

# Touchstones of God's Economy

## Numbers (2)

Numbers, which follows Exodus and Leviticus in the books of the Pentateuch, covers the period of Israel's history from their encampment at Mount Sinai to their arrival at the plains of Moab facing Jericho. In the previous installment of "Touchstones," we saw that Numbers has three sections—encamping (1:1—9:14), journeying (9:15—20:29), and fighting (chs. 21—36)—that correspond to the three sections of the book of Ephesians in the New Testament. The first section, on the children of Israel's encamping, corresponds to the first section of Ephesians, the position of the church in Christ (chs. 1—3). The high point of this section in both Numbers and Ephesians is the threefold blessing of the Triune God spoken by the priests and the apostle Paul, respectively (Num. 6:22-27; Eph. 1:3-14). The second section, on the Israelites' journeying, corresponds to the second section in Ephesians, the living of the church in the Holy Spirit (4:1—6:9). The third section, on the children of Israel's fighting, corresponds to the third section in Ephesians, the church's responsibility in the Holy Spirit (6:10-20), that is, the spiritual warfare of the church as a corporate warrior for God's kingdom.

The character of the first and third sections is truly heavenly, spiritual, and victorious. The second section also begins in a wonderful way, with the children of Israel setting out under the guidance of the cloud and the two silver trumpets (Num. 10:1-10). The Ark of the Covenant went before "to seek out a resting place for them" (v. 33). However, as they continued their journey, they encountered frustrations, trials, and disciplinings, which exposed their actual condition as God's called race, namely, that they were fallen and altogether sinful, corrupt, and rebellious, "dead in...offenses and sins" (Eph. 2:1). Nevertheless, their failures afforded God the opportunity to reveal aspects of His divine economy in Christ for their enjoyment.

### Journeying and Failures

In their journeying, the children of Israel experienced

numerous failures. In Numbers 11 the children of Israel murmured about their misfortune, and the fire of Jehovah burned among them (vv. 1-3). Then the mixed multitude with them led the assembly to lust exceedingly after meat (v. 4). They remembered the fish, cucumbers, melons, leeks, onions, and garlic that they had enjoyed for free in Egypt, conveniently forgetting their harsh servitude (v. 5). They abhorred the manna that Jehovah was sending them from heaven and lusted for the worldly taste of Egyptian food (v. 6). Moses complained to Jehovah that he was not able to

bear the people alone; it was a weight too heavy for him (v. 14). In response, God instructed Moses to bring seventy elders of the children of Israel to the entrance of the Tent of Meeting (v. 16). There God took the Spirit that was upon Moses and put Him on the seventy, who then began to prophesy (v. 25). However, two of

their number remained in the camp and did not come out to the Tent of Meeting (v. 26). When Joshua complained to Moses that the two were also prophesying (v. 28), Moses said, "Are you jealous for my sake? Oh that all Jehovah's people were prophets, that Jehovah would put His Spirit upon them!" (v. 29). To prophesy is not mainly to predict but to speak for God. In the New Testament sense, it is to speak for the Lord and to speak forth the Lord, that is, to minister Christ to people. Prophesying requires the divine life, through the divine love, to fill it as its content (1 Cor. 14:1). Moses desired that all the people of Israel would be prophets, those who spoke for God. This word itself, a great prophesy uttered by Moses, is fulfilled in God's New Testament economy by the prophesying of the believers in the church meetings (vv. 24, 31).<sup>1</sup>

In Numbers 12 Miriam and Aaron slandered Moses because he took a Cushite woman as a wife. They questioned whether God spoke only through Moses, who was their younger brother. On the surface, what they said seemed reasonable, as they were also prophets (Exo. 4:10-16; 6:30—7:1; 15:20). However, the real issue concerned who had God's oracle. Although Miriam and Aaron were used by God to speak for Him, neither of them was God's spokesman.

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Their slander, taking Moses' apparent mistake in marriage as an excuse, exposed their rivalry with Moses in the matter of speaking for God. This was a serious matter. As God's spokesman, Moses was the deputy authority of God, to whom Miriam and Aaron should have submitted (3:10-18; 7:1). Instead, they rebelled, and Miriam, probably the instigator of the slander, was judged by God, became leprous, and had to remain outside the camp of Israel for seven days. Moreover, God said that Moses was faithful in all His house and that he beheld the form of Jehovah (Num. 12:7-8). In this way Moses was a testimony and a prefigure of Christ, the Son of God (Heb. 3:2, 5).

**I**n Numbers 13 Jehovah brought the children of Israel to the border of the good land. The children of Israel could have easily crossed the border and entered into the land. But God knew their heart and, in order to test them, purposely gave word to Moses to send twelve men to spy out the land. The test exposed them to the uttermost. They returned and reported accurately: "The land into which you sent us...indeed flows with milk and honey, and this is its fruit [clusters of grapes, pomegranates, and figs]" (v. 27). But ten of them doubted that Israel could defeat the inhabitants of the land:

The people who dwell in the land are strong, and the cities are fortified and very large; and we also saw the descendants of Anak there...The land...is a land that eats up its inhabitants...And there we saw the Nephilim (the descendants of Anak are part of the Nephilim); and we were like grasshoppers in our own sight, and so we were in their sight. (vv. 28, 32-33)

The Nephilim, who dwelt in the land of Canaan, were giants, descendants of the mixture of fallen angels with the human race that occurred at the time of Noah (Gen. 6:4). God sent the flood to exterminate Noah's generation, because that generation had become impure. For the sake of the fulfillment of His purpose, God could not allow such a human race to exist. For the same reason He commanded the children of Israel to take over the land of Canaan and utterly destroy every living being there so that the human race could be cleared up (Deut. 7:1-2).

The ten spies' report exposed that the children of Israel did not believe in God. Rejecting Caleb's exhortation—"Let us go up at once and possess it; for we are well able to overcome it" (Num. 13:30)—they lifted up their voice and cried, wept all night, and purposed to appoint a captain for themselves who would lead them back to Egypt. The root of the children of Israel's unbelief was that they did not care for God but cared only for themselves. In everything and in every way they were for themselves, not for God's interests. Because of this, they did not believe in God and became abhorrent to Him. God alone is the source of faith. If we would have faith, we must learn to care for God's interests

and not for our benefit. Although, through Moses' intercession, God eventually forgave the people, He nevertheless punished them by causing them to wander in the wilderness for forty years and die there without entering into the promised land. Rather, their "little ones" (14:3), whom they said would become plunder to the inhabitants of Canaan, would enter into the good land to fulfill God's intention.

God's judgment was also His word to the children of Israel. However, they immediately rejected it and attempted to enter the land of Canaan, disregarding Moses' warning that Jehovah was not with them. The Amalekites and the Canaanites came and struck down the people. This exposed that the children of Israel were not only a rebellious people but also a stubborn people. They transgressed the word of God because of their unbelief.

At this point in their journey, Jehovah reminded the children of Israel of the ordinances concerning the offerings and the Sabbath (ch. 15). After the failures in the preceding chapters, the children of Israel needed to be brought back to the way to be kept in a proper relationship with God. If they had kept these ordinances, they would have been rescued from further turmoil.

**I**n Numbers 16 the children of Israel had a more serious failure in the rebellion of Korah, Dathan, Abiram, and two hundred fifty leaders of the assembly, well-known men. The rebels accused Moses and Aaron of elevating themselves above the congregation of Jehovah. The root cause of this rebellion was ambition, the struggle for power and for a higher position. Ambition undermines God's plan and damages His people. Throughout the centuries many problems among God's people have been caused by ambition (Matt. 20:20-28; 3 John 9-11).

God judged Korah, Dathan, and Abiram with an unnatural death when the earth opened and swallowed them up, with all their households and possessions. Nevertheless, according to Numbers 26:11, the sons of Korah must not have joined the rebellion but, rather, separated themselves from it. Thus, they were spared the judgment of the rebellion. Among Korah's descendants was Samuel, who became a great prophet and a Nazarite priest, and Heman, a psalmist and singer in the temple under David's arrangement (1 Chron. 6:33-37; Psa. 88, title; 1 Chron. 6:31-33). In this we can see God's unlimited mercy and grace.

God judged the two hundred fifty leaders by consuming them with fire. They had been instructed to bring incense in their censers before the Tent of Meeting. After the judgment the men's censers were gathered and beaten out as a covering for the altar. God's judgment on the two hundred fifty men signifies the judgment of the cross on all of man's service to God that is according to man's opinions, by his flesh, and in rivalry with others (1 Cor. 3:12-17).

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Following His judgment of the rebellion, God vindicated His ordination of Aaron as high priest in Numbers 17. He instructed the children of Israel to take twelve rods of the leaders of the tribes of Israel, including Aaron's, and to place them in the Tent of Meeting before the Testimony overnight. The next day Aaron's rod had budded; it had also produced blossoms and bore ripe almonds. The budding of Aaron's rod was a vindication that Aaron was the one accepted by God as having authority in the God-given ministry of the priesthood. The budding rod typifies Christ as the resurrected One, who not only buds but also blossoms and bears fruit to maturity. Such a Christ imparts life to others. Today Christ is still budding, and we are the fruit, the almonds, of His budding.

**T**he rebellion of Korah was an attack on the priesthood of Aaron and his household. In Numbers 18 God gave a definite word regarding the service of the Levites and the priesthood of Aaron and his sons and also regarding the reward that they received as the compensation for their service. The reward given to the priests was a strong vindication of the priesthood in addition to the vindication by the budding rod.

In Numbers 19 Jehovah instructed Moses to prepare the water for impurity. The water was prepared by an offering of a red heifer without defect. The blood of the heifer was sprinkled toward the Tent of Meeting, and the heifer was burned together with cedar wood, hyssop, and scarlet. The ashes that remained were kept and added later to running water in a vessel to produce water for cleansing from impurity. The heifer signifies the redeeming Christ, and its red color signifies the likeness of the flesh of sin, which is for bearing man's sin outwardly. Although Christ was in the likeness of the flesh of sin, He did not have the sinful nature (Rom. 8:3). Cedar wood signifies Christ in His dignified humanity; hyssop, Christ in His humbled humanity; and scarlet strands, redemption in its highest significance. The high and dignified Christ and the lowly and humbled Christ in His redemption were elements in the composition of the water for impurity.

*Impurity* here does not refer to sin but to death: "Whoever touches a dead person, the body of a human being who has died, and does not purify himself, defiles the tabernacle of Jehovah; and that person shall be cut off from Israel. Because the water for impurity was not sprinkled upon him, he shall be unclean; his uncleanness is still on him" (Num. 19:13). Death issues from sin, and sin is the root of death (Rom. 5:12). Because of the sin of Israel's rebellions, death

became prevailing among the children of Israel (Num. 16:49). Thus, there was the need for the water for impurity. Only the working of Christ's redemption, through His dignified and humbled humanity, with His death and the Spirit of His resurrection (living water, 19:17), could heal and cleanse the situation from the uncleanness of death. In the water for impurity, signifying the Holy Spirit in the resurrection of Christ, there is the efficacy of Christ's redemption with the washing power of the Spirit of His resurrection.

The children of Israel experienced further failures in Numbers 20, 21, and 25. On their journey in the book of Numbers, the children of Israel had a number of failures, the result of which was death, not only of the common Israelites but also of Miriam (20:1), Aaron (vv. 23-29), and Moses (27:12-14). This should serve as a warning to us to be careful concerning failures, because failures result in death, and some even in physical death (Acts 5:1-11; 1 Cor. 11:27-30; 1 John 5:16).

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**I**n Numbers 20:2-13 the children of Israel contended with Moses and with God for water. However, Jehovah was not angry with the people. He told Moses, "Take the rod, and gather the assembly, you and Aaron your brother, and speak to the rock before their eyes, so that it yields its water" (v. 8). The rock typifies the

crucified and resurrected Christ, and the water that flowed from it typifies the Spirit (1 Cor. 10:4). The Spirit as the living water flowed out of the crucified Christ (John 19:34; 7:39). In Exodus 17:1-7 Moses struck the rock with his rod, and water flowed out for the people to drink. This signifies Christ being struck (crucified) by the authority of the law. The second time, however, Moses was only to speak to the rock. This signifies that since Christ has been crucified and the Spirit has been given, there is no need for Christ to be crucified again; that is, there is no need for the rock to be struck again. To receive the living water from the crucified Christ, we need only to "take the rod" and "speak to the rock." To take the rod is to identify with the crucified Christ in His death and to apply the death of Christ to ourselves and our situation. To speak to the rock is to speak a direct word to Christ as the smitten rock, asking Him to give us the Spirit of life based on the fact that the Spirit has already been given to us (1 Cor. 12:3). Then we will receive the living Spirit as the bountiful supply of life (Phil. 1:19).

Moses, however, allowed his anger to boil over due to the people's provocation. Contrary to God's command in Numbers 20, he struck the rock. In being angry with the people

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when God was not angry, and in striking the rock in disobedience to God's word, Moses misrepresented God in His holy nature and acted against God's economy. Thus, he offended both God's holy nature and His divine economy. Because of this, even though he was intimate with God and considered a companion of God, Moses lost the right to enter the good land. This is also a warning to us. In all that we say and do concerning God's people, our attitude must be according to God's holy nature, and our actions must be according to His divine economy. This is to sanctify God. Otherwise, in our words and deeds we will rebel against God and offend Him.

The children of Israel spoke once more against Jehovah and Moses in 21:4-9, again regarding the matter of water and food. This time Jehovah sent fiery serpents among them, and the people were bitten by them so that many died. When the people repented and Moses prayed for them, Jehovah told Moses to make a serpent of bronze and set it on a pole. Everyone who was bitten and looked at the bronze serpent would live. Bronze signifies judgment. The bronze serpent is a type of the Lord Jesus, who was in the likeness of the flesh of sin and became our Substitute and Replacement on the cross to bear God's judgment for us. When we "look at" Him, that is, when we believe into Him, we have eternal life (John 3:14-15).

### Further Journeying

Numbers 20—21 and 33 recount the further journeying of the children of Israel. In 21:10-20 their journey took them to the top of Pisgah, which looks down upon the desert. On the way they camped at Beer, meaning "a well," where Jehovah gave the people water. This time, however, the children of Israel needed to dig for the water. Verse 18 says, "The well, which the leaders sank, / Which the nobles of the people dug, / With the scepter, with their staffs." Whereas the rock from which flowed water in Numbers 20 signifies the crucified Christ, the well at Beer typifies Christ within us (John 4:11-12, 14). The digging of the well signifies the digging away of the "dirt," the barriers in our heart—our mind, emotion, will, and conscience—so that the Spirit as the living water may spring up within us and flow freely.

Numbers 33 records the forty-two stations of Israel's journey from Rameses in Egypt to the plains of Moab beside the Jordan River at Jericho. These forty-two stations typify the forty-two generations from Abraham to Christ recorded in Matthew 1:1-17. The goal of the forty-two stations was the good land, and the goal of the forty-two generations was Christ. The correspondence here indicates that God's intention is to bring all His people into the good land, which typifies Christ as the goal (Deut. 8:7-10; Col. 1:12). In the Old Testament, God's people first journeyed and then arrived at the goal. In the New Testament the believers, having been baptized into Christ, are already in

the goal and walk in Him as the good land (Rom. 6:3; Gal. 3:27; 1 Cor. 1:30; Col. 2:6).

### Fighting

Prior to entering the land of Canaan, the children of Israel fought against and defeated three kings who stood in their path: the king of Arad, the king of the Amorites, and the king of Bashan (Num. 21:1-3, 21-35). In ancient times the gate of a city stronghold was its key strategic point. The three kings were "gate guards" on the east side of the Jordan, guarding the kingdom of darkness in the land of Canaan, for Satan. In order for the children of Israel to enter into the good land, they had to pass through the territory controlled by these kings and fight against them, destroy them, and take over their territory. This signifies that in order to enjoy the unsearchably rich Christ, the church must defeat and take over the territory of the enemies signified by these kings.

In the typology of the Old Testament, Canaan has two aspects: on the positive side, it is a land of riches, typifying the all-inclusive Christ with His unsearchable riches (Deut. 8:7-10; Col. 1:12; Eph. 3:8). On the negative side, it is a land full of evil kings, signifying the aerial part of Satan's kingdom of darkness. As the ruler of this world and the ruler of the authority of the air, Satan has his kingdom that includes the principalities, powers, and rulers of the darkness of this world (Col. 1:13; Eph. 2:2; 6:12). The Canaanites typify the fallen angels, who followed Satan in his rebellion and became the powers, rulers, and authorities in his kingdom (Rev. 12:4, 7; Dan. 10:13, 20). The children of Israel's fighting against the Canaanites for the possession of the good land typifies the spiritual warfare of the church, including all the members, against the "spiritual forces of evil in the heavenlies" for the purpose that the saints may enjoy Christ as the all-inclusive land (Eph. 6:12). The church must be such a corporate warrior, fighting against Satan's aerial forces so that God's people may gain more of Christ for the building up of the Body of Christ, establishing and spreading the kingdom of God so that Christ can come back to inherit the earth.

Following the defeat of the three kings on the east side of the Jordan, Balak, the king of Moab, hired Balaam, a Gentile prophet, to harass Israel in Numbers 22 through 25. In this, Satan changed his way of fighting and took a religious way. Balaam received Jehovah's consent, although contrary to His will, to cooperate with the Moabites and Midianites in their plan to harass Israel. Balaam directed Balak to build altars and offer sacrifices. It is not clear to whom they offered—to Jehovah or to Baal (22:40). Balaam worshipped in God's way, but he mixed the worship of God with the worship of an idol.

Balak hired Balaam to curse God's people, but Balaam,

speaking on behalf of God, blessed them. He spoke four parables. In the first, concerning Israel, he declared, "Here is a people who live alone / And do not reckon themselves among the nations. / Who can count the dust of Jacob, / Or number the fourth part of Israel? / Let me die the death of the upright, / And let my latter end be like theirs!" (23:9-10). In God's sight, His people were holy. In his second parable Balaam declared that God "has not beheld iniquity in Jacob, / Nor has He seen trouble in Israel; / Jehovah their God is with them, / And the shout of a king is among them" (v. 21). God's view of His people is that they are perfect. In the third parable Balaam said, "How fair are your tents, O Jacob, / Your tabernacles, O Israel!" (24:5). God regards His people as altogether beautiful. Finally, Balaam spoke one more time, this time concerning Christ: "There shall come forth a Star out of Jacob, / And a Scepter shall rise out of Israel, / And He shall crush the corners of Moab / And break down all the sons of Sheth" (v. 17). In this prophecy the Star is the heavenly Christ, and the Scepter is the Christ with power and authority. The greatest blessing to the children of Israel is Christ. As the Star and the Scepter, Christ will be the almighty One with all-inclusive power and authority. Balaam's first three parables concern the church, which is sanctified, perfect, and beautiful, whereas his fourth parable contains a prophecy concerning Christ. The church is sanctified, perfect, and beautiful when it is full of Christ. Christ is the content, the constituent, and every part of the church as the new man (Col. 3:11).

Since Balak was unable to defeat Israel through the use of religion, Balaam counseled him to induce Israel to fall into fornication and idolatry, committing fornication with the daughters of Moab and sacrificing to their gods (Num. 31:16; 25:1-3). God's view of Israel according to Balaam's parables is altogether positive, but according to their actual condition in their adamic nature, they were fallen and sinful, a people full of fornication and idolatry. It is the same with the believers in Christ: on the one hand, they are a heavenly people; on the other hand, they are, in themselves, fallen and sinful, worthy to be judged by God (Eph. 2:6; Phil. 3:20; Col. 3:1-3; Rom. 7:18; Eph. 2:1-3).

**B**ecause of Midian's harassment in Numbers 25, Jehovah instructed Moses to strike Midian, which the children of Israel did in Numbers 31. Between these two chapters a number of matters are dealt with: the renumbering of the people in preparation for inheriting the land, signifying the enjoyment of Christ through fighting (ch. 26);

God's statute for the daughters of Zelophehad to inherit their father's allotment of the land in the absence of a male heir (27:1-11), signifying the desire to inherit Christ as grace given to us by God; statutes concerning the offerings to be offered to God for His food, which typifies Christ, who is God's food, showing that God's food is related to the daily, weekly, monthly, and yearly life of His people (chs. 28—29); and statutes concerning vows, signifying our volunteering ourselves to God in a definite and particular way (ch. 30).

### The Prearrangement of the Distribution of the Good Land

Numbers 32 and 34—36 show the prearrangement of the distribution of the good land. This typifies the sharing of the enjoyment of the rich Christ (Col. 1:12; 1 Cor. 1:2, 9). In Numbers 32 two tribes of Israel, Reuben and Gad, requested the land on the east side of the Jordan for their inheritance. Although this request was not wrong, they were not right in wanting to receive what God had promised according to their own choice. Moreover, they would inherit this land without crossing the river Jordan, which signifies that the old man was not dealt with and buried (Rom. 6:3-6). Eventually, their land was the first part of the land of Israel to be taken over by the Gentile invaders from the east (1 Chron. 5:25-26).

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**I**n Numbers 33:50—34:29 there are the statutes for inheriting the land and the designation of the boundaries of the land. The best part of the land was across the Jordan (34:1-13). It was a land surrounded by two seas—the Mediterranean Sea and the Dead Sea—and a river—the Jordan—which all signify the death of Christ. This indicates that the enjoyment of Christ is closely related to His death. The enjoyment of Christ must be in the sphere, the territory, of His death (Phil. 3:7-11). The good land "rose up" from the waters that bordered it on either side, which indicates that it was an elevated, uplifted land. The good land thus signifies the resurrected and ascended Christ, the heavenly Christ, who has entered into us in His resurrection and whose riches we enjoy in His ascension (John 20:22; Eph. 2:6; Col. 3:1-4).

Numbers 35 deals with the cities given to the Levites and the cities of refuge, which typify the all-inclusive Christ as the embodiment of the redeeming God, into whom mistaken sinners can flee for refuge. Numbers 36, the final chapter of the book, gives a further statute concerning daughters

in Israel inheriting the good land, requiring a daughter who inherited from her father to marry within the same tribe (v. 8). This statute may have been fulfilled by the marriage of Mary, the mother of the Lord Jesus, to Joseph (Matt. 1:16; Luke 3:23), indicating that this statute was ordained by God for Christ's incarnation.

### Conclusion

It is meaningful to consider the book of Numbers in its relationship with the books of Exodus and Leviticus. All are books of typology and that portray God's need for a people to be saved and go on with Him to enjoy His Christ, receive His revelation, and be built up with Him as the processed Triune God. God's people must also be formed into an army that journeys with Him and fights together with Him. Moreover, these books show that God's people need to be disciplined by passing through certain difficulties and undergoing different kinds of frustrations.

In Exodus Israel was redeemed from God's judgment by the passover and saved from Egypt by the saving power of the Triune God. Then they enjoyed the heavenly provision and divine care in their initial journey in the wilderness. They arrived at Mount Sinai, where they were given the law as a portrait of what God is in His attributes. There they received the divine revelation and training in knowing God and in being built together with God as His dwelling place on earth for His expression and testimony. In Leviticus the divine revelation continues in the aspect of the building up of the priesthood for the divine service. Numbers records how God's chosen and redeemed people were

formed into a priestly army to journey with God and fight with Him for His interest on earth, while also passing through various trials for their purification. At the end of Numbers God's people arrived at the entrance of the land of Canaan. They were now ready to cross the river Jordan, enter Canaan, consume its inhabitants, and possess the land promised by the faithful God.

As we have seen, those who were preparing to enter Canaan were not the first generation of those who had come out of Egypt. Rather, with the exception of Caleb and Joshua, all those qualified to take possession of the land were the younger ones, the second generation. This younger generation received the benefit of all that the first generation experienced. With a rich inheritance and a strong background, they were qualified to be formed into an army to fight with God and for God for the accomplishing of His economy. The history of Israel portrayed in these three books is a full type of the history of the church in her mystical union with the all-inclusive Christ, the embodiment of the processed and dispensing Triune God, for the accomplishing of God's eternal economy (1 Cor. 5:6-8; 10:1-13; Heb. 3:7—4:13).

by Jim Batten

### Note

<sup>1</sup>See footnote 1 in Numbers 11:29 in the *Recovery Version of the Bible*. This article draws extensively on the outline and footnotes in the *Recovery Version of the Bible*, Living Stream Ministry, 2003.

### The Ark in Its Journeying in Numbers

Numbers 4:5 says, "When the camp sets out, Aaron and his sons shall go in, and they shall take down the veil of the screen and cover the Ark of the Testimony with it." Since the Ark of the Testimony typifies Christ, the veil also typifies Christ. Whereas the Ark of the Testimony typifies Christ as God's testimony, the veil covering the Ark typifies Christ becoming flesh. Hebrews 10:20 says, "Which entrance He initiated for us as a new and living way through the veil, that is, His flesh." This verse says plainly that the veil is Christ's flesh. When the Tent of Meeting moved, the Ark needed the covering of the veil, indicating that when God moves, His testimony—Christ—is never separated from the fact of His becoming a man in His incarnation. In the last two thousand years God's move on the earth has never been separated from Christ's incarnation. Therefore, wherever we preach Christ, we should preach not only that Christ is God or the Savior but also that this One who is God's testimony is the Word becoming flesh, God becoming a man (John 1:14).

At the time of the apostle John, some denied that Christ came in the flesh; hence, the apostle said, "Every spirit which confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is of God, and every spirit which does not confess Jesus is not of God; and this is the spirit of the antichrist" (1 John 4:2-3). John's word indicates that those who deny that Christ has come in the flesh are antichrist. Such a denial is to desire the Ark without the veil...We need Christ as the Ark of the Testimony and need to confess that He has been covered by a veil, that He has come in the flesh.

From *The Collected Works of Witness Lee*, 1960, vol. 1, "Synopsis of Numbers," pp. 187-188