

Pinhas Bamidbar - Numbers (25.10-30.1)

The Hebrews camped at Shittim and soon the young men begin to marry Moabite (and Midianite) women and bow to their god. God, who demands exclusive worship, was angry and 24,000 die before Pinhas rose up to kill the final Israelite man with his Midianite woman. God said to Moses, "Your brother Aaron's son, the Kohen Pinhas obeyed Me well. Because he zealously took up Israel's cause and made atonement for them, I shall give him the everlasting priesthood. Now take a new counting of all the sons of Israel, 20 years old and up, according to their father's tribe."

After the families are counted and numbered God says to Moses, "Divide the land according to the number of people within a tribe. This shall be their father's family land inheritance and they are to be known by the father's name. To the tribes that are large you shall give a large piece of land and to the small tribes a small one."

During the dividing of land the 5 daughters of Tzelophehad came to the Tent of Appointed Meeting with God and asked Moses, "Our father died in the wilderness. He died naturally and did not join the Korach rebellion against God. But he had no sons. Why should the name of our father disappear just because he did not have a son? Please give us land too." Moses asked God what to do. God answered, "The daughters of Tzelophehad speak justly. Give them their father's inheritance. Then announce the ruling that if a father has no son, his land and possessions shall be given to his daughter. If there are no children, give his inheritance to his brothers or closest kin. This shall be the law of all Israel."

God then says to Moses, "Go to the Mountain of Transitions and look at the land I am giving to the Israelites. Afterwards, you will be gathered to your people in death because you acted against Me at the waters of contention at Kadesh. There you did not make Me holy in front of the Israelites." Moses said, "Let God, the God of the spirits of all flesh, appoint a new leader for the community of God so they shall not be like sheep who have no shepherd."

God said to Moses, "Take Joshua, son of Nun, a man to whom there is spirit, and announce him leader in front of the entire community so everyone will obey him. Afterwards make sure the Israelites bring offerings to Me in each season of Appointed Meeting and each festival, including Passover, the Sabbath, the New Moon, Shavuot, and the Day of Atonement. Whether livestock, flour, incense, wine or festival rest, each offering expresses obedience to God." And Moses did exactly as God said with Joshua when he laid his hands upon him to appoint him before the entire community of Israel.

Questions: 1) Name 3 qualities of a great leader 2) How do you define obeying? 3) Name one offering you would like to give God to express your obedience to God

Illustration Ideas: death of sinning Israelites...daughters asking Moses..Moses appointing Joshua leader...any festival offering