

## A Worship Study Guide for Individuals, Groups and Families: For the week of March 25, 2018

Note to Discussion Leaders: Have members read the Bible passage in the group meeting. This is a “worship discussion” guide, and our reflections and applications are grounded in Scripture. Read through this guide before meeting with the group. You do not need to work through the whole guide. Decide which points would be most helpful for the time of meeting together, and use them as a starting point for your time together.

### Numbers 20:1-29 “Perseverance Through Sin”

- **Is there a situation in your life right now where it is difficult to persevere? Why?**

<sup>1</sup> And the people of Israel, the whole congregation, came into the wilderness of Zin in the first month, and the people stayed in Kadesh. And Miriam died there and was buried there.

<sup>2</sup> Now there was no water for the congregation. And they assembled themselves together against Moses and against Aaron. <sup>3</sup> And the people quarreled with Moses and said, “Would that we had perished when our brothers perished before the LORD! <sup>4</sup> Why have you brought the assembly of the LORD into this wilderness, that we should die here, both we and our cattle? <sup>5</sup> And why have you made us come up out of Egypt to bring us to this evil place? It is no place for grain or figs or vines or pomegranates, and there is no water to drink.” <sup>6</sup> Then Moses and Aaron went from the presence of the assembly to the entrance of the tent of meeting and fell on their faces. And the glory of the LORD appeared to them, <sup>7</sup> and the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, <sup>8</sup> “Take the staff, and assemble the congregation, you and Aaron your brother, and tell the rock before their eyes to yield its water. So you shall bring water out of the rock for them and give drink to the congregation and their cattle.” <sup>9</sup> And Moses took the staff from before the LORD, as he commanded him.

<sup>10</sup> Then Moses and Aaron gathered the assembly together before the rock, and he said to them, “Hear now, you rebels: shall we bring water for you out of this rock?” <sup>11</sup> And Moses lifted up his hand and struck the rock with his staff twice, and water came out abundantly, and the congregation drank, and their livestock. <sup>12</sup> And the LORD said to Moses and Aaron, “Because you did not believe in me, to uphold me as holy in the eyes of the people of Israel, therefore you shall not bring this assembly into the land that I have given them.” <sup>13</sup> These are the waters of Meribah, where the people of Israel quarreled with the LORD, and through them he showed himself holy.

- **Thirty-eight years have passed since the children of Israel were previously at Kadesh ([Numbers 14:2-3](#)) and almost everyone who was over the age of twenty at that time has since died in the wilderness. Who now dies and is buried at Kadesh (1)? Why is this person**

**significant to Israel? ([Exodus 15:20](#), [Numbers 26:59](#), [Micah 6:4](#))**

- **When the next generation of Israelites comes to Kadesh on the border of the Promised Land, they gather together against Moses and Aaron (2). Why (3-5)?**
- **The congregation contends with Moses and Aaron as they had many times before ([Exodus 17:1-2](#), [Numbers 14:2-3](#)). What is Moses and Aaron's characteristic response (6)? ([Numbers 14:5](#), [16:4](#), [22](#), [45](#)) What is the Lord's solution to this contention (8)?**
- **What does Moses say to the congregation as he and Aaron gather them together before the rock (10)? ([Psalm 106:32-33](#))**
- **What does Moses do to the rock (11)? Was Moses instructed to do this (8)? What happens when Moses does this (11)?**
- **How did the Lord judge Moses & Aaron at the rock (12)? ([Numbers 27:14](#), [Deuteronomy 1:37](#), [3:26](#))**

<sup>14</sup> Moses sent messengers from Kadesh to the king of Edom: “Thus says your brother Israel: You know all the hardship that we have met: <sup>15</sup> how our fathers went down to Egypt, and we lived in Egypt a long time. And the Egyptians dealt harshly with us and our fathers. <sup>16</sup> And when we cried to the LORD, he heard our voice and sent an angel and brought us out of Egypt. And here we are in Kadesh, a city on the edge of your territory. <sup>17</sup> Please let us pass through your land. We will not pass through field or vineyard, or drink water from a well. We will go along the King's Highway. We will not turn aside to the right hand or to the left until we have passed through your territory.” <sup>18</sup> But Edom said to him, “You shall not pass through, lest I come out with the sword against you.” <sup>19</sup> And the people of Israel said to him, “We will go up by the highway, and if we drink of your water, I and my livestock, then I will pay for it. Let me only pass through on foot, nothing more.” <sup>20</sup> But he said, “You shall not pass through.” And Edom came out against them with a large army and with a strong force. <sup>21</sup> Thus Edom refused to give Israel passage through his territory, so Israel turned away from him.

- The people of Edom were the descendants of Esau, Jacob's brother. Moses sends messengers to the king of Edom requesting safe passage through his land. What do the messengers commit to the king of Edom if he allows them safe passage (17)?
- What is the king of Edom's response to Moses' request for safe passage through his land (18)?
- The messengers make a second commitment to the king of Edom if he will allow them safe passage. What is it (19)?
- What is the response of the Edomites to the request for safe passage by the children of Israel (20-21)?
- Moses attempted to lead Israel through Edom without the Lord's guidance or blessing. But his failure did thwart God's purposes for Israel. Where in your life do you need grace to trust that the failure of man cannot undo the purposes of God?

<sup>22</sup>And they journeyed from Kadesh, and the people of Israel, the whole congregation, came to Mount Hor. <sup>23</sup>And the LORD said to Moses and Aaron at Mount Hor, on the border of the land of Edom, <sup>24</sup>"Let Aaron be gathered to his people, for he shall not enter the land that I have given to the people of Israel, because you rebelled against my command at the waters of Meribah. <sup>25</sup>Take Aaron and Eleazar his son and bring them up to Mount Hor. <sup>26</sup>And strip Aaron of his garments and put them on Eleazar his son. And Aaron shall be gathered to his people and shall die there." <sup>27</sup>Moses did as the LORD commanded. And

they went up Mount Hor in the sight of all the congregation. <sup>28</sup>And Moses stripped Aaron of his garments and put them on Eleazar his son. And Aaron died there on the top of the mountain. Then Moses and Eleazar came down from the mountain. <sup>29</sup>And when all the congregation saw that Aaron had perished, all the house of Israel wept for Aaron thirty days.

- The Lord tells Moses and Aaron that Aaron would be gathered to his people. Why is Aaron, the high priest and brother of Moses, not going to be allowed to enter the Promised Land (24)?
- Because Aaron is going to be gathered to his people, the Lord instructs Moses to transfer the role of the high priest from Aaron to Aaron's son Eleazar. How is this done (25-28)?
- Aaron dies on the top of Mount Hor four months after his sister Miriam dies at Kadesh ([Numbers 33:38](#)). What does the congregation do to mark Aaron's death (29)?
- The phrase "gathered to his people" is the usual way of describing the death of a righteous person at a ripe old age. It is used of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Aaron, and Moses. What happens to a person who dies and is "gathered to his people"? ([Matthew 22:31-32](#))
- Take time to pray together. Do you need power to persevere? Ask God. Do you need faith to trust God's promises & provision? Ask Him. Do you need grace to repent and trust Jesus? Ask Him

## Sermon Notes

This week, Steve Shelby preached on [Numbers 20:1-29](#).

- The Two Deaths
  - The death of Miriam (1) and the death of Aaron (22-29)
  - What do they signal to us?
  - The old generation is going away
- Reasons to Rejoice
  - The failed negotiation with Edom (14-21)
  - What does it signal to us?
  - The LORD is largely absent from this negotiation
  - The rock and water (2-13)
  - What do they signal to us?
  - Human leaders are sinners and will let us down

Questions about this week's study guide? Contact Kevin Greene, [kevin@wepc.org](mailto:kevin@wepc.org)  
To hear sermons and access past study guides visit [www.wepc.org/archivedsermons](http://www.wepc.org/archivedsermons)