

Stay Focused (*we're almost there!*)

Purpose: to encourage God's people to keep their focus on Him, through the example of the children of Israel.

We are coming to the end of the wilderness wanderings and the children of Israel are getting close to going into the promised land. These are those who were 20 years old and under who are now about to enter. They had to learn their lessons from the wilderness just like their predecessors.

At first they were discouraged, complained, and were bitten by fiery serpents. But they repented and were saved by looking at the bronze serpent, which Moses made. After this, they wandered, but this time they learned from their mistakes:

Num 21:10 - Now the children of Israel moved on and camped in Oboth.

Num 21:11 - And they journeyed from Oboth and camped at Ije Abarim, in the wilderness which *is* east of Moab, toward the sunrise.

Num 21:12 - From there they moved and camped in the Valley of Zered.

Num 21:13 - 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.

Num 21:14 - Therefore it is said in the Book of the Wars of the LORD: "Waheb in Suphah, The brooks of the Arnon,

Num 21:15 - And the slope of the brooks That reaches to the dwelling of Ar, And lies on the border of Moab."

Num 21:16 - 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."

Num 21:17 - Then Israel sang this song: "Spring up, O well! All of you sing to it—

Num 21:18 - 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,

Num 21:19 - from Mattanah to Nahaliel, from Nahaliel to Bamoth,

Num 21:20 - and from Bamoth, *in* the valley that *is* in the country of Moab, to the top of Pisgah which looks down on the wasteland.

Consider how they responded to adversity this time:

- They did not complain when God had them move from place to place.
- They did not complain when there was no water.
- God directed their leaders and their leaders led them to water.
- They worshipped God with a song!

At last, they were now ready to defeat their enemies:

Num 21:21 - Then Israel sent messengers to Sihon king of the Amorites, saying,

Num 21:22 - "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."

Num 21:23 - 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.

Num 21:24 - 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.

Num 21:25 - So Israel took all these cities, and Israel dwelt in all the cities of the Amorites, in Heshbon and in all its villages.

Num 21:26 - 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.

Num 21:27 - Therefore those who speak in proverbs say:

"Come to Heshbon, let it be built;
Let the city of Sihon be repaired.

Num 21:28 - "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.

Num 21:29 - 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.

Num 21:30 - "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."

Num 21:31 - Thus Israel dwelt in the land of the Amorites.

Num 21:32 - Then Moses sent to spy out Jazer; and they took its villages and drove out the Amorites who *were* there.

Num 21:33 - 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.

Num 21:34 - 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."

Num 21:35 - So they defeated him, his sons, and all his people, until there was no survivor left him; and they took possession of his land.

These were written for our example and for our learning:

- The first generation did not receive God's blessing because they did not trust Him
- The new generation had to go through the lessons of the wilderness just like the first.
- They made mistakes and suffered, but they repented and they learned:
- They learned not to complain!
- They learned to trust their leaders!

- They learned to worship!
- They were finally ready for battle!

So stay focused... (we are almost there!)

- Focus on the character of God (...are You not God in heaven...)
- Focus on the power of God (...in Your hand is there not power and might...)
- Focus on the promises of God (...You will hear and save...)
- Focus on the plea – (...we don't know what to do, but our eyes are upon You)