

have famine for 7 years or whether he would have 3 mo. of military terrible losses or three days of pestilence. And David said, I would rather fall into the hand of the Lord than of any enemy. Let's have the pestilence. And so they had the pestilence, and any one of these three would have made the census of no further value for the military purpose for which David was making it. So that there is no contradiction between God ~~ordering~~ ^{ordering} a census in the book of Num. and punishing David for having a census because of the time when David ~~when~~ had the census and the purpose for which it was. The purpose to go beyond what the Lord desired in His freeing of the Israelites and establishing them.

And so the census here again reminds us that no act is wrong in itself. The moral law applies to the application of the law, to its purpose, to its relationship. And it is very vital that we see exactly how the moral law does apply and that we examine our purposes in everything we do and ~~that~~ ^{that} we make sure we are seeking God's glory not our own glory ~~or~~ ^{nor} our own perfection (?)

But now No. 2 is a question. Why is the census included in the Bible, and specifically at this point? Why does Num. begin with a census? ^{well} Of course there is ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~historical reason.~~ The OT gives us the history of what happened. And so the fact that the census was taken is a matter of importance and interest to us. But the OT is not simply a history. The OT gives us God's will for our lives. The NT tells us ^{these} things were done for our ~~edifica/ edification~~ ^{edification}, they were done for our learning. Many things that ~~were done~~ ^{were done} in OT times ~~were~~ ^{are} not recorded. That which ~~is~~ ^{was} recorded is either a vital part of the organic progress of God's plan or it is recorded to convey some ~~bl~~ ^{bl} blessing to us. And so we are justified in saying, What is the meaning for us of the book of Num. ~~here~~ ^{here}? the account of this start of the main portion of the Israelites pilgrimage journey beginning with this careful ~~sentence~~ ^{sentence}? So we say,

No. 3, It is the Christian's duty to make a true appraisal of his own abilities. We find that our Lord Jesus Christ brought this out very clearly in Luke 14:28-33, Where ^{of} He said, For which/you intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he have sufficient to finish it? ~~Last chapter after this~~