

NUMBERS 28-33

WEEK IN REVIEW + FAMILY GUIDE



WEEK IN REVIEW

As God's people are preparing to enter into the Promised Land, there are some more instructions given. There was a call for the people to depend on the Lord for the future and remember what He had done in the past through **offerings** and **feasts**. As a reminder, the offerings given were either a way of saying "thank you" to God or "I'm sorry" to God. The feasts were holy days and a time to look back on an aspect of God's redemption in the Exodus and look forward to a future redemption through Christ. These were daily, weekly, monthly, and yearly rhythms of reflection on the Lord.

God then spoke to Moses and gave him a command to execute **vengeance** on a people group called the Midianites. Vengeance is punishment in response for wrongdoing, and only God can rightfully bring vengeance (Romans 12:19). The Midianites were enemies of Israel who practiced evil and sought to prevent the worship of the one true God. The Israelites were instructed to kill all of the Midianites, with a few exceptions. There were a thousand men from each Israelite tribe (12,000 total) to go to war with the Midianites. God did not need a large army to see a victory. This was a glimpse of the victories that were to come for the Israelites in the book of Joshua as they conquer the Land.

We might read this section of Scripture and come to the conclusion that God's judgement on the Midianites seems harsh and unjust. However, there are a few key things to remember when we read passages like this. The first thing is that *God is creator and judge*. Everything belongs to the Lord and He is the righteous judge of all the earth. The second thing we can remember is that *all people have sinned*. Sin has always had consequences and brings about the wrath of God. However, God is also slow to anger and abounding in faithful love. He does not turn on and off His character; He is fully just and fully merciful all the time. The third thing we can hold on to is that *God is impartial*. That means He does not show favoritism. God's ultimate desire is for all people of all nations to worship Him. This section concludes with the tribes of Reuben and Gad asked if they could settle outside the Promised Land instead of inside. They still pledged to help drive out the Canaanites as the Lord commanded, which we will see more of throughout the book of Joshua.

FAMILY GUIDE

BIG IDEA:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● God is fully just and fully merciful all the time
KEY STORIES:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Offerings and Vows● Israel avenges Midian● Reuben and Gad
KEY VERSES:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Numbers 31:2<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ “Take vengeance on the Midianites for the Israelites. After that, you will be gathered to your people.”● Numbers 32:1<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ “The Reubenites and Gadites, who had very large herds and flocks, saw that the lands of Jazer and Gilead were suitable for livestock.”
PEOPLE/ WORDS TO KNOW:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Offerings<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Giving up something you value● Feasts<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Holy days of Israel where they would look back on what God had done and look forward to what He will do● Vengeance<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Punishment in response for wrongdoing● Ethical<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Something morally right

Reflection Questions

1.	What was the purpose of the offerings and the feasts for the Israelites?
2.	What were some of the feasts celebrated by the Israelites?
3.	What do we learn about God’s character in the judgment towards the Midianites?
4.	Why didn’t Reuben and Gad want to enter into the Promised Land?