

Numbers 30

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[0 : 00] making our way through the Old Testament. And if you remember, if you want to take it in its proper context, Numbers chapters 28 and 29 really serve a very unique purpose for the nation of Israel.

It actually goes all the way back to the end of, or to about halfway through Numbers chapter 27. Numbers 27 reveals for us that God had told Moses that his days were numbered, that it was time for him to depart.

Well, I mean, to put it plainly, Moses is about to die. And as he is about to die, he is to put some of his authority and some of his power and some of his position before the people upon the one who would come up after him, be it Joshua.

And then you have Eleazar, who is the descendant of Aaron, who is serving as high priest. So no one will hold the entire position that Moses held. No one will serve that place, no single individual. Eleazar is going to serve as the intercessor between God and man. Joshua is going to be the political leader of the people, be the one who takes them out into war and brings them in.

[1 : 09] He's going to have kind of the authority in the political realm, if you will. Eleazar has the authority in the spiritual realm. So Moses here is giving final instructions.

He is kind of telling this younger generation. We say younger generation, but it's the generation that were children when the people failed to enter into the promised land some 38 years prior to this. So this is the generation that's going to go into the promised land. And after hearing that his time has come for him to leave, Moses is then instructed of the Lord to teach this generation certain things.

So we say all this to put it in this context. I always, when I open up the New Testament, and I'm reading through the Gospels especially, I pay pretty close attention to when I get to John chapter 13.

Because while not all of, well, very few portions of Scripture actually happen chronologically.

[2 : 08] The authors weren't, I don't want to say few, especially when we get to the New Testament, they weren't so concerned making sure they told you how things happened this, this, this, this, this, in perfect chronological order as they were just highlighting things.

And sometimes they may kind of be out of order, but they really were pointing to a purpose. And it wasn't to tell history. It was to tell the story of Christ. But when we get to John 13, it's almost like John pumps the brakes and he slows down.

And John 13, 14, 15, 16, and 17 are all chronological events that happened the night Jesus was betrayed.

And it's the final words of Christ to his disciples. That's where we get to great teaching. You know, I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go, I will come back again. And, you know, it's better for you that I leave because if I leave, the Father will send the Holy Spirit to be with you.

You will do the works that I've done and greater works than these you will do too. All these great teachings of Christ are found in that final session, that final night, right? It's the night of his betrayal.

[3 : 15] It's actually what he tells them in the upper room, on the way to the garden, and in the garden, right? It's what he shares with them. And it ends in that high priestly prayer of John 17.

And I like to pay attention to them because it's the final words of Christ. It's what he said before his departure. It's what he wanted them to hold on to. You say, what does that have to do with Numbers chapter 30?

Well, the Lord has told Moses he's about to die. And these are the things he wants them to hold on to, right? Now, he's going to dedicate a whole book, Deuteronomy, to that. He's going to instruct them.

That's the second law. That's what Deuteronomy means. He's going to tell them the law again. It's going to be kind of a recap of everything. But immediately after hearing that he's about to die, these

are the things the Lord has told him to do.

Numbers 27, 28, 29, 30, 31. They're chronological. They're happening in successive order. They're happening, I think, in a divinely inspired order. And you'll kind of get a grasp of that here in just a moment because the very first thing God tells them says, now instruct them in Numbers 28 and 29 what their calendar of worship will look like.

[4 : 24] If you were here Sunday night, you know, we looked at this from Numbers, in Numbers 28 to the end of Numbers 29. It is one year's worth of worship. This is how you worship daily.

This is how you worship weekly. This is how you worship monthly. And this is how you worship in the special festivals. This is what your worship looks like through the year.

Now, immediately following the calendar of worship is this chapter. This is the very next thing the Lord tells Moses to tell them.

Okay? So hopefully we set the stage there a little bit. They've just heard. This is what it looks like to worship the Lord our God throughout the year. And then we come to Numbers 30.

It says, Then Moses spoke to the heads of the tribes of the sons of Israel, saying, This is the word which the Lord has commanded.

[5 : 21] Again, we see this is coming with divine authority. This isn't the opinion of Moses. This is the word which the Lord has commanded. If a man makes a vow to the Lord or takes an oath to bind himself with a binding obligation, he should not violate his word.

He shall do according to all that proceeds out of his mouth. Also, if a woman makes a vow to the Lord and binds herself by an obligation in her father's house in her youth, and her father hears her vow and her obligation, by which she has bound herself, and her father says nothing to her, then all her vows shall stand, and every obligation by which she has bound herself shall stand.

But if her father should forbid her on the day he hears of it, none of her vows or her obligations by which she has bound herself shall stand. And the Lord will forgive her because her father has forbidden her.

However, if she should marry a man while under her vows or the rash statement of her lips, by which she has bound herself, and her husband hears of it and says nothing to her on the day he hears it, then her vow shall stand, and her obligations by which she has bound herself shall stand. But if on the day her husband hears of it, he forbids her, then he shall annul her vow which she is under, and the rash statement of her lips by which she has bound herself, and the Lord will forgive her.

[6 : 35] But the vow of a widower, of a divorced woman, everything by which she has bound herself shall stand against her. However, if she vowed in her husband's house, or bound herself by an obligation with an oath, and if her husband heard it, but said nothing to her and did not forbid her, then all her vows shall stand, and every obligation by which she bound herself shall stand.

But if her husband indeed annuls them, or the day he hears them, then whatever proceeds out of her lips concerning her vows, or concerning the obligation of herself shall not stand. Her husband has annulled them, and the Lord will forgive her.

Every vow and every binding oath to humble herself, her husband may confirm it, or her husband may annul it. But if her husband indeed says nothing to her from the day to day, then he confirms all her vows, or all her obligations which are on her.

He has confirmed them, because he said nothing to her on the day he heard them. But if he indeed annuls them after he has heard them, then he shall bear her guilt.

These are the statutes which the Lord commanded Moses, as between a man and his wife, and between a father and his daughter, while she is in her youth in her father's house.

[7 : 45] Numbers chapter 30. I want us to see this evening the power of our words. The power of our words. Now, in connection with, or right on the heels of, instructions of proper worship throughout the year, what it looks like to worship daily, what it looks like to worship weekly, what it looks like to worship monthly, what it looks like to worship in special festivals, right on the heels of that, the Lord instructs Moses to give instructions concerning what the people say, or what commitments they make, or the vows or the oaths that they enter into.

Now, this is something that we shouldn't be that surprised of, because often in the Jewish worship, an offering would be made in connection to an oath or a vow.

Warren Wiersbe rightly defines it, I think, that a vow is an agreement to do something if a prayer is answered, whereas an oath is an agreement to abstain from something for a period of time.

So if you enter into a vow, Lord, if you do this, then I will do that. You've just read about it in the book of Judges. For those of you following the Murray-McChin reading program, those who are following the same reading plan that Carrie and I are, and I know a number of you are, and you read in the book of Judges about Jephthah as he went out, and he said, If I reign victorious, then I will offer the very first thing that comes out of my house as a sacrifice.

It's that confusing passage, and you know it's because it's his daughter. That comes out of the house first. But she says, Do what you have what vowed to do. Now, this is the power of words.

[9 : 33] I'm not saying that that's right, okay? The only answer I have to the book of Judges, when we read the book of Judges, and I think it is defined there, and we're in it now, and that annual reading plan is that often repeated phrase.

It's repeated five times in the book of Judges. In those days, there was no king in Israel, and every man did what was right in his own eyes. And this is exactly what it looks like when man does what is right in his own eyes. Okay?

We read of another one, because we know that the only way Samuel ended up in the temple was his mother was praying and made a vow. Lord, if you give me a son, I'll dedicate him to you.

Right? And she gave the boy Samuel to Eli and said, I made a vow. Here he is. I kept my vow. And so these things were often done in connection to worship.

The oath of a Nazarite, or a Nazarite oath, I'm going to abstain from things. I'm not going to touch a dead body. I'm not going to drink of the wine. I'm not going to do any of those things.

[10 : 32] Right? Even though we know that there are Nazarites who broke every one of those.

Samson broke every single oath that a Nazarite was supposed to take. Even though he was supposed to be a Nazarite from birth, he broke every single one of them.

You know, and we understand that. But this is what we see here. This is what Moses tells us. The power of our words. Really, simply it is, if we say we're going to do something, then we do it.

Because there's power in that word. It is the power of commitment. And he repeats it for us here.

And I know it's kind of a difficult passage to grasp that.

But I want you to see just three truths, three reasons why there is great power in our words. The first one is, they are to be a reflection of his holiness.

Number one, our words are to be a reflection of his holiness. Then Moses spoke to the heads of the tribes of the sons of Israel, saying, This is the word which the Lord has commanded me.

[11 : 38] So this is the word that God has said. And it is in connection to the words we say back to him. This is the word which the Lord has commanded. If a man makes a vow to the Lord.

Now look at the word Lord. There is capital L, capital O, capital R, capital D. That is Yahweh, right? That is the covenant God. He is using the name of the covenant God there.

Yahweh, the covenant God. And the covenant was based upon what? The word of God. God says, I will be your God, and you will be my people, if you do these things. So their whole relationship, with this holy God, was based upon a covenant, which was given to them through the word of God. So here we see the power of words. Our words are to be a reflection of his holiness, because our relationship with him is completely dependent upon the fact that he keeps his word.

That he is true to his word. That what he says is accurate. That what he says will be done. We're going to look, if the Lord allows us to tarry, and the Lord allows us to stay there.

[12 : 46] We'll be in Hebrews chapter 11, this Sunday. In Hebrews chapter 11, that Hebrews of the faith chapter, and it says, Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, right?

It is the assurance of things unseen. But faith is not blind. Because when we start going through that heroes of the faith chapter, what you find is, these people all respond to what God commanded them to do.

Faith stands on the word of God, as if it is a settled fact. That's, Adrian Rogers says that faith, you know, practice, faith is something with legs on it.

You want to have faith with legs on it. You want to stand on something, and move as a result of that. And you want to say that God is going to keep his word. And since he is a God of his word, then I can trust him to live my life accordingly.

And now what God is doing here is, he says, since you depend on my word, shouldn't I also hold you to your word? Because if your life is completely dependent upon what I have said, shouldn't I also count on you for what you say?

[14 : 05] Jesus says that we will be held accountable for every word we have said. And I believe that is harking back to this oath, these vows.

I'm not so sure Jesus is picking on us there and saying for every haphazard word we've said, every mess up, you know, when we get angry. I think what he's really emphasizing, because we see this emphasized over and over again, and this is why it says, let your yes be yes, and your no be no, right?

This, this repeated theme throughout scripture, that what you say you're going to do, then do it. Because God's going to hold us to that. Because when God's people give their word, they are to be a reflection of his holiness.

Much harm has been done to the word of God, because the people of God failed to keep their word. Because if we cannot, and I include myself in this, if we cannot be people of our word, then how will others see the truth of God's word?

The only thing they're going to see being lived out is us. And our words are to be a reflection of his holiness. And our life depends upon the very word of God, or it should.

[15 : 27] And it depends upon the truthfulness of the promises of God, as it should. And what God is saying is, I want you to be the same. Because when you make a vow, you're making it to me.

You're making it to the Lord. You're not making it to anyone. This is something every couple I do pre-marriage counseling with. I'll be starting another one soon. And I tell them, listen, we stand up there.

It's not like the two of you are just making an agreement with each other. You're not just talking to each other. You're making a vow before the Lord. I said, if something happens, I want you to come talk to me.

I'm not 100%. I'm not batting 1,000 on this. I've had, you know, to my great sorrow, there have been those who've walked away. But I always tell them, it's not just me.

It's not like you've got to be ashamed to come talk to me, because the Lord's going to hold you accountable for the vow you make when you stand before Him. The world may take it lightly, but the Lord does not.

[16 : 33] And we see this, but it's not just in the marriage realm, right? It's in every realm. This is what He's saying. It's when you say you're going to do something.

Now, I've failed this, right? I'll be honest with you. I will overextend myself. I will. I will make too many promises, and I will fall. But what we see here, we need to understand, and maybe your pastor needs to hear this more than any, that our words are to be a reflection of His holiness, not our, as Erwin Lutzer once said, Satan's not bothered by our good intentions.

Just because we meant to do something, that doesn't bother him. What bothers Satan is when we do what we said we were going to do. That's what bothers him. So it is a reflection of His holiness. Number two, we see that our words serve as a realization or a recognition of our commitment. It helps us to realize how committed we are, and this goes hand in hand with the first one because we're making a vow to the Lord, and they're difficult vows, but we understand this.

If we can easily make a vow and break that vow, or if we could easily enter into an oath and break that oath, then we're really not as committed as we ought to be at any level in our relationship with the Lord.

[17 : 57] And we see this because we take it lightly, as the world does, and we take it easy because it's real easy in this life to operate in the shadows, but He is telling us here that if we make that, we are bound to keep it.

Now we're going to get into it other, but especially men, and the weight of responsibility here, and it's another thing that I always counsel when I meet with couples or anyone, is the weight of responsibility falls on men.

I know we read passages like this. The ladies have a tendency to be offended by it, and the ladies tend to get a little uncomfortable with it, but I want you to understand this. Even when we open up the New Testament, when we read these passages, and it seems like it's degrading.

It's not degrading at all. It is really exalting and lifting up to a higher standard because it is putting the weight of the responsibility on the man where it ought to be. And what it says here, if the man makes a vow, there's no getting out of it.

If a man commits, he has to keep. And it's his commitment level that is being reflected there. It is his commitment, not only to the people around him, but his commitment to the Lord is being reflected in

the word he has proclaimed.

[19 : 05] And it is to be a reflection of that, of the commitment that he has with the Lord and the commitment that he has because his commitment to the Lord will be displayed in his commitment to others around him.

Always. It will always be put on display and helps others realize where we're at. The third and the final thing that we see in this passage is probably the one that the bulk of this passage deals with. And it is this recognition we have here of the divine order. It is this recognition that God has set things up in an order. Now, spends a lot of times in this passage speaking to the ladies.

The first lady he speaks to is a lady who is young enough to be living at home. She is unmarried. And she is living at home with her father and she makes a vow where he says a rash statement. So in her worship and in her, maybe in her offerings, she makes a commitment to the Lord. And then he says, but if her father hears of this vow and says nothing, then the vow stands.

[20 : 06] But if her father hears of this vow and opposes it, then the vow is annulled, right? She's not held to it. She's not held responsible because the divine order was that the father would be the head of the household there and the father there would bear responsibility.

This is one thing we need to understand. Men, silence is agreement with. To not say anything is to endorse. Now, on the other side of that, I told my boys there are those trap questions, right?

And when your wife asks you, which one do you like? What do you think looks better on me? I say, don't answer that. I said, because if you say this one, the very next question is going to be, well, what's wrong with that one? And you're in the trap question, right? There are some points where you just need to be silent.

Don't say anything, just kind of nod your hand, go, anything looks great, honey, whatever you want to wear. You know, don't ever endorse something that's going to get you in trouble. I tell them that. But when the scripture says here is that if he is silent, he is endorsing it.

And we need to understand it. This is the great tragedy is when men begin to step outside of that divine order and take a passive role rather than an active role. Now, this is not domineering.

[21 : 15] We need to understand that, okay? There's a big difference in servant leadership and domineering leadership. This is not domineering, I have authority over you. No, this is active, I'm taking a part in your life and I'm concerned about you.

That's a big difference. And this is exactly what he's talking about here. A father that would look lovingly upon his daughter and say, I don't think that's wise for you and would speak against it or allow it to happen.

And then he talks of the lady who is engaged and she is in a vow while she is engaged and then after the engagement when she is married, her new husband hears about it. It really doesn't matter how long she has made that vow.

Now she has left her father's realm and she has entered into her husband's realm and the husband upon hearing it then has the opportunity to say something. If he doesn't, he endorses it.

Again, silence is agreement. But if he speaks against it then she is free from it. Now the widow or the divorced lady, he says, hey, she's on her own, right?

[22 : 16] She enters into a vow. She has to keep it. She's under her own world there and she enters and then he speaks of the husband here that has been married for some time and knows of the vow.

He hears of the vow and he doesn't say anything. He kind of wants to ponder on it for a little bit.

Well, while being silent he has endorsed it so now the vow is binding and is holding upon her and then he says but then after some time the husband says, you know what, on second thought I don't think that's good and you shouldn't do that.

Moses says, now the husband bears the guilt for that vow. You know what he was forcing to do? He was forcing husbands to take an active role immediately.

To be involved. To be concerned. He was ensuring that there would be open communication in the family. Everybody would know what was going on.

And again, this isn't a domineering thing. This isn't, we have to put this in connection with all what we see in scripture of the divine order because it tells us in the New Testament the husbands ought to love their wives as Christ loved the church and he gave himself up for her.

[23 : 33] Now, if that is not present, then nothing else is present. I know men who want to claim the wives should submit to their husbands and leave off that first part because it says, first let husbands

love their wives as Christ loved the church and he gave himself up for her and let, and then let the wives be obedient or submissive to their husbands.

I know guys that want to cut that first half off and say, oh, she needs to submit to me. And I always say, but go back and read as Paul Harvey said the rest of the story, right? You need to be loving her so much you die to yourself. Then you have earned the right to lead and then you have earned the right to carry.

Then you have earned the right lovingly because at that time, listen, when Christ comes to me and says, Billy Joe, I don't think this is good for you. I can accept that because he died for me.

And that's the divine order. That's the power that God is keeping open communication for. That people would all be actively involved and concerned and loving and worried enough instead of going, oh, well, that's her vow.

She can do whatever she wants to. Be involved. Be involved. Because there's power in what we say, but there's also power in what our loved ones have said.

[24 : 55] There's power in words. There's power in the commitments we make. And God says, you need to remember. He does this right, I mean, look where he puts this in, right?

Right after he tells us what it looks like to worship him and right before he tells them to go to war. He starts talking about what they say. And you know why that's important?

Because the very next passage, God's going to tell them to do something and they won't do it completely. Moses gets mad. He says, you didn't do everything God told you to do. There's power in words.

Whether or not we agree with it or not, there's divine power in those words. And we see this from Numbers chapter 30.

Thank you. A little bit different passage this evening. A little bit shorter. But I think very fitting for your pastor to be reminded.

[26 : 25] so, Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.