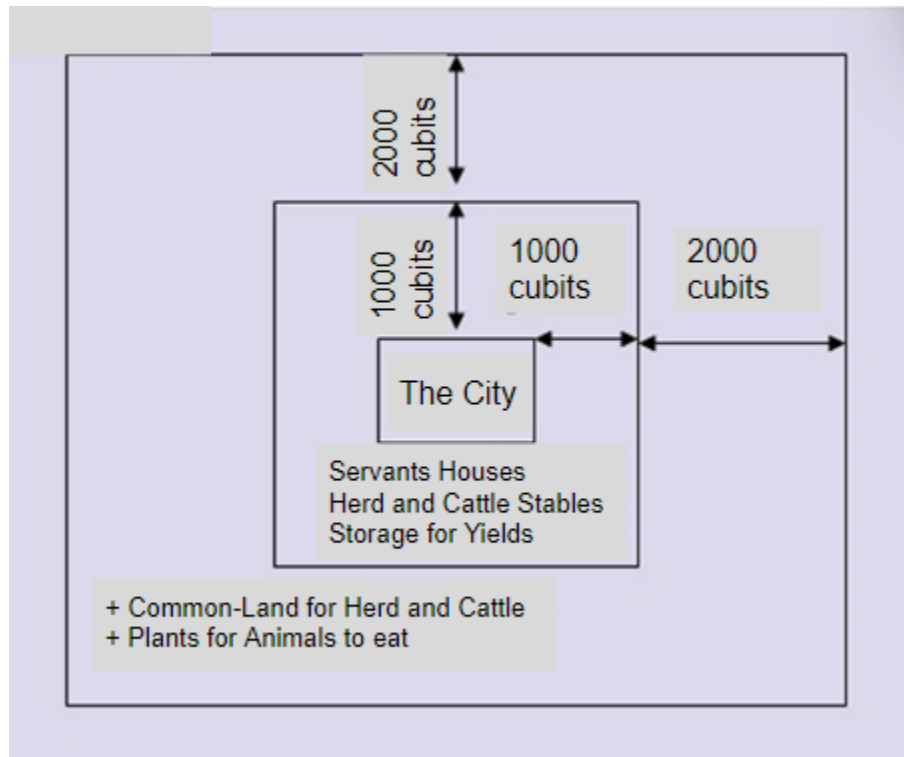
(Verse 3): **They shall have the cities to dwell in; and their common-land shall be for their cattle, for their herds, and for all their animals.**

their cattle: like cows. **their herds:** Include slaves, granaries, sheep, and goats. **all their animals:** Carrying animals such as donkeys, mules and camels

(Verses 4-5): **The common-land of the cities which you will give the Levites shall extend from the wall of the city outward a thousand cubits all around. 5 And you shall measure outside the city on the east side two thousand cubits, on the south side two thousand cubits, on the west side two thousand cubits, and on the north side two thousand cubits. The city shall be in the middle. This shall belong to them as common-land for the cities.**

Everything that pertains to God's servants must have a heavenly character. These common-lands are 1,000 cubits in size, 2,000 cubits. The number 1,000 refers to the celestials. The thousand cubits were designated as dwellings for servants, stables for livestock, sheep, and animals, and warehouses for crops and fruits. They might have planted orchards and vineyards in them. The two thousand cubits are used as pastures for cattle and sheep, growing crops to feed animals, and are often common-land fields (Leviticus 25: 34).

The Levites do not sow themselves, they are interested in serving, but their servants sow for them.



(Verses 6-7): **"Now among the cities which you will give to the Levites you shall appoint six cities of refuge, to which a manslayer may flee. And to these you shall add forty-two cities. 7 So all the cities you will give to the Levites shall be forty-eight; these you shall give with their common-land."**

forty-two cities: Again it refers to the 42 generations from Abraham to Christ. In these 42 generations, the last of the names was Christ, as if these generations were waiting and looking forward to the coming of Christ, who was the spirit of prophecy (Revelation 19: 10). It was the longing of everyone (Song of Solomon 8: 1 + Isaiah 64: 1). This is the work of the servants to enter with every human soul into the acquaintance of Christ and the enjoyment of knowing Him so that each one will have this longing for Christ.

forty-eight: The 42 cities for the Levites + 6 cities of refuge. And $12 \times 4 =$ indicates that Christ is everywhere (4 the general number); we find Him as a refuge for us (the church and her number 12 is the body of Christ).

six cities of refuge: The murderer would flee to the cities of refuge; that is, he would be exiled from his homeland, and he would remain fortified in the city of refuge until the high priest dies, at which time he can go out (verse 25). Thus we were banished from the bosom of the Heavenly Father (until our High Priest died). We note that the flight was for the cities of the Levites only, and the cities of the Levites are the portion of the Lord, and the Lord designated these cities, for God is our refuge. And the Levites protected the murderer according to the law while he lived among them. Therefore, killing a person sheltering in the cities of refuge was an insult to God (God is faithful and just, if we confess our sins, He

will forgive us). There is no weapon that protects the killer inside the shelter except the word of God and His promise, and this indicates that God's promise and His word have sufficient protection for us if we confess our sins (Philippians 3: 9 + Hebrews 6: 18). Jesus is our refuge, and God sent His priests to guide us to the path of salvation—bringing judgment before the congregation is like confessing before the Lord in the presence of the priests. (Psalm 59: 9, 16, 17 + 61: 3 + 71: 7). The number 6 refers to the full working days of man as if man is exposed in his work to make mistakes, so he finds all the days of his sojourn a refuge in God. God's arms are open to him all his days; He never closes them.

(Verses 8-11): **And the cities which you will give shall be from the possession of the children of Israel; from the larger tribe you shall give many, from the smaller you shall give few. Each shall give some of its cities to the Levites, in proportion to the inheritance that each receives." 9 Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, 10 "Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: 'When you cross the Jordan into the land of Canaan, 11 then you shall appoint cities to be cities of refuge for you, that the manslayer who kills any person accidentally may flee there.**

(Verse 12): **They shall be cities of refuge for you from the avenger, that the manslayer may not die until he stands before the congregation in judgment.**

the avenger: He is the closest person to the killed, and he has the right to demand his blood if killed or redeem him if he is sold or captured, i.e. redeems him and redeems his sold or mortgaged property if he is unable to redeem them himself. The avenger of the believers is the Lord Jesus, and He is a living and efficient avenger (Job 19: 25 + Proverbs 18: 10, 24 + Zechariah 9: 12). God is the refuge.

(Verse 13): **And of the cities which you give, you shall have six cities of refuge.**

(Verse 14): **You shall appoint three cities on this side of the Jordan, and three cities you shall appoint in the land of Canaan, which will be cities of refuge.**

3 Cities in east of Jordan, 3 cities in west of Jordan. Regardless of whether Gad and Reuben erred in choosing lands for themselves, God has prepared a refuge for them. The cities are scattered all over the place because Jesus is our refuge everywhere. Everyone can escape to Him.

And the cities of refuge belong to the cities of the priests. It is as if God wanted the people to know that the goal of the priests is to guide them to the Lord Christ, the true refuge, in which the believers hide from evil.

The Christian priesthood is the servant of the sacraments through which we abide in the Lord Jesus, our true refuge.

(Verse 15): **These six cities shall be for refuge for the children of Israel, for the stranger, and for the sojourner among them, that anyone who kills a person accidentally may flee there.**

for the stranger, and for the sojourner: This is a sign of the generality of salvation.

Spiritual contemplation on cities of refuge:

Suppose the manslayer is found accidentally outside the cities of refuge. In that case, he is liable to be killed by the avenger of blood, then he is in danger as long as he is outside the refuge, and we are in danger as long as we are not abiding in Christ. The person's failure to reach the cities of refuge would cause him to be killed. So the accidental manslayer had to quickly resort to the nearest city of refuge, as stipulated in (Deuteronomy 19: 3) that the roads leading to the cities of refuge should be prepared, and it is said that their width was about 20 cubits. And if there is water blocking it, bridges are built over it. Signs are also placed that read "Refuge... Refuge" and the cities were distributed throughout the land so that it would be easy for anyone who wanted to flee to them. These ways indicate that the way to seek refuge in Christ by repentance is open, and its signs are clear. There is a question! Can a murderer unintentionally say if God wants to save me, let Him save me without running and fleeing and taking refuge in a shelter? Indeed, this is not true. He had to run as long as the road is prepared. Thus, we have to strive and even unto bloodshed so that we remain in the protection of the blood of Christ. The road is prepared, Christ leads, the Holy Spirit helps, and the church with her sacraments is present.

(Verses 16-21): **'But if he strikes him with an iron implement, so that he dies, he is a murderer; the murderer shall surely be put to death. 17 And if he strikes him with a stone in the hand, by which one could die, and he does die, he is a murderer; the murderer shall surely be put to death. 18 Or if he strikes him with a wooden hand weapon, by which one could die, and he does die, he is a murderer; the murderer shall surely be put to death. 19 The avenger of blood himself shall put the murderer to death; when he meets him, he shall put him to death. 20 If he pushes him out of hatred or, while lying in wait, hurls something at him so that he dies, 21 or in enmity he strikes him with his hand so that he dies, the one who struck him shall surely be put to death. He is a murderer. The avenger of blood shall put the murderer to death when he meets him.**

Here the murder is premeditated, in which case the cities of refuge do not save him.

(Verses 22-23): **'However, if he pushes him suddenly without enmity, or throws anything at him without lying in wait, 23 or uses a stone, by which a man could die, throwing it at him without seeing him, so that he dies, while he was not his enemy or seeking his harm,**

Here is the unintentional killing. We find an explanation for this in (Exodus 21: 13). The killer did not mean to kill, but God is the One who wanted "God delivered him into his hand"

In (Exodus 21: 14) " you shall take him from My altar, that he may die." It seems that the horns of the altar were used for the same purpose before defining the cities of refuge. The meaning is that neither the horns of the altar nor the cities of refuge protect the killer who killed deliberately.

(Verses 24-25): **then the congregation shall judge between the manslayer and the avenger of blood according to these judgments. 25 So the congregation shall deliver the manslayer from the hand of the avenger of blood, and the congregation shall return him to the city of refuge where he had fled, and he shall remain there until the death of the high priest who was anointed with the holy oil.**

The killer was being judged before the congregation. Rather, in verse 30, we find that there must be at least two witnesses before the court, so I think that the blood avenger would not have killed the killer if there were no witnesses and that the congregation had judged him. Not everyone who wants to kill should do it without a judgment issued from the congregation, i.e. of the judiciary.

The manslayer would seek refuge in the city and then return and present his case before the city's elders, who would include him with them if they saw him confessing that he had murdered, and they verified that the killing had been done accidentally and not intentionally.

And they keep him in the city of refuge in their protection, he resides within the city's walls, and the avenger has no right to avenge the blood of the slain. He remains like this until the high priest dies, and he has the right to leave the city. Some may say he is a prisoner, but he is a prisoner of hope.

Why would he wait until the death of the high priest?

1. The manslayer unintentionally enjoyed the atonement and protection of the high priest, who offered atonement for the whole people. In this, he refers to Christ, who intercedes for us with the significance of his blood shed on the cross. It was as if this killer was under the protection of the High Priest as long as the High Priest was alive. As for Christ, our High Priest, He is alive forever and will protect His people forever.
2. All the cities of refuge belong to the Levites, and their chief is the high priest. This is as if the murderer is a prisoner of the high priest, and when he dies, he has the right to go out.
3. For the greatness of the position of the high priest, when he dies, grief over him swallows up any other grief, makes the avenger leave the manslayer if he leaves the city of refuge.
4. The death of the high priest refers to the death of the real high priest, who is Christ, who, with His death, freed us from the wages of sin and granted us complete freedom. The killer returned to the arms of his family, and with the death of Christ we returned to the bosom of the heavenly Father.

Strictness:

So that no one thinks that the law of cities of refuge means leniency with the crime of murder, God explains its seriousness:

1. It can only be proven by the testimony of more than one witness and is punishable by death. This indicates that the penalty for sin is death.
2. It is not possible to accept a ransom for the soul of the manslayer who is guilty of death so that the rich man does not think that with his money, he can kill and pay a ransom... But whoever kills shall be killed. The soul is too precious to be ransomed with money.
- 3- Neglecting the manslayer's punishment is considered a desecration of the land in which they reside, and the Lord Himself lives in the midst of it.

And if these conditions mean not to be indifferent to the lives of others, then salvation by the blood of Christ does not mean complacency with sin and our contempt for committing it, as the wages of sin is death.

(Verse 25): **So the congregation shall deliver the manslayer from the hand of the avenger of blood, and the congregation shall return him to the city of refuge where he had fled, and he shall remain there until the death of the high priest who was anointed with the holy oil.**

This indicates that if the killer unintentionally resorted to the judiciary outside the city of refuge and they judged that he was innocent, they would return him to the city of refuge to take shelter in it.

(Verses 26-30): **But if the manslayer at any time goes outside the limits of the city of refuge where he fled, 27 and the avenger of blood finds him outside the limits of his city of refuge, and the avenger of blood kills the manslayer, he shall not be guilty of blood, 28 because he should have remained in his city of refuge until the death of the high priest. But after the death of the high priest the manslayer may return to the land of his possession. 29 'And these things shall be a statute of judgment to you throughout your generations in all your dwellings. 30 Whoever kills a person, the murderer shall be put to death on the testimony of witnesses; but one witness is not sufficient testimony against a person for the death penalty.**

This means for us that Christ protects those who take refuge in Him while he is in His Church. As for those who do not want Christ and leave the Church, they do not enjoy the protection of Christ. Rather, we hear Christ saying to such a person who does not want Christ: " I will vomit you out of My mouth." (Revelation 3: 16).

(Verse 31): **Moreover you shall take no ransom for the life of a murderer who is guilty of death, but he shall surely be put to death.**

a murderer who is guilty of death: That is, he who has sinned and his sin is that he killed someone, he must die.

(Verses 32-34): **And you shall take no ransom for him who has fled to his city of refuge, that he may return to dwell in the land before the death of the priest. 33 So you shall not pollute the land where you are; for blood defiles the land, and no atonement can be made for the land, for the blood that is shed on it, except by the blood of him who shed it. 34 Therefore do not defile the land which you inhabit, in the midst of which I dwell; for I the Lord dwell among the children of Israel."**

The meaning is that there is no way to forgive the murderer except the death of the high priest. No ransom is valid, nor can the murderer (the sinner) even seek protection by adhering to the holy things (for example, if he committed to implementing all the commandments of the law).

This symbolizes that the blood of Christ, which is symbolized by the death of the high priest, is the only one capable of forgiving sin. Even if a person committed to all the commandments of the law, how can the original sin that we inherited from our father Adam be forgiven? There is no forgiveness except by the blood of Christ, which forgives the original sin and our personal sins.

Chapter 36

(Verses 1-13): **Now the chief fathers of the families of the children of Gilead the son of Machir, the son of Manasseh, of the families of the sons of Joseph, came near and spoke before Moses and before the leaders, the chief fathers of the children of Israel. 2 And they said: "The Lord commanded my Lord Moses to give the land as an inheritance by lot to the children of Israel, and my Lord was commanded by the Lord to give the inheritance of our brother Zelophehad to his daughters. 3 Now if they are married to any of the sons of the other tribes of the children of Israel, then their inheritance will be taken from the inheritance of our fathers, and it will be added to the inheritance of the tribe into which they marry; so it will be taken from the lot of our inheritance. 4 And when the Jubilee of the children of Israel comes, then their inheritance will be added to the inheritance of the tribe into which they marry; so their inheritance will be taken away from the inheritance of the tribe of our fathers." 5 Then Moses commanded the children of Israel according to the word of the Lord, saying: "What the tribe of the sons of Joseph speaks is right. 6 This is what the Lord commands concerning the daughters of Zelophehad, saying, 'Let them marry whom they think best, but they may marry only within the family of their father's tribe.' 7 So the inheritance of the children of Israel shall not change hands from tribe to tribe, for every one of the children of Israel shall keep the inheritance of the tribe of his fathers. 8 And every daughter who possesses an inheritance in any tribe of the children of Israel shall be the wife of one of the family of her father's tribe, so that the children of Israel each may possess the inheritance of his fathers. 9 Thus no inheritance shall change hands from one tribe to another, but every tribe of the children of Israel shall keep its own inheritance." 10 Just as the Lord commanded Moses, so did the daughters of Zelophehad; 11 for Mahlah, Tirzah, Hoglah, Milcah, and Noah, the daughters of Zelophehad, were married to the sons of their father's brothers. 12 They were married into the families of the children of Manasseh the son of Joseph, and their inheritance remained in the tribe of their father's family. 13 These are the commandments and the judgments which the Lord commanded the children of Israel by the hand of Moses in the plains of Moab by the Jordan, across from Jericho.**

The law of women's inheritance:

As the daughters of Zelophehad of the tribe of Manasseh became entitled to their father's inheritance (Chapter 27), the chief fathers of the families of the children of Gilead the son of Machir, the son of Manasseh, came to Moses, the prophet, complaining that if the daughters of Zelophehad married from another tribe, part of the inheritance of the tribe of Manasseh would be transferred to the other tribe. This can let a tribe acquire another tribe. Moses answered according to the command of the Lord, affirming two principles:

1. Girls have the right to marry whomever they choose, for marriage is not obligatory = **Let them marry whom they think best** (verse 6).

2. But if they want to keep their share in the land, they must marry a man from their tribe = **but they may marry only within the family of their father's tribe.' 7 So the inheritance of the children of Israel shall not change hands from tribe to tribe, for every one of the children of Israel shall keep the inheritance of the tribe of his fathers** (verses 6,7). If they marry from within the tribe, the inheritance remains for them, and if they marry outside the tribe, the inheritance is lost from them so that the inheritance remains within the tribe.

(Verse 4): **And when the Jubilee of the children of Israel comes, then their inheritance will be added to the inheritance of the tribe into which they marry; so their inheritance will be taken away from the inheritance of the tribe of our fathers.**

And when the Jubilee: This is the rest of the complaint of the tribe of Manasseh, that if the daughters of Zelophehad marry men outside the tribe of Manasseh, the land that became their inheritance will go to the tribe of husbands and will not return even in the Jubilee. In the Jubilee, the land is returned to its owners (Leviticus 25: 23-28). But this does not apply to a woman who married a man from outside her tribe. In the Jubilee, only the sold or mortgaged land returns. In this case, the land went with the married girl, so it becomes a legal right for their husbands, and this is a sway from the lot that divided a specific land for each tribe.

The complaint of the the chief fathers of the tribe of Manasseh here is wonderful:

- a. In this, they resemble Naboth the Jezreelite (1 Kings 21: 3) as they adhere to their inheritance.
- b. They are holding on to their inheritance that they have not taken yet, proving that their faith is great.
- c. Their attitude showed their vigilance, zeal for their people, and understanding of the law and the commandments. But they had a question about this law and were asking boldly with faith, for the children of God are not deaf machines but living people.

There is a question why this chapter did not come after the story of the daughters of Zelophehad in chapter 27, and why did this story come at the end of the book of Numbers?

Simply, the meaning of the story is that the daughters who want to marry outside the tribe lose their fathers' inheritance. Every daughter is free to decide between her inheritance or a husband.

The spiritual interpretation of this at the end of this journey is that whoever wants to cling to the Church during this life's journey will not lose his heavenly inheritance. In other words, every soul clings to her heavenly groom Jesus Christ, who is from the same tribe (He is the Groom of the Church). This soul inherits with Christ and becomes an heir of God with Christ (Romans 8: 17). But every person is free to choose Christ, and his inheritance remains for him, or he chooses another and loses his inheritance.

Book of Numbers Commentary

When this chapter comes after the cities of refuge chapter, it is like a call to remain in the protection of Christ so as not to lose our inheritance. It is like the conclusion of the Book of Revelation: "He who is unjust, let him be unjust still; he who is filthy, let him be filthy still; he who is righteous, let him [a]be righteous still; he who is holy, let him be holy still." (Revelation 22: 11). That is, after God gave everything and prepared the inheritance, he gave us freedom.