

*Leviticus and Numbers*

*Exodus was followed by two other lawcodes, each with its own emphasis, and each with its own interruptive middle section. Here are those two.*

(26) Leviticus begins with some purely sacrificial rules,

(27) is interrupted by the story of Nadab and Abihu, who are killed for an improper sacrifice, and concludes with . . .

(28) The “Holiness Code,” Leviticus 17-27. This is widely thought to be a single composition, but that proves not to be the case.

(29) Numbers is partly a rewrite of the primary exit narrative in Exodus. It exaggerates the people’s disobedience, which was already obvious in Exodus.

(30) Balaam, the middle episode in Numbers, exists in two forms, the seemingly earlier one interpolated into the later. Balaam’s talking ass, from the intruded second version, is one of the best remembered tales in the Bible.

(31) Tribal Lands. The last part of Numbers anticipates Joshua by giving an outline of how the conquered land will be divided among the Twelve Tribes. Much of Numbers is a revised preparation for the Conquest.

(32) The Daughters of Zelophehad. These court cases, both interpolated in Numbers, and thus later than the Conquest preparations, show two stages in the gaining of legal status by women.



*The growth of Biblical law will see its furthest development in the Decalogue Code of Deuteronomy. The next section will consider it in detail, along with the later material which was added at both ends of it.*