

The Book of Numbers

"Take a census of the whole Israelite community by their clans and families, listing every man by name, one by one." Numbers 26:2

Bible Study – September 21, 2022

Book of Numbers *facts*:

- **Moses** is the source and primary author of the book of Numbers, which is the fourth volume in the Pentateuch (Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy).
- **Date of Writing:** The Book of Numbers was written between 1440 and 1400 B.C.

- **Purpose of Writing: The message of the Book of Numbers is universal and timeless.**
- **It reminds believers of the spiritual warfare in which they are engaged, for Numbers is the book of the service and walk of God's people.**

Primary Theme of Numbers

- **The holiness of God is continued from the book of Leviticus into the book of Numbers, which reveals God's instruction and preparation of His people to enter the Promised Land of Canaan.**
- **The words "all these things happened to them for examples" refers to the sin of the Israelites and God's displeasure with them.**

Theme and Purpose

- The theme of Numbers is the gradual fulfillment of the promises to Abraham that his descendants would be the people of God and would occupy the land of Canaan.
- The book shows the reality of God's presence with Israel in the pillar of cloud and fire over the tabernacle.

- **It also shows how Israel's unbelief delays the entry into Canaan and costs many lives. Nevertheless, by the end of the book, Israel is ready to enter the land.**

Key Themes

- There were four elements to God's promise to Abraham in [Genesis 12:1–3](#), and they all play a role in [Numbers](#):
- I. The land. Numbers describes Israel's journey toward the Promised Land.
- II. Descendants. Abraham had been promised that his descendants would be as many as the stars of heaven (Gen. 15:5).

- **III. Covenant relationship with God - “You shall be my people, and I will be your God.” The Lord’s presence with Israel is constantly highlighted.**
- **IV. Blessing to the nations - Nations who treat Israel generously by blessing her will themselves be blessed.**

- **Continues the history of the people of Israel after they escaped from Egypt, and it tells what happened during the forty years when the Israelites lived in the desert on their journey from Mount Sinai to Canaan.**
- **This book is named "Numbers" because it begins with Moses counting the Israelites to find out the number of people in each of Israel's twelve tribes.**

Numbers can
be divided
into three
parts.



Part 1

- **(1.1 - 10.10) the Lord has Moses count the people, and then he gives Moses instructions for setting up Israel's camp and for assigning the Levites their duties.**
- **This part ends with everyone celebrating Passover and offering sacrifices to the Lord.**

Part 2

- **The second part (10.11 -21.20) includes events that happened while the Israelites were on their way to Moab, a nation living east of the Jordan River.**
- **This was a very difficult journey through the desert, and the people often complained and even rebelled against Moses and against God.**

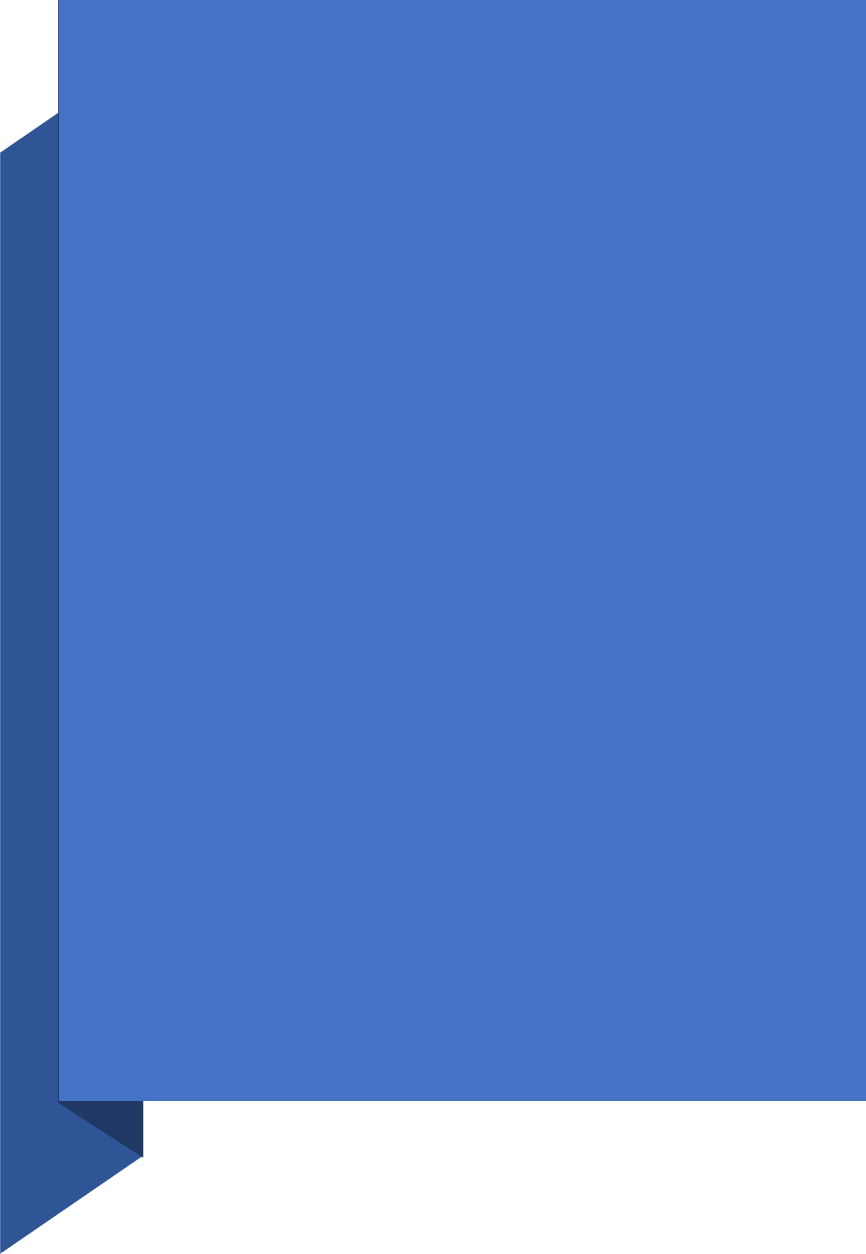
- **The Israelites refused to enter Canaan after hearing about the nations that lived there, and so the Lord punished the Israelites by making them remain in the desert for forty years.**
- **This part of Numbers ends with the people camped in Moab near Mount Pisgah.**

Part 3

- **(21.21 -36.13) begins with the Israelites conquering the land just east of the Jordan River from the border with Moab in the south to Lake Galilee in the north.**
- **Then the King of Moab hired the foreign prophet Balaam to curse the people of Israel. But the Lord told Balaam to bless the Israelites, and Balaam obeyed.**

Practical Application:

- **Just as the Israelites wandered in the wilderness 40 years because of their rebellion, so too does God sometimes allow us to wander away from Him and suffer loneliness and lack of blessings when we rebel against Him.**

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- **But God is faithful and just, and just as He restored the Israelites to their rightful place in His heart, He will always restore Christians to the place of blessing and intimate fellowship with Him if we repent and return to Him (1 John 1:9).**
 - **In Romans 11:22, Paul speaks about the "goodness and severity of God." That, in a nutshell, is the message of Numbers.**

- **The severity of God is seen in the death of the rebellious generation in the wilderness, those who never entered the Promised Land.**
- **The goodness of God is realized in the new generation.**
- **God protected, preserved, and provided for these people until they possessed the land.**

**This reminds us of the justice and love of God,
which are always in sovereign harmony.**



KEY
→ Possible route of the Exodus

An 11 Hour journey became a 4 decades journey

