

# God's Story, Our Story

## Lesson 14: Israel in the Desert (Lev – Num – Deut)



*God leads the Israelites to the land he promised to their forefathers.*

*Num 13-14*

*Num 14:20-35*

*Num 16*

*Num 21  
Jn 3:14-15*

*Num 25*

*Dt 24:1, Mt 19:8  
Dt 21:10-14,  
Dt 20:16-17  
Ezek 20:21-25  
Dt 15:19-20  
Dt 28  
Dt 30:19-20*

*Dt 30:1-6  
Ezek 36:24-28  
Jer 31:31-33  
Dt 18:17-19  
Jn 6:14*

1. Spies are sent to Canaan. Everyone except Joshua and Caleb fear the inhabitants of the land and want to return to Egypt.
2. Because of their unbelief, the Israelites are condemned to wander in the desert for 40 years.
3. Korah's rebellion: Korah, Dathan, Abiram and 250 men rebel against Moses and Aaron. The ground swallows Korah, Dathan and Abiram and fire consumes the 250.
4. After the Israelites speak out against God and Moses, fiery serpents bite them and many die. They are saved by looking at a bronze serpent which God commanded Moses to make.
5. The Israelites commit harlotry with the women of Moab at Baal Peor and bow to their gods. The Lord strikes them with a plague and 24,000 die. Pinchas slays one of them and God gives him the covenant of everlasting priesthood.
6. The Deuteronomic covenant: the "second law" mediated by Moses which becomes Israel's national constitution. It includes:
  - a. Legal concessions: on divorce and remarriage, the taking of foreign slave-wives, and genocidal warfare.
  - b. Ritual stipulations: sacrifices offered at a central sanctuary.
  - c. Blessings and curses: faithfulness with bring peace and prosperity; sin will bring defeat, destruction and exile.
7. Even after Israel is exiled, God will return them to their land if they repent. He will make a new and greater covenant with them and give them a new heart, through another prophet like Moses: Jesus.

| Moses   | Jesus, the new Moses  |
|---|---|
| Born in the reign of the ruthless pharaoh.                                  | Born in the reign of the ruthless Herod (Mt 2:1).   |
| Escaped when pharaoh ordered all the male children of the Hebrews killed.   | Escaped when Herod ordered all the male children of Bethlehem killed (Mt 2:16).                           |
| Exiled in Midian before his ministry.                                       | Exiled in Egypt before his ministry (Mt 2:14-15).   |
| Passed through the waters of the Red Sea.                                   | Passed through the waters of the Jordan (Mk 1:9).   |
| Tested in the wilderness 40 years.  | Tested in the wilderness 40 days (Mk 1:12-13).  |
| Fasted for 40 days and nights at Sinai.                                     | Fasted for 40 days and nights in the wilderness.  |
| First sign: changed water into blood.                                       | Changed water into wine, later wine into blood (Jn 2).  |
| Brought the law down from the mountain.                                     | Taught the new law from the mountain (Mt 5).  |
| Gave Israel manna and water in the wilderness.                              | Gave us heavenly food and spiritual drink (Jn 6).   |
| Formed a national people with 12 chiefs of 12 tribes, along with 70 elders. | Chose 12 apostles to rule over the 12 tribes of Israel; appointed 70 other disciples (Lk 22:29-30, 10:1). |
| The Exodus: Lead Israel out of bondage in Egypt.                            | The New Exodus frees us from sin and death.   |

| The Passover Lamb  | Jesus, the Lamb of God   |
|--|--|
| The Lamb must be without blemish (Ex 12:5).                                      | Jesus was without sin.   |
| The lambs were slaughtered starting at the sixth hour on the day of preparation. | Jesus was sentenced to be crucified at about the sixth hour on the day of preparation (Jn 19:14-16). |
| No bones of the lamb could be broken (Ex 12:46).                                 | Jesus' <b>bones were not broken (Jn 19:32-33)</b> .  |
| A branch of hyssop was used for sprinkling the blood of the Lamb (Ex 12:22).     | A sponge of vinegar was given to Jesus on a branch of hyssop (Jn 19:29).                             |
| The high priest wore a linen tunic when making the sacrifice (Lv 16:4).          | Jesus, our high priest, wore a seamless linen tunic before his crucifixion (Jn 19:23).               |

## **Questions for Discussion**

1. How did God's relation with Israel change after the golden calf?
2. What was the structure of authority among the children of Israel? How did God speak to them?
3. Why were the Israelites condemned to wander in the desert for 40 years?
4. Why did God wipe out Korah and his men?
5. What were the consequences of the idolatry of the Israelites at Baal Peor?
6. How is the Deuteronomic covenant different from the Sinai covenant?
7. Why is the Mosaic covenant insufficient? Why did God not 'stop there' in his plan of salvation?
8. How does Jesus fulfill the Exodus and the Mosaic covenant? How are they fulfilled in our own Christian life?