

## SESSION 5

### ("NUMBERS")

#### I. PRAYER/REVIEW

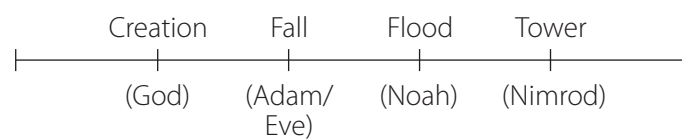
#### II. PANORAMA OF THE BIBLE

##### A. Twelve Movements

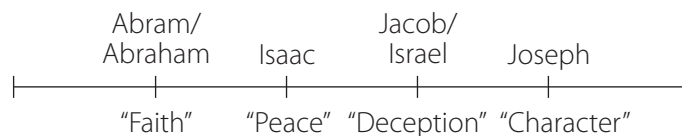
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|--------------------------|------------------------|
| 1. Prologue              | 7. Kingship: Divided   |
| 2. Patriarchs            | 8. Exile               |
| 3. Redemption/Wanderings | 9. Return from Exile   |
| 4. Conquest              | 10. Life of Christ     |
| 5. Apostasy              | 11. Church Age         |
| 6. Kingship: United      | 12. Final Consummation |

##### B. Timeline

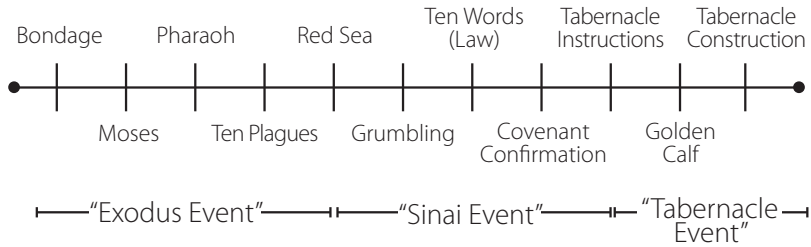
###### 1. Movement #1: "Prologue"



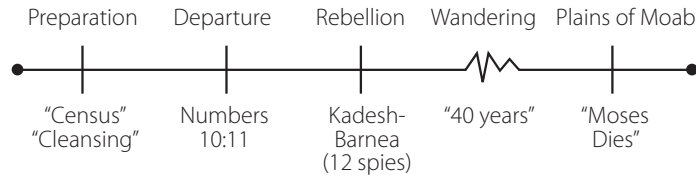
###### 2. Movement #2: "Patriarchs"



### 3. Movement #3: "Redemption"



### Movement #3: "Wanderings"

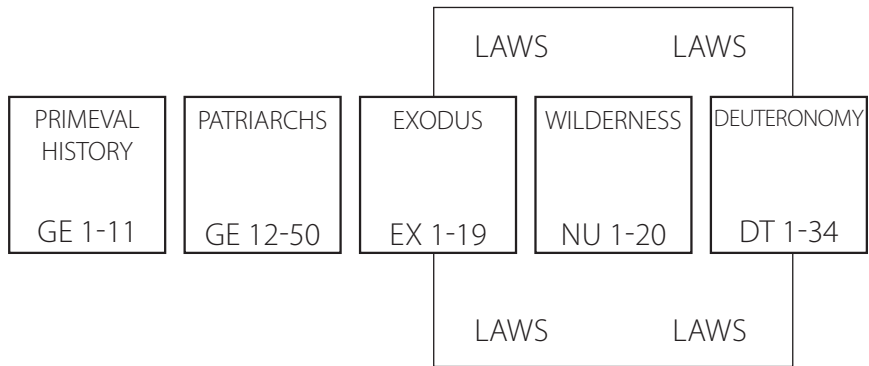


### III. Movement #3: "Redemption/Wanderings"

#### A. Pentateuch (Books of Moses)

PENTATEUCH				
Genesis	Exodus	Leviticus	Numbers	Deuteronomy
Selection	Redemption	Sanctification	Direction	Instruction
Abrahamic Covenant	Mosaic Covenant	Holiness Code	Journey Rebellion	Covenant Reinstruction

B. Chronological Flow (Pentateuch)  
(Sailhamer, 33)



IV. BOOK OF NUMBERS: OVERVIEW

A. Charted

BOOK OF NUMBERS		
Order	Disorder	Reorder
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Census and Assignments (1-4)</li> <li>Purity and Separation (5-9)</li> <li>Preparation and Departure (10)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Defection and Rejection (11-14)</li> <li>Rebellion and Authority (15-20)</li> </ul> <p>End: Old Generation</p>	<p>New Generation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conflicts and Victories (21-32)</li> <li>Warning and Encouragement (33-36)</li> </ul>
1	10	11
		20
		21
		36
At Sinai (few weeks)	To Moab (about 39 years)	At Moab (few months)

B. Contrasted to Book of Leviticus  
(adapted from Norm Geisler, Popular Survey of OT, 73-74)

<b>Leviticus</b>	<b>Numbers</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• worship</li><li>• purity</li><li>• ceremonial</li><li>• fellowship with God</li><li>• sacrifice required</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• walk</li><li>• pilgrimage</li><li>• historical</li><li>• faithfulness to God</li><li>• obedience expected</li></ul>

C. Distinctiveness (of “Numbers”)

1. “Numbers” emphasizes the importance of obedience. A redeemed nation (“Exodus”) has been instructed in sacrifice and separation (“Leviticus”) in order to obediently go (“Numbers”) and possess their covenantal Promised Land (“Genesis”).
2. “Numbers” contains two (2) important censuses (Num 1, 26) of Israel’s fighting men.
3. “Numbers” narrates the story of the rebellion and lack of faith at Kadesh-Barnea. As a result that generation would not be allowed to enter the Promised Land.
4. “Numbers” contains noteworthy events and words:
  - a. That Moses married a Cushite woman (Num 12)
  - b. That the “prophet-for-hire” Balaam’s donkey speaks (Num 22)
  - c. That the institution of the Nazirite vow is established (Num 6)
  - d. That the rebellion of Korah and others opposing Moses’ leadership fails (Num 16)
  - e. That Aaron’s rod (staff) buds (Num 17)
  - f. That Moses and Aaron’s lack of faith and anger in striking the rock (for water) causes their disqualification for entering the Promised Land (Num 20)

- g. That a bronze snake was made to avert judgment through poisonous snakes (Num 21; cf. John 3)
- h. That Joshua was appointed to succeed Moses as the new leader (Num 27)

## V. BOOK OF NUMBERS: BIBLICAL DEVELOPMENT

The exposition of "Numbers" follows the outline structure of the "Book of Numbers" chart (previous section).

### A. Order (Chapters 1-10)

#### 1. Census and Assignments (Num 1:1-4:49)

Numbers 1:1-3

*The LORD spoke to Moses in the tent of meeting in the Desert of Sinai on the first day of the second month of the second year after the Israelites came out of Egypt. He said:<sup>2</sup>"Take a census of the whole Israelite community by their clans and families, listing every man by name, one by one.<sup>3</sup>You and Aaron are to count according to their divisions all the men in Israel who are twenty years old or more and able to serve in the army."*

The nation would soon leave (by God's direction) the mountain at Sinai. The journey would be to the land promised to Abraham and his descendants. But that land, though promised, would also have to be taken by military might (and God's powerful presence). Thus, it was necessary to number those of military age ("who are able to serve in the army").

#### a. Census (1:1-54)

Capable and trusted men were appointed to assist Moses and Aaron (1:4-5). The census revealed a round number of 603,550 fighting men from the twelve tribes. (Levi is not counted here.)

Reuben	46,500	Ephraim	40,500
Simeon	59,300	Manasseh	32,200
Gad	45,650	Benjamin	35,400
Judah	74,600	Dan	62,700
Issacher	54,400	Asher	41,500
Zebulun	57,400	Naphtali	53,400

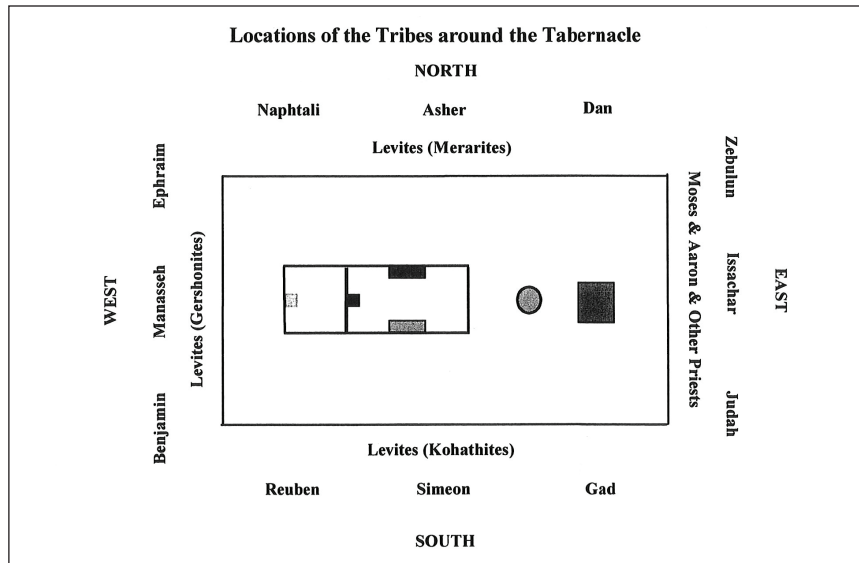
The large numbers represented here cause some interpreters problems, prompting many to explain the members as actually smaller. The crux revolves around the Hebrew word, 'eleph. It can be translated "thousand" or even "clan" or "military unit." By translating Reuben's numbers differently, it is suggested by these scholars that Reuben had 46 military units totaling 500 men. Until more definite evidence gains broad scholarly consensus, it will be best to see the numbers as literal.

b. Arrangement (2:1-34)

Numbers 2:1-2

***The LORD said to Moses and Aaron:<sup>2</sup>"The Israelites are to camp around the tent of meeting some distance from it, each of them under their standard and holding the banners of their family."***

Following is a visual representation of how Israel would camp as well as set out on their journey. Note the centrality of the Tabernacle. Also, when traveling, the vanguard and rearguard had the strongest forces.



c. Levites (3:1-4:49)

Numbers 3:5-13

*The LORD said to Moses, <sup>6</sup>“Bring the tribe of Levi and present them to Aaron the priest to assist him. <sup>7</sup>They are to perform duties for him and for the whole community at the tent of meeting by doing the work of the tabernacle. <sup>8</sup>They are to take care of all the furnishings of the tent of meeting, fulfilling the obligations of the Israelites by doing the work of the tabernacle. <sup>9</sup>Give the Levites to Aaron and his sons; they are the Israelites who are to be given wholly to him. <sup>10</sup>Appoint Aaron and his sons to serve as priests; anyone else who approaches the sanctuary is to be put to death.”*

*<sup>11</sup>The LORD also said to Moses, <sup>12</sup>“I have taken the Levites from among the Israelites in place of the first male offspring of every Israelite woman. The Levites are mine, <sup>13</sup>for all the firstborn are mine. When I struck down all the firstborn in Egypt, I set apart for myself every firstborn in Israel, whether human or animal. They are to be mine. I am the LORD.”*

- (1) The Levites were not numbered in the men of war census (Num 2). They were assigned to the care and transportation of the Tabernacle. Within the greater tribe of Levi were the sons of Aaron, the priestly lineage. Thus, the Levites assisted the Aaronic priesthood who performed the priestly duties within the Tabernacle.
- (2) Aaron had four sons, but due to Abihu and Nadab's death after offering "unauthorized" (strange) fire, the priestly duties fell to Eleazer and Ithamar during the lifetime of Aaron (3:2-4). Priestly duties were held by Aaron's descendants (Ex. 29:29).
- (3) Should anyone approach the Tabernacle to perform priestly duties other than Aaron and his descendants, they were to be put to death (3:10).
- (4) The firstborn male belonged to the Lord.

Exodus 13:11-13

*"After the LORD brings you into the land of the Canaanites and gives it to you, as he promised on oath to you and your ancestors, <sup>12</sup>you are to give over to the LORD the first offspring of every womb. All the firstborn males of your livestock belong to the LORD. <sup>13</sup>Redeem with a lamb every firstborn donkey, but if you do not redeem it, break its neck. Redeem every firstborn among your sons.*

The Lord informed Moses that from this point, the Levites would take the place of the offered firstborn (Num 3:11-13).

Numbers 3:14-16, 39

*The LORD said to Moses in the Desert of Sinai, <sup>15</sup>"Count the Levites by their families and clans. Count every male a month old or more." <sup>16</sup>So Moses counted them, as he was commanded by*



*the word of the LORD...<sup>39</sup>The total number of Levites counted at the LORD's command by Moses and Aaron according to their clans, including every male a month old or more, was 22,000.*

Numbers 3:38

*Moses and Aaron and his sons were to camp to the east of the tabernacle, toward the sunrise, in front of the tent of meeting. They were responsible for the care of the sanctuary on behalf of the Israelites. Anyone else who approached the sanctuary was to be put to death.*

**Numbers 4** catalogs the specific duties of three Levitical families: the Kohathites (4:4-20), the Gershonites (4:21-28), and the Merarites (14:29-33).

- (1) Kohathites (includes Moses, Aaron, priests):  
"care of the most holy things" (4:4) which included the tent and furniture; they camped on south side of the Tabernacle.
- (2) Gershonites:  
responsibility to "work and carry burdens" (4:24); this included interior curtains, coverings, and curtains of the courtyard; they camped on the west side.
- (3) Merarites:  
"perform service at the Tent of Meeting" (4:30); they transported frames, crossbars, posts, and bases plus posts and bases of the courtyard tent; they camped on the north side.

## 2. Purity and Separation (5:1-9:23)

The first four chapters have recorded the instructions for preparing to depart: the census, the arranging of the tribes around the Tabernacle, the priestly assignments.

Beginning in Numbers 5 through 9, the focus is on the preparation of individuals. The nation (composed, of course, of individuals) was to be a holy nation (Ex. 19:5). Therefore, regulations and stipulations to ensure a holy people were given.

a. Purity in the camp (5:1-4)

Purity required ceremonial cleanness.

Insight:

"Because the presence of God dwelled in the tabernacle, the encampment around it was considered holy ground. Therefore, ritually unclean people could not remain in its precincts" (F.B. Huey, Numbers, 28).

b. Restitution for wrongs (5:5-10)

Numbers 5:5-7

*The LORD said to Moses, <sup>6</sup>"Say to the Israelites: 'Any man or woman who wrongs another in any way and so is unfaithful to the LORD is guilty<sup>7</sup> and must confess the sin they have committed. They must make full restitution for the wrong they have done, add a fifth of the value to it and give it all to the person they have wronged.*

c. Test of an unfaithful wife (5:11-31)

Previously, the guilty party was expected to confess his sin (5:7). But what if there was suspicion without proof? What followed was the accepted procedures to take.

Insight:

"The point of this section is the importance of maintaining purity in the marriage relationship to preserve God's blessings on Israel. Marriage is the most basic interpersonal relationship" (Constable, Notes on Numbers, 17).

d. Nazirite Vow (6:1-21)

Numbers 6:1-6

*The LORD said to Moses, <sup>2</sup>“Speak to the Israelites and say to them: ‘If a man or woman wants to make a special vow, a vow of dedication to the LORD as a Nazirite, <sup>3</sup>they must abstain from wine and other fermented drink and must not drink vinegar made from wine or other fermented drink. They must not drink grape juice or eat grapes or raisins. <sup>4</sup>As long as they remain under their Nazirite vow, they must not eat anything that comes from the grapevine, not even the seeds or skins. <sup>5</sup>“During the entire period of their Nazirite vow, no razor may be used on their head. They must be holy until the period of their dedication to the LORD is over; they must let their hair grow long. <sup>6</sup>“Throughout the period of their dedication to the LORD, the Nazirite must not go near a dead body.*

- (1) The Hebrew word, “nazar,” means “to separate.” The making of a Nazirite vow included literal separation from certain things for a period of time, thus highlighting the symbolism of separation from sin or from the world or perhaps best, separation unto God. “Throughout the period of his separation he (or she) is consecrated to the Lord” (6:8).
- (2) The vow required:
  - (a) abstention from wine, vinegar, fermented drink; also grape juice, grapes, or raisins (3-4)
  - (b) no cutting of one’s hair (5)
  - (c) no touching of a corpse (6)

Are there symbolic reasons for the prohibitions?  
Perhaps seen in:

- (a) Separation from pleasure

- (b) Separation from vanity
- (c) Separation from uncleanness (sin, death)

Reflection:

The principle of separation in order to fulfill a vow may find parallel (in part) in the call of Jesus to a “vow of discipleship.”

Mark 8:34-38

*Then he called the crowd to him along with his disciples and said: “Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. <sup>35</sup>For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me and for the gospel will save it. <sup>36</sup>What good is it for someone to gain the whole world, yet forfeit their soul? <sup>37</sup>Or what can anyone give in exchange for their soul? <sup>38</sup>If anyone is ashamed of me and my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of Man will be ashamed of them when he comes in his Father’s glory with the holy angels.”*

- e. Aaronic Blessing (6:22-26)

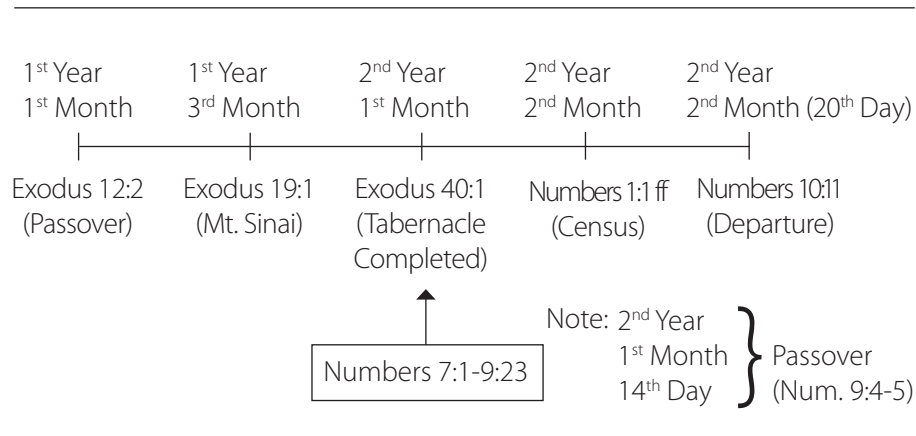
Numbers 6:22-26

*The LORD said to Moses, <sup>23</sup>“Tell Aaron and his sons, ‘This is how you are to bless the Israelites. Say to them: <sup>24</sup> ““The LORD bless you and keep you; <sup>25</sup>the LORD make his face shine on you and be gracious to you; <sup>26</sup>the LORD turn his face toward you and give you peace.”*

- f. Dedication of the Tabernacle (7:1-9:23)

This section of the Book of Numbers is out of chronological sequence. These offerings, setting apart of the Levites and Passover observance, occurred (in time) before the events of “Numbers.”

A brief chronological overview follows:



- (1) Offerings at the dedication of the Tabernacle (7:1-89)

This flashback demonstrated the generosity of the leadership in giving toward the completion of the Tabernacle.

Numbers 7:10-11

*When the altar was anointed, the leaders brought their offerings for its dedication and presented them before the altar. <sup>11</sup>For the LORD had said to Moses, "Each day one leader is to bring his offering for the dedication of the altar."*

- (2) Lighting the golden lampstand (8:1-4)

Instructions had been given to construct this lampstand (Ex. 25:32-40) which had been completed (Ex. 37:17-24). At this point in the greater narrative, the lampstands are lit.

Note the importance of lampstands in the Book of Revelation (1:19-20; also chapters 2-3).

(3) Setting apart of the Levites (8:5-26)

Numbers 8:5-6

*The LORD said to Moses: <sup>6</sup>“Take the Levites from among all the Israelites and make them ceremonially clean.”*

While the priests had been consecrated earlier (Lev. 8), the Levites must also be separated unto special service appropriate to their assigned duties.

(4) Observing Passover (9:1-23)

Numbers 9:4-5

*So Moses told the Israelites to celebrate the Passover, <sup>5</sup>and they did so in the Desert of Sinai at twilight on the fourteenth day of the first month. The Israelites did everything just as the LORD commanded Moses.*

Refer back to the previous diagram on the chronological flow of events (p. 125).

Numbers 9:15-17

*On the day the tabernacle, the tent of the covenant law, was set up, the cloud covered it. From evening till morning the cloud above the tabernacle looked like fire. <sup>16</sup>That is how it continued to be; the cloud covered it, and at night it looked like fire. <sup>17</sup>Whenever the cloud lifted from above the tent, the Israelites set out; wherever the cloud settled, the Israelites encamped.*

Insight:

"As in Exodus 13-14, when God was leading and protecting them, a great presence covers the tabernacle, appearing as a cloud by day and as a fire by night, signifying the holy Presence of God. It is an exciting time for Israel. The tabernacle has been constructed and filled with the glorious Presence of God. Their worship system is well organized, with the Levites to lead them." (Baker Illustrated Bible Handbook, 96)

### 3. Preparation and Departure (10:1-36)

#### a. Pre-launch preparation: silver trumpets (1-10)

Numbers 10:1-7

*The LORD said to Moses:<sup>2</sup>"Make two trumpets of hammered silver, and use them for calling the community together and for having the camps set out.<sup>3</sup>When both are sounded, the whole community is to assemble before you at the entrance to the tent of meeting.<sup>4</sup>If only one is sounded, the leaders-the heads of the clans of Israel-are to assemble before you.<sup>5</sup>When a trumpet blast is sounded, the tribes camping on the east are to set out.<sup>6</sup>At the sounding of a second blast, the camps on the south are to set out. The blast will be the signal for setting out.<sup>7</sup>To gather the assembly, blow the trumpets, but not with the signal for setting out.*

#### b. Departure from Sinai (10-36)

The Israelites had arrived at Mt. Sinai "in the third month after the Israelites left Egypt" (Ex 19:1). They departed about 11 months later.

Numbers 10:11-13

*On the twentieth day of the second month of the second year, the cloud lifted from above the tabernacle of the covenant law. <sup>12</sup>Then the Israelites set out from the Desert of Sinai and traveled from place to place until the cloud came to rest in the Desert of Paran. <sup>13</sup>They set out, this first time, at the LORD's command through Moses.*

The departure was orderly and obedient to God's command. Contrast this to the drunken revelry of the golden calf incident:

Exodus 32:25

*Moses saw that the people were running wild and that Aaron had let them get out of control and so become a laughingstock to their enemies.*

Numbers 10:33-36

*So they set out from the mountain of the LORD and traveled for three days. The ark of the covenant of the LORD went before them during those three days to find them a place to rest. <sup>34</sup>The cloud of the LORD was over them by day when they set out from the camp. <sup>35</sup>Whenever the ark set out, Moses said, "Rise up, LORD! May your enemies be scattered; may your foes flee before you." <sup>36</sup>Whenever it came to rest, he said, "Return, LORD, to the countless thousands of Israel."*

B. Disorder (Chapters 11-20)

The prospects looked good. Israel has been redeemed, given a new covenant, instructed in the Law, and made necessary preparations for approaching and worshiping a holy God. The departure will take the new people to the Promised Land (cf. Abrahamic Covenant – Gen 12:1-3; 17:1-8). The journey should have taken a few weeks (it was an eleven day journey to Kadesh-Barnea on the southernmost



border (cf. Deut 1:2). In fact, it would be almost forty years before they arrived.

#### 1. Defection and Rejection (Num 11:1-14:45)

Numbers 11-14 chronicles the beginning of the journey. The Israelites will first travel from Sinai to Kadesh-Barnea. Because of sin and rebellion, the arrival at Moab will take close to 40 years. The three stages of the journey are given:

- Stage One: Sinai to Kadesh-Barnea (Num 12-14)
- Stage Two: Wanderings in the desert (Num 15-19)
- Stage Three: Kadesh-Barnea to Moab (Num 20-36)

##### a. Complaining and judgment (11:1-3)

Numbers 11:1-3

*Now the people complained about their hardships in the hearing of the LORD, and when he heard them his anger was aroused. Then fire from the LORD burned among them and consumed some of the outskirts of the camp. <sup>2</sup>When the people cried out to Moses, he prayed to the LORD and the fire died down. <sup>3</sup>So that place was called Taberah, because fire from the LORD had burned among them.*

The complaining and grumbling occurred “three days” into the journey. This parallels the grumbings that had happened three days after crossing the Red Sea (Ex 15:22-24). This sin consists of unbelief (lack of faith) and ingratitude.

This is the 8th of 10 murmurings in Exodus/Numbers (see Session 1, p. 28).

b. Complaining and quail (11:4-35)

(1) The complaint (4-9)

Numbers 11:4-6

*The rabble with them began to crave other food, and again the Israelites started wailing and said, "If only we had meat to eat! <sup>5</sup>We remember the fish we ate in Egypt at no cost-also the cucumbers, melons, leeks, onions and garlic. <sup>6</sup>But now we have lost our appetite; we never see anything but this manna!"*

The "rabble" refers to non-Israelites who with their complaining, infected the Israelites (4). Ingratitude and a loss of perspective seized the people.

(2) The middle man (10-15)

Moses found himself caught in the middle between the grumbings of the people and the "exceedingly angry" Lord (10). Feeling the heavy weight of responsibility for the multitudes, Moses complains to God (11-13):

- "Why have you (Lord) brought this trouble?"
- "What have I (Moses) done?"
- "Why do you tell me to carry them . . .?"
- "Where can I get meat for all these people?"

In frustration, Moses cried out, "I cannot carry all these people by myself; the burden is too heavy for me . . . put me to death right now" (14-15).

(3) The Lord's response (16-23)

Moses was instructed to find 70 men "known to you as leaders and officials" and have them share the leadership burden.

Moses was instructed to tell the people to

consecrate themselves in preparation for eating meat. In fact, the people would eat meat for a whole month “until it comes out of your nostrils and you loathe it” (20).

Psalm 106:14-15

***In the desert they gave in to their craving; in the wilderness they put God to the test.<sup>15</sup> So he gave them what they asked for, but sent a wasting disease among them.***

God’s promise of provision stretches even the faith of the leader, Moses. Yet the Lord’s reply, “Is the Lord’s arm too short? You will now see whether or not what I say will come true for you” (23).

(4) The Spirit upon the seventy (24-30)

To assist Moses, the Lord “put the Spirit on the seventy elders” (25). As a sign of authenticity, the elders prophesied (likely, praised God in a significant way) but never again.

(5) The provision of quail (meat) (31-35)

Note a series of miracles:

- Miraculous wind (31)
- Quail driven toward the people (31)
- Quail drop to three feet above the ground (31)
- Miraculous number of quail (32)
- Plague judgment (see Ps. 106:14-15 above)

c. Complaining and Miriam/Aaron (12:1-16)

Numbers 12:1-3

***Miriam and Aaron began to talk against Moses because of his Cushite wife, for he had married a Cushite.<sup>2</sup> “Has the LORD spoken only through Moses?” they asked. “Hasn’t he also spoken through us?” And the LORD heard this.<sup>3</sup> (Now***

*Moses was a very humble man, more humble than anyone else on the face of the earth.)*

Why this complaint from Moses' sister and brother?

Possible reasons follow:

- Concern that Moses had lost credibility to lead (Cushite wife)
- Disillusioned with Moses' leadership (marriage an excuse)
- Envy over Moses' position

Yet, through it all, Moses maintains his humility (3).

Numbers 12:6-8

*he said, "Listen to my words: "When there is a prophet among you, I, the LORD, reveal myself to them in visions, I speak to them in dreams. <sup>7</sup>But this is not true of my servant Moses; he is faithful in all my house. <sup>8</sup>With him I speak face to face, clearly and not in riddles; he sees the form of the LORD. Why then were you not afraid to speak against my servant Moses?"*

God vindicates the leadership of Moses once again. Miriam (who likely led out in the complaint against Moses) was judged with leprosy for seven days (12:9-16).

Challenges against Moses' authority follow a pattern as outlined in the Pentateuch. Sailhamer (Pentateuch, 387) charts it as follows:



d. Exploring Canaan and Rejection (13:1-14:45)

The ensuing story of the spies, their report and the people's lack of faith in the Lord's ability to provide the land marked the turning point (hinge) in the Book of Numbers.

(1) Exploration (13:1-25)

Numbers 13:1-2

*The LORD said to Moses, <sup>2</sup>"Send some men to explore the land of Canaan, which I am giving to the Israelites. From each ancestral tribe send one of its leaders."*

Twelve men, one man for each of the twelve tribes was selected (4-15). Of note, was Hoshea of the tribe of Ephraim (named by Moses, "Joshua" – 13:16) and Caleb of the tribe of Judah.

Numbers 13:17-20, 25

*When Moses sent them to explore Canaan, he said, "Go up through the Negev and on into the hill country. <sup>18</sup>See what the land is like and whether the people who live there are strong or weak, few or many. <sup>19</sup>What kind of land do they live in? Is it good or bad? What kind of towns do they live in? Are they unwalled or fortified? <sup>20</sup>How is the soil? Is it fertile or poor? Are there trees in it or not? Do your best to bring back some of the fruit of the land." (It was the season for the first ripe grapes.) . . .*

*At the end of forty days they returned from exploring the land.*

(2) Report (13:26-33)

Numbers 13:26-29

*They came back to Moses and Aaron and the*

*whole Israelite community at Kadesh in the Desert of Paran. There they reported to them and to the whole assembly and showed them the fruit of the land. <sup>27</sup>They gave Moses this account: "We went into the land to which you sent us, and it does flow with milk and honey! Here is its fruit. <sup>28</sup>But the people who live there are powerful, and the cities are fortified and very large. We even saw descendants of Anak there. <sup>29</sup>The Amalekites live in the Negev; the Hittites, Jebusites and Amorites live in the hill country; and the Canaanites live near the sea and along the Jordan."*

The spies delivered their commissioned report (26-27). Then they added their assessment that the inhabitants were too strong, their cities too fortified, the task too difficult. But one of the twelve courageously spoke up.

Numbers 13:30-32

*Then Caleb silenced the people before Moses and said, "We should go up and take possession of the land, for we can certainly do it."*

*<sup>31</sup>But the men who had gone up with him said, "We can't attack those people; they are stronger than we are." <sup>32</sup>And they spread among the Israelites a bad report about the land they had explored. They said, "The land we explored devours those living in it. All the people we saw there are of great size."*

Caleb and Joshua (cf. 14:6) alone had faith in God's ability to provide what He had promised. The ten-spy majority report was flawed and faithless. The two-spy minority report was inspired and faithful.

Insight:

“Trust and obey” is a significant principle found in this story and many others throughout the Scriptures. The theological question revolves around human enablement vs. divine provision. This will become acutely clear in the Book of Joshua.

### (3) Rebellion (14:1-19)

Numbers 14:1-4

*That night all the members of the community raised their voices and wept aloud.<sup>2</sup> All the Israelites grumbled against Moses and Aaron, and the whole assembly said to them, “If only we had died in Egypt! Or in this wilderness!<sup>3</sup> Why is the Lord bringing us to this land only to let us fall by the sword? Our wives and children will be taken as plunder. Wouldn’t it be better for us to go back to Egypt?”<sup>4</sup> And they said to each other, “We should choose a leader and go back to Egypt.”*

- (a) The people have lost heart (cf. Deut 1:28).
- (b) The people have begun to grumble again (this is the 9th of 10 times in Exodus/Numbers – note previous discussion).
- (c) The people have become mutinous and desire to choose a new leader. Nehemiah 9:17 notes, “They refused to listen and failed to remember the miracles you (God) performed among them. They became stiff-necked and in their rebellion appointed a leader in order to return to their slavery.”

Numbers 14:8-9

*Moses and Aaron “fell face down.” Joshua and Caleb appealed to the people to trust in God’s provision. The Israelites must not “rebel against the Lord;” they must “not be afraid of the people of the land.”*

Numbers 14:10-11

*But the whole assembly talked about stoning them. Then the glory of the LORD appeared at the tent of meeting to all the Israelites.*

*<sup>11</sup>The LORD said to Moses, "How long will these people treat me with contempt? How long will they refuse to believe in me, in spite of all the signs I have performed among them?"*

This rejection was so serious that God proposed to Moses that He strike down the rebels and start over a new nation through Moses (12).

Moses appeals to God for mercy based upon:

- God's reputation (if the Egyptians hear) (13)
- God's reputation (if other nations hear) (14-16)
- God's display of strength/patience (17-19)

*"The Lord is slow to anger, abounding in love and forgiving sin and rebellion" (18)*

- God's past forgiveness/pardon (19)

(4) Punishment (14:20-45)

Numbers 14:20-23

*The LORD replied, "I have forgiven them, as you asked. <sup>21</sup>Nevertheless, as surely as I live and as surely as the glory of the LORD fills the whole earth, <sup>22</sup>not one of those who saw my glory and the signs I performed in Egypt and in the wilderness but who disobeyed me and tested me ten times- <sup>23</sup>not one of them will ever see the land I promised on oath to their ancestors. No one who has treated me with contempt will ever see it.*



Insight:

"The result of Israel's lack of faith was nevertheless severe. Except for Joshua and Caleb, that whole generation who did not believe died in the wilderness (Num 14:29); that is, that generation who was to dwell in the wilderness for forty years until they died – 14:33."  
(Sailhamer, Pentateuch, 389)

Numbers 14:34-35

*"For forty years—one year for each of the forty days you explored the land—you will suffer for your sins and know what it is like to have me against you.<sup>35</sup>I, the LORD, have spoken, and I will surely do these things to this whole wicked community, which has banded together against me. They will meet their end in this wilderness; here they will die."*

The spies who gave a bad report before the nation died (judgment) of a plague (36:37). The people belatedly attempted to repent ("we have sinned" – 40) and enter the land by military force. But Moses warned them that it was doomed to failure; "Because you have turned away from the Lord, he will not be with you and you will fall by the sword" (43).

Numbers 14:44-45

*Nevertheless, in their presumption they went up toward the highest point in the hill country, though neither Moses nor the ark of the LORD's covenant moved from the camp.<sup>45</sup>Then the Amalekites and the Canaanites who lived in that hill country came down and attacked them and beat them down all the way to Hormah.*

## 2. Rebellion and Authority (15:1-20:29)

The previous rebellion will lead to wandering in the wilderness for almost forty years.

### a. Supplementary offerings (15:1-41)

To prepare a nation for eventual life in the Promised Land, a series of seven laws were given (1-31). The last law was related to “defiant sin.” The successive story of the Sabbath-breaker and his being put to death illustrated the seventh law. The institution of wearing tassels on one’s garments was a reminder of the importance of the Sabbath and a safeguard against the defiant sin of breaking the Sabbath (37-41).

### b. Rebellion of Korah (16:1-50)

Numbers 16:1-3

*Korah son of Izhar, the son of Kohath, the son of Levi, and certain Reubenites—Dathan and Abiram, sons of Eliab, and On son of Peleth—became insolent <sup>2</sup>and rose up against Moses. With them were <sup>250</sup> Israelite men, well-known community leaders who had been appointed members of the council. <sup>3</sup>They came as a group to oppose Moses and Aaron and said to them, “You have gone too far! The whole community is holy, every one of them, and the LORD is with them. Why then do you set yourselves above the LORD’s assembly?”*

There are no historical markers to identify when this rebellion occurred, save that it was during the wilderness wanderings. Miriam and Aaron had rebelled previously against Moses’ leadership (Num 12); now a new challenge was issued. Jensen ([Numbers](#), 71) notes, “the issue was the same: out of sheer jealousy, God’s leaders were challenged in their divinely appointed positions.” Moses saw the rebellion differently.

Numbers 16:11

***"It is against the LORD that you and all your followers have banded together. Who is Aaron that you should grumble against him?"***

The direct challenge was to the authority of Aaron and the priests. The clear instructions at Sinai were being controverted. Korah and his followers were envious of the established priesthood (8-10). They sought perceived power and prestige.

When Moses summoned two of the leaders, Dathan and Abiram, they refused to come. Further, they charged Moses with inept leadership. Moses responded.

Numbers 16:15

***Then Moses became very angry and said to the LORD, "Do not accept their offering. I have not taken so much as a donkey from them, nor have I wronged any of them."***

Moses, then issued a challenge to Korah and the rebellious leaders to appear before the Lord (16-18). When God appeared to be ready to judge not only Korah and his men, but also the assembly, Moses and Aaron pleaded for leniency with the assembly. God replied.

Numbers 16:23-24

***Then the LORD said to Moses,<sup>24</sup> "Say to the assembly, 'Move away from the tents of Korah, Dathan and Abiram.'"***

Numbers 16:28-32

***Then Moses said, "This is how you will know that the LORD has sent me to do all these things and that it was not my idea:<sup>29</sup>If these men die a natural death and suffer the fate of all mankind, then the LORD has not sent me.<sup>30</sup>But if the LORD***

*brings about something totally new, and the earth opens its mouth and swallows them, with everything that belongs to them, and they go down alive into the realm of the dead, then you will know that these men have treated the LORD with contempt.”<sup>31</sup> As soon as he finished saying all this, the ground under them split apart <sup>32</sup>and the earth opened its mouth and swallowed them and their households, and all those associated with Korah, together with their possessions.*

Surprisingly, some remaining in the congregation grumbled again against Moses and Aaron. Another judgment caused 14,700 to die of a plague (46-49).

c. Budding of Aaron’s rod (17:1-13)

One further incident will confirm God’s choice of Aaron for the high priestly duties.

Numbers 17:1-5

*The LORD said to Moses, <sup>2</sup> “Speak to the Israelites and get twelve staffs from them, one from the leader of each of their ancestral tribes. Write the name of each man on his staff. <sup>3</sup>On the staff of Levi write Aaron’s name, for there must be one staff for the head of each ancestral tribe. <sup>4</sup>Place them in the tent of meeting in front of the ark of the covenant law, where I meet with you. <sup>5</sup>The staff belonging to the man I choose will sprout, and I will rid myself of this constant grumbling against you by the Israelites.”*

Aaron’s staff was the lone one that budded (even supernaturally produced almonds). God commanded Moses to place it in front of the Testimony “as a sign to the rebellious” (10).

d. Further instructions for priests and Levites (18:1-19:22)

(1) Clarification of priestly duties (18:1-7)

(2) Offerings for priests/Levites (18:8-32)

(3) Water of cleansing (19:1-22)

Laws for purification were given. The ashes of the red heifer were used for ceremonial rites of cleanness.

e. Water from the rock incident (20:1-29)

Numbers 20:1-5

*In the first month the whole Israelite community arrived at the Desert of Zin, and they stayed at Kadesh. There Miriam died and was buried. <sup>2</sup>Now there was no water for the community, and the people gathered in opposition to Moses and Aaron. <sup>3</sup>They quarreled with Moses and said, "If only we had died when our brothers fell dead before the LORD! <sup>4</sup>Why did you bring the LORD's community into this wilderness, that we and our livestock should die here? <sup>5</sup>Why did you bring us up out of Egypt to this terrible place? It has no grain or figs, grapevines or pomegranates. And there is no water to drink!"*

(1) Apart from "the first month," there is no clear historical marker as to when this event occurred. However, by comparing to Numbers 33:37-39, this event would have occurred at the end of the forty years of wandering.

Numbers 33:37-39

*They left Kadesh and camped at Mount Hor, on the border of Edom. <sup>38</sup>At the LORD's command Aaron the priest went up Mount Hor, where he died on the first day of the fifth month of the fortieth year after the Israelites came out of Egypt. <sup>39</sup>Aaron was a hundred and twenty-three years old when he died on Mount Hor.*

- (2) The location of the story is Kadesh (or Kadesh-Barnea). As noted previously, the original journey from Sinai to Moab (eastern side of Jordan River across from Jericho) had three stages:
- Stage One: Sinai to Kadesh (Num 12-14)
  - Stage Two: Wanderings (Num 15-19)
  - Stage Three: Kadesh to Moab (Num 20-36)
- (3) Miriam dies at this time (1) and Aaron will soon die (22-29). Even Moses will not be allowed to enter the Land (12).
- (4) Once again in a time of national stress (prolonged lack of water), the people quarrel with Moses and Aaron (3-5).

Numbers 20:6-8

*Moses and Aaron went from the assembly to the entrance to the tent of meeting and fell facedown, and the glory of the LORD appeared to them. <sup>7</sup>The LORD said to Moses, <sup>8</sup>“Take the staff, and you and your brother Aaron gather the assembly together. Speak to that rock before their eyes and it will pour out its water. You will bring water out of the rock for the community so they and their livestock can drink.”*

- (1) Moses and Aaron seek the Lord's will (9).
- (2) The Lord commands Moses specifically “to speak” to the rock in faith. Moses must believe God's command and God's provision will proceed from Moses' faith and Moses' strict obedience.

Numbers 20:9-11

*So Moses took the staff from the LORD's presence, just as he commanded him. <sup>10</sup>He and Aaron gathered the assembly together in front of the rock and Moses said to them, “Listen, you rebels, must we bring you water out of this*

*rock?"<sup>11</sup>Then Moses raised his arm and struck the rock twice with his staff. Water gushed out, and the community and their livestock drank.*

- (1) Moses' obedience was lacking. He did not speak to the rock but "struck the rock twice" in anger and frustration with the people.
- (2) This evidences a lack of faith (and as a result, incomplete obedience).

Numbers 20:12

*But the LORD said to Moses and Aaron, "Because you did not trust in me enough to honor me as holy in the sight of the Israelites, you will not bring this community into the land I give them."*

Insight:

"Faith is the correct response to God's word, whether it is a word of promise or a word of command."  
(Constable quoting G. Wenham, Notes . . .,65)

Psalms 106:32-33

*By the waters of Meribah they angered the LORD, and trouble came to Moses because of them;<sup>33</sup>for they rebelled against the Spirit of God, and rash words came from Moses' lips.*

Reflect:

"And without faith it is impossible to please God..." (Heb. 11:6)

### C. Reorder (Chapters 21-36)

The Israelites departed Kadesh and began the journey to Moab. Traveling in a northeasternly direction, the people arrived at Mt. Hor, the site of Aaron's death (20:22-29).

## 1. Conflicts and Victories (Chapters 21-32)

### a. The bronze snake (21:4-9)

Numbers 21:4-9

*They traveled from Mount Hor along the route to the Red Sea, to go around Edom. But the people grew impatient on the way;<sup>5</sup> they spoke against God and against Moses, and said, "Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? There is no bread! There is no water! And we detest this miserable food!"<sup>6</sup> Then the LORD sent venomous snakes among them; they bit the people and many Israelites died.<sup>7</sup> The people came to Moses and said, "We sinned when we spoke against the LORD and against you. Pray that the LORD will take the snakes away from us." So Moses prayed for the people.<sup>8</sup> The LORD said to Moses, "Make a snake and put it up on a pole; anyone who is bitten can look at it and live."<sup>9</sup> So Moses made a bronze snake and put it up on a pole. Then when anyone was bitten by a snake and looked at the bronze snake, they lived.*

- (1) Not surprisingly the people once again began to murmur and complain. The frustration pointed to no bread, no water, and miserable food (i.e. the standard fare of manna, described favorably in Ex. 16:31). This will be the last complaint on the journey to the Land.
- (2) In judgment the Lord sent venomous ("fiery") snakes. This became the harsh instrument of judgment / discipline. The people immediately recognize the root of the problem and confess, "we sinned when we spoke against the Lord and you. Pray that the Lord will take the snakes away from us" (7).



- (3) Gordon Wenham (Quoted by Constable, Notes . . . , 71) observes:

"I suggest that the clue to the symbolism (i.e. bronze serpent) should be sought in the general principles underlying the sacrifices and purificatory rites in the Old Testament. Animals are killed, so that sinful men who deserve to die may live. Blood which pollutes when it is spilled can be used to sanctify and purify men and articles. The ashes of a dead heifer cleanse those who suffer from the impurity caused by death. In all these rituals there is an inversion: normally polluting substances or actions may in a ritual context have the opposite effect and serve to purify. In the case of the copper serpent similar principles operate. Those inflamed and dying through the bite of living snakes were restored to life by a dead reddish-coloured snake. It may be that copper was chosen not only because its hue matched the inflammation caused by the bites, but because red is the colour that symbolizes atonement and purification."

- (4) The incident underscored that in order to take away the "sting" or "bite" of the people's sin, faith (and repentance) in God and His provision must be exercised. Jesus drew upon this story and declared to Nicodemus:

John 3:14-15

*Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the wilderness, so the Son of Man must be lifted up,  
<sup>15</sup>that everyone who believes may have eternal life in him."*

b. The journey to Moab (21:10-20)

The Biblical account seems to move swiftly from place to place. Interestingly, in one of the places God promises to provide water (16-18). There is no record of grumblings.

c. The defeat of Sihon and Og (21:21-35)

Along the way the Israelites defeated the Amorite kings Sihon and Og. Chronologically, the story with Sihon (who reigned from Heshbon, a city) may fit in the previously described journey to Moab (21:10-20; particularly v. 13).

Numbers 21:13

***They set out from there and camped alongside the Arnon, which is in the wilderness extending into Amorite territory. The Arnon is the border of Moab, between Moab and the Amorites.***

Og was king over the territory of Bashan, land located east of the Jordan River [north to Mt. Hermon and south to the Yarmuk wadi (stream or river)]. The Israelites soundly defeated the army of King Og and “took possession of his land” (35).

d. The Moabite threat (22:1-25:18)

As the Israelites defeated their foes on the journey to the Promised Land, other nations were very aware. The sons of Israel were a formidable threat to the safety and security of the Moabites.

Numbers 22:1-3

***Then the Israelites traveled to the plains of Moab and camped along the Jordan across from Jericho.<sup>2</sup> Now Balak son of Zippor saw all that Israel had done to the Amorites,<sup>3</sup> and Moab was terrified because there were so many people.***

*Indeed, Moab was filled with dread because of the Israelites.*

(1) Moabite opposition (outside threat) (22:1-24:25)

Numbers 24b-6

*So Balak son of Zippor, who was king of Moab at that time, <sup>5</sup>sent messengers to summon Balaam son of Beor, who was at Pethor, near the Euphrates River, in his native land. Balak said: "A people has come out of Egypt; they cover the face of the land and have settled next to me. <sup>6</sup>Now come and put a curse on these people, because they are too powerful for me. Perhaps then I will be able to defeat them and drive them out of the land. For I know that whoever you bless is blessed, and whoever you curse is cursed."*

- (a) Balaam was apparently a well-known sorcerer (magician) contracted to curse Israel. Some would classify him as an idol-worshiping false prophet. Others grant him true prophet status, but one who had fallen into pursuit of wealth and selfish ambition. Either way, he has been contracted by Balak, the king of Moab.
- (b) Balaam encountered God (in a dream?) where he was commanded clearly, "Do not go with them, you must not put a curse on those people, because they are blessed" (12).

Recall:

The Abrahamic Covenant call and promise:

*"The LORD had said to Abram, "Go from your country, your people and your father's household to the land I will show you. <sup>2</sup>"I will make you into a great nation, and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. <sup>3</sup>I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you."*

(Gen 12:1-3)

- (c) The next morning Balaam informed Balak's princes (emissaries) that the Lord refused to allow Balaam to come (and perform the cursing – vv. 13-14). Undeterred, Balak then sent others "more numerous and more distinguished" than the first group. This party "upped the ante" by promises of "handsome reward."

Balaam deferred again:

Numbers 22:18-19

*But Balaam answered them, "Even if Balak gave me all the silver and gold in his palace, I could not do anything great or small to go beyond the command of the LORD my God. <sup>19</sup> Now spend the night here so that I can find out what else the LORD will tell me."*

- (d) Once more Balaam encountered God who permissively allowed the "prophet" to go with the princes of Balak, yet with careful instruction.

Numbers 22:20

*That night God came to Balaam and said, "Since these men have come to summon you, go with them, but do only what I tell you."*

- i. God's permissive will allowed Balaam to go (His decreed will was spoken earlier – see 22:12).
- ii. Balaam's departure was motivated by greed.

2 Peter 2:15

***They have left the straight way and wandered off to follow the way of Balaam son of Bezer, who loved the wages of wickedness.***

Jude 11

***Woe to them! They have taken the way of Cain; they have rushed for profit into Balaam's error; they have been destroyed in Korah's rebellion.***

- iii. God's plan is to bless Israel in spite of Balaam's plan to curse Israel (and earn a "handsome" reward).

(e) Balaam saddles his donkey and departs. The humorous story of Balaam and his donkey can be summarized as follows:

- i. God (who knows the true heart of Balaam) was angry and sent an angel to block his way (21-22).
- ii. The donkey perceived the angel blocking the way and would not proceed further; each time Balaam beat the donkey (23-27).
- iii. The Lord opened the donkey's mouth to speak and challenge Balaam's cruel treatment (28-30).
- iv. The Lord opened Balaam's eyes to see and hear the rebuke delivered by the angel of the Lord (31-33).
- v. Balaam confessed his sin, offered to return, but was instructed, "Go with the men, but speak only what I tell you" (34-35).
- vi. Balak greeted Balaam, though somewhat put out by Balaam's tardy arrival.

- (f) Balaam's first oracle (23:1-12)  
Balaam's second oracle (23:13-26)  
Balaam's third oracle (23:27-24:14)  
Balaam's fourth and other oracles (24:15-25)

Though brought to curse the Israelites (and paid to do so), the prophet Balaam found every intention to curse turned into a blessing instead.

- (2) Moabite opposition (inside threat) (25:1-18)

Numbers 25:1-3

*While Israel was staying in Shittim, the men began to indulge in sexual immorality with Moabite women, <sup>2</sup>who invited them to the sacrifices to their gods. The people ate the sacrificial meal and bowed down before these gods. <sup>3</sup>So Israel yoked themselves to the Baal of Peor. And the LORD's anger burned against them.*

If professional cursing would not work, the next scheme involved corrupting the Israelites morally and theologically. This blatant sin (rivalled perhaps only by the golden calf incident) incurred harsh judgment (25:4-9).

- e. A new generation prepares to enter the Promised Land (26:1-32:42)

The highlights of this section follow:

- (1) A second census was taken (26:1-65).

Numbers 26:63-65

*These are the ones counted by Moses and Eleazar the priest when they counted the Israelites on the plains of Moab by the Jordan across from Jericho. <sup>64</sup>Not one of them was*

*among those counted by Moses and Aaron the priest when they counted the Israelites in the Desert of Sinai. <sup>65</sup>For the LORD had told those Israelites they would surely die in the wilderness, and not one of them was left except Caleb son of Jephunneh and Joshua son of Nun.*

- (2) Zelophehad's daughters received their dead father's inheritance (27:1-11).
- (3) Joshua was chosen to succeed Moses as Israel's leader into the land (27:12-23).

Numbers 27:18-20

*So the LORD said to Moses, "Take Joshua son of Nun, a man in whom is the spirit of leadership, and lay your hand on him. <sup>19</sup>Have him stand before Eleazar the priest and the entire assembly and commission him in their presence. <sup>20</sup>Give him some of your authority so the whole Israelite community will obey him.*

- (4) Worship regulations were restated to insure Israel's ability to maintain fellowship with God in the new land (28:1-30:16).
- (5) Vengeance upon the Midianites (who earlier were aligned with the seducing Moabites) was enacted (31:1-54).
- (6) The Transjordan tribes (those would settle east of the Jordan River) were given permission to settle there, but only if they fulfilled their military duty to help conquer the Promised Land (32:1-42).

2. Warnings and encouragements (33:1-36:13)

To help prepare the new generation about to enter the land, Moses summarized (for their instruction) certain important reminders.

a. Historical review (33:1-49)

Numbers 33:1-2a

*Here are the stages in the journey of the Israelites when they came out of Egypt by divisions under the leadership of Moses and Aaron. <sup>2</sup>At the LORD's command Moses recorded the stages in their journey.*

b. Challenge to the Israelites (33:50-56)

Numbers 33:50-53

*On the plains of Moab by the Jordan across from Jericho the LORD said to Moses, <sup>51</sup>"Speak to the Israelites and say to them: 'When you cross the Jordan into Canaan, <sup>52</sup>drive out all the inhabitants of the land before you. Destroy all their carved images and their cast idols, and demolish all their high places. <sup>53</sup>Take possession of the land and settle in it, for I have given you the land to possess.*

c. Boundaries of the Land (34:1-29)

d. Towns for the Levites (35:1-5)

e. Cities of refuge (35:6-34)

Numbers 35:15

*These six towns will be a place of refuge for Israelites and for foreigners residing among them, so that anyone who has killed another accidentally can flee there.*



f. Inheritance for Zelophehad's daughters (36:1-12)

g. Summary of warnings/encouragements

Numbers 36:13

*These are the commands and regulations the LORD gave through Moses to the Israelites on the plains of Moab by the Jordan across from Jericho.*

## VI. TAKEAWAYS

*I don't want you to forget, dear brothers and sisters, about our ancestors in the wilderness long ago. All of them were guided by a cloud that moved ahead of them, and all of them walked through the sea on dry ground.<sup>2</sup> In the cloud and in the sea, all of them were baptized as followers of Moses.<sup>3</sup> All of them ate the same spiritual food,<sup>4</sup> and all of them drank the same spiritual water. For they drank from the spiritual rock that traveled with them, and that rock was Christ.<sup>5</sup> Yet God was not pleased with most of them, and their bodies were scattered in the wilderness.*

*<sup>6</sup> These things happened as a warning to us, so that we would not crave evil things as they did,<sup>7</sup> or worship idols as some of them did. As the Scriptures say, "The people celebrated with feasting and drinking, and they indulged in pagan revelry."<sup>8</sup> And we must not engage in sexual immorality as some of them did, causing 23,000 of them to die in one day.*

*<sup>9</sup> Nor should we put Christ to the test, as some of them did and then died from snakebites.<sup>10</sup> And don't grumble as some of them did, and then were destroyed by the angel of death.<sup>11</sup> These things happened to them as examples for us. They were written down to warn us who live at the end of the age.*

*<sup>12</sup> If you think you are standing strong, be careful not to fall.*

*<sup>13</sup> The temptations in your life are no different from what others experience. And God is faithful. He will not allow the temptation to be more than you can stand. When you are tempted, he will show you a way out so that you can endure.*

(1 Cor. 10:1-13 NLT)

## “BE THOU MY VISION”

Be Thou my Vision, O Lord of my heart;  
Naught be all else to me, save that Thou art  
Thou my best Thought, by day or by night,  
Waking or sleeping, Thy presence my light.

Be Thou my Wisdom, and Thou my true Word;  
I ever with Thee and Thou with me, Lord;  
Thou my great Father, I Thy true son;  
Thou in me dwelling, and I with Thee one.

Be Thou my battle Shield, Sword for the fight;  
Be Thou my Dignity, Thou my Delight;  
Thou my soul's Shelter, Thou my high Tower:  
Raise Thou me heavenward, O Power of my power.

Riches I heed not, nor man's empty praise,  
Thou mine inheritance, now and always:  
Thou and Thou only, first in my heart,  
High King of heaven, my Treasure Thou art.

High King of Heaven, my victory won,  
May I reach Heaven's joys, O bright Heaven's Sun!  
Heart of my own heart, whatever befall,  
Still be my Vision, O Ruler of all.