

39 Years of Wandering

24 – 30 OCT 2017

LEV 25-27; NU 1-13

Week 6 --- 44 Weeks to Go

Leviticus ends with the sanctification of the people of Israel as a whole through ceremonial and moral holiness. Numbers is the book of wanderings, describing Israel's experiences during their 40 years in the wilderness. It begins with a census to prepare them for future tasks. The first generation of Israelites did not trust God and did not thank Him for His provision. They would not inherit the Promised Land because they had been faithless. God teaches His people the consequences of rebellion and irresponsible decisions. God ultimately shows great mercy and forgiveness for his people despite their repeated rebellion, disobedience and complaining.

Weekly Reading Plan

Day 1: LEV 25:1-27:34
Day 2: NU 1:1 – 2:34
Day 3: NU 3:1 –4:49
Day 4: NU 5:1 – 5:29
Day 5: NU 6:1 – 8:26
Day 6: NU 9:1 – 12:16
Day 7: NU 13:1- 13:33

Outline

The Sabbath Years & Year of Jubilee [Day 1]
Rewards and Punishments [Day 1]
Laws of redemption [Day 1]
Israel prepares for their journey [Day 2-6]
Observing the Rite of the Passover [Day 6]
The people complain and rebel [Day 6-7]
Canaan Before the Conquest [Day 7]

Key Characters

Moses
Aaron
The Levites
12 tribes
Miriam
Joshua
Caleb

Key Locations

Sinai wilderness
Desert of Paran
Kadesh
Boundaries of Canaan

Key Terms

Wandering
Wilderness
Manna

Key Verses

Take a census of the whole Israelite community by their clans and families, listing every man by name, one by one. [NU 1:2]

The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you; the Lord turn his face toward you and give you peace. [NU 6:24-26]

Come with us and we will treat you well, for the Lord has promised good things to Israel [NU 10:29]

“Rise up, Lord! May your enemies be scattered; may your foes flee before you.” Whenever it [the ark] came to rest, he said, “Return, Lord, to the countless thousands of Israel.” [NU 10:35-36]

EPOCH 3
(1500 – 1200 BC)

Chapter Summaries (from @biblesummary)

Lev25: Every seventh year the land shall rest. Every fiftieth year shall be a jubilee, when property shall be restored and slaves released.

Lev26: If you keep my laws I will give peace in the land and make you fruitful. If not I will scatter you, but I will not break my covenant.

Lev27: If anyone dedicates a person or land to the LORD you shall make a valuation. A tithe of everything from the land belongs to the LORD.

Nu1: The LORD told Moses to count the Israelite armies. The number of men over twenty years old was 603,550. The Levites were not counted.

Nu2: The Israelites shall camp around the tabernacle: Judah to the east, Reuben to the south, Ephraim to the west and Dan to the north.

Nu3: The Levites are to assist Aaron. I have taken them in place of every firstborn. The number of Levites over one month old was 22,000.

Nu4: The Kohathites are to carry the most holy things. The Gershonites are to carry the coverings. The Merarites are to carry the frame.

Nu5: Anyone who sins shall make restitution and add a fifth. If a man suspects his wife of unfaithfulness he shall take her to the priest.

Nu6: Anyone who makes a Nazirite vow shall not drink wine or cut their hair. Aaron's blessing shall be: "The LORD bless you and keep you."

Nu7: The leader of each tribe brought a grain offering, a burnt offering, a sin offering and peace offerings. Moses spoke with the LORD.

Nu8: Present the Levites as a wave offering to the LORD and make atonement for them. I have set them apart to serve at the tent of meeting.

Nu9: In the first month of the second year the Israelites kept the Passover. Whenever the cloud lifted from the tabernacle they journeyed.

Nu10: Make two silver trumpets to direct the congregation. In the second month the cloud lifted and they set out as the LORD had commanded.

Nu11: The people grumbled that they had no meat. The LORD was angry but he sent quails. He put his Spirit on seventy elders to help Moses.

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Nu12: Miriam and Aaron spoke against Moses. The LORD was angry and Miriam became leprous. Moses prayed and after seven days she returned.

Nu13: Moses sent men to spy out the land of Canaan. Caleb said, "Let us go up," but the others said that the inhabitants were too strong.

Big Ideas in NUMBERS

God will judge rebellion

God faithfully cares for his people even when they are ungrateful

God is in absolute control; he accomplishes his plans despite human disruption

Judgment and pain follow disobedience; repentance results in hope and forgiveness

WARNING: GOD IS HARSH TO HIS PROMISES, BUT WILL LET HIS PEOPLE GO AWAY AGAIN AND FACE THE CONSEQUENCES.

WILDERNESS STORIES:
 ISRAEL'S REBELLIONS: GOD'S PATIENCE & MERCY
 ISAIAH'S REBELLION: ISRAEL'S REBELLION TO GOD'S PATIENCE & MERCY
 PROPHETS: ISAIAH, AMOS, HOSEA, MICHAEL, NAHUM, ZEPHANIAH, HAGGAI, ZECHARIAH, MALACHI
 POETS: PSALMS, PROVERBS, ECCLESIASTES, SONG OF SONGS
 APOSTLES: MATTHEW, MARK, LUKE, JOHN, ACTS

1-10a MT. SINAI
 1-10: CENSUS
 11-15: LEVITES
 16-18: PRIESTS
 19: JUDAH
 20-25: AARON'S ROD

10b-12 TRAVEL
 13: PEOPLE COMPLAINT
 14-15: MIRACLES
 16-17: AARON & MIRIAM

13-19 WILDERNESS OF PARAN
 13: THE CANANITES WILL BE DEFEATED
 14: SPIES
 15: CALIB & JOSHUA
 16: THIS GENERATION WILL DIE IN THE WILDERNESS... AND THEIR CHILDREN WILL ENTER THE LAND.
 17: REBELLIION OF KORAH
 18: AARON & MIRIAM

20-21 TRAVEL
 21: PEOPLE COMPLAINT & MIRACLES
 22: YOU REBEL! YOU MUST DIE!
 23: A STRANGE SYMBOL SOURCE OF LIFE
 24: THE BRONZE SNAKE

22-36 PLAINS OF MOAB
 22: BALAK & BALAM
 23: CURSE ISRAEL FOR YOU!
 24: BALAK
 25: A STAR WILL COME OUT OF JABES.
 26: A SUFFERER SHALL ARISE OUT OF ISRAEL.
 27: VICTORY OVER AMIHITES
 28: NEW CENSUS
 29: BALAK
 30: THE NEXT GENERATION OBEYS TO ENTER THE LAND
 31-36: NEW CENSUS

REBELLION IN THE WILDERNESS - GOD BRINGS JUDGMENT... AND SHOWS MERCY

NUMBERS

EXODUS OF ISRAEL
 1: COVENANT AT MTS. SINAI
 2: COVENANT BROKEN
 3: MIRACLES & PRESTES

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CREATED BY THE BIBLE PROJECT

The 39 Years of Wandering

[The Book of Numbers]

God led the Israelites to the edge of the Promised Land but the Israelites mistrusted God and refused to go in and claim it. The Israelites feared that God would not give them victory over the Canaanites living there.

The consequence imposed upon the Nation of Israel for mistrusting God was that they would wander in the desert until all of the men who had been over 20 years old (at the time of mistrust) had died. The only exceptions were Joshua and Caleb because they had trusted God.

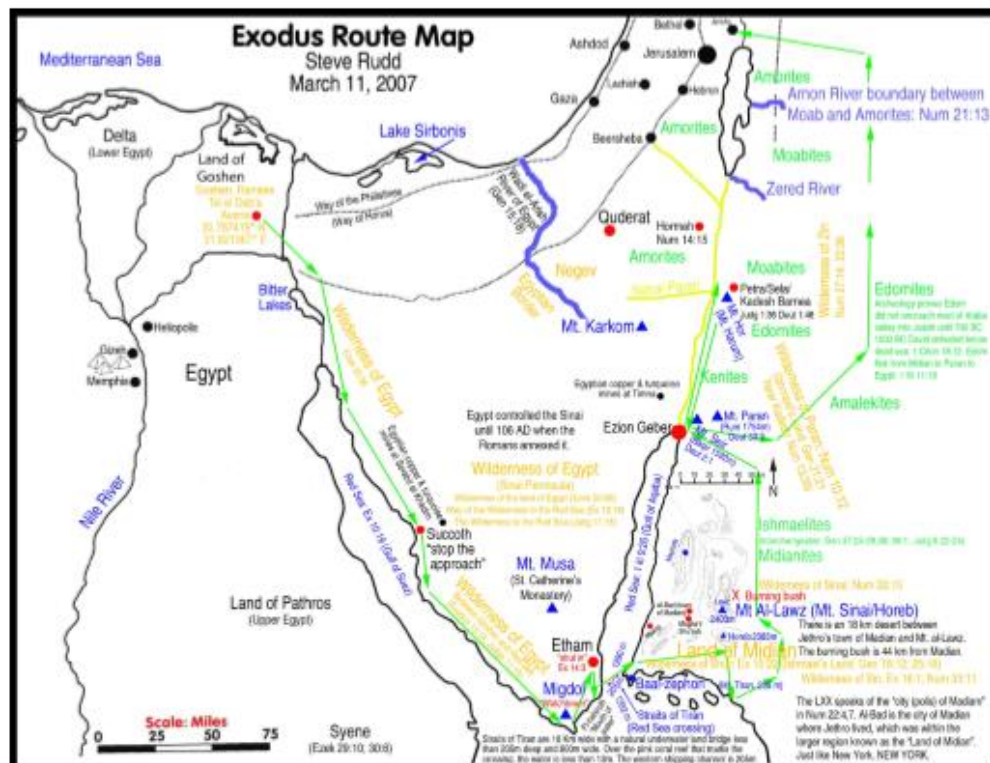
During the desert wanderings Moses disobeyed one of God's specific instructions and was told that as a result he also would not be allowed to enter the Promised Land.

After 39 years God once again led the Israelites to the edge of the Promised Land and Moses turned over his leadership to Joshua.

God took Moses up on Mt. Nebo to let him see the Promised Land. Moses died shortly after that and God buried him.



Lieber, D. (1994). Bible 101 getting the big picture. From a class presented at Solana Beach Presbyterian Church in 1994.



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Notes for Discussion

What did I learn about God?

What did I learn about human nature?

How does what I read apply to my life and my relationship with God?

Insights about the time and/or customs?

Other thoughts

WEEK 6 DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

What did I learn about God?

- What message does it communicate about God that he is orderly [NU 2-3]?
- Why do you think God used a cloud in his relationship with Israel?
- What does it mean to be “set apart” [NU8:14]? How would the ritual in NU 8:5-14 illustrate the concept? What does this teach you about God’s desires for his own?
- How does God guide spiritual leaders today? How does this compare with his guidance in NU 9:15-23?

What did I learn about human nature?

- In LEV 27:1-15, what might it mean for a house to be dedicated to the Lord? What kind of family life would be expected in such a home? What difference would it make if you deliberately dedicated your house or your car or your money to the service of Jesus?
- What are the dangers of becoming isolated from the real world in which we live? How can we keep the balance between separation and involvement in the world?
- What are the biggest reason the Israelites were complaining? How was Moses affected by the people’s complaints? What good comes from complaining? What harm comes from complaining?
- What was the greatest way that Moses demonstrated his humility [NU 12:3]?

What did I learn about my life/relationship with God?

- What kinds of gifts do you give to God in time, money or talent? What motivates you to give these gifts? How does God use these gifts to aid you in your spiritual pilgrimage?
- How do you seek God’s guidance in your life? How often do you think about knowing and doing the will of God?
- What effect do other people’s demands, complaints or negative attitudes have on you? What do you complain about most? How do you think God feels about your complaints? How do your complaints affect your relationship with God?
- God asks every child of His to keep Him first, to obey Him above all and to give Him the honor and glory due to Him. How does this truth help you in your personal Christian walk?

Shared Time/Culture Insights

- Given the mobile nature of the Israelites, how important would the work of the Gershonites and Merarites (NU 3:21-33) be in the religious life of the Israelites? How would their work enhance the worship of all Israel? What does this say about the nature of worship?