

Outline of
Numbers



Introduction

Writer

Moses

Theme

“PILGRIM’S PROGRESS” — walking, wandering, working, warring, witnessing, and worshipping. It is a handbook for pilgrims. “Chart and compass come from Thee.” It is a roadmap for the wilderness of this world.

For whatever things were written in earlier times were written for our learning, that we, through patience and comfort of the scriptures, might have hope. (Romans 15:4)

Now all these things happened unto them for examples, and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the ages are come. (1 Corinthians 10:11)

These all died in faith, not having received the promises but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. (Hebrews 11:13)

Dearly beloved, I beseech you as sojourners and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul. (1 Peter 2:11)

I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil. (John 17:14,15)

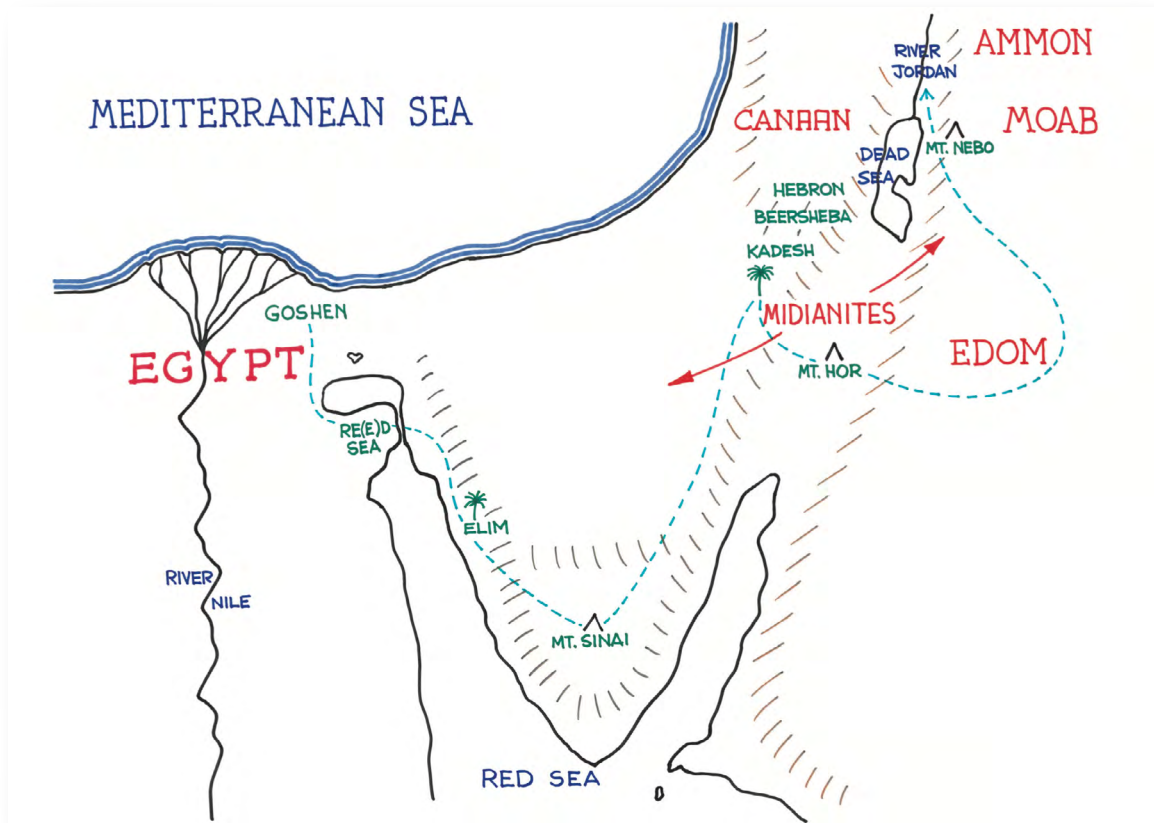
Forward march

In the Book of Numbers, we see the children of Israel depart from Mt. Sinai and march to Kadesh-barnea. At Kadesh-barnea, the attitude of unbelief is crystallized into actual disobedience. The light is focused on faith, and they failed. “So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief” (Hebrews 3:19). After Kadesh-barnea, they began to wander until that entire generation died in the wilderness (two notable exceptions were Joshua and Caleb). The years of wandering were a veritable saga of suffering, a trek of tragedy, and a story of straying.

Numbers gets its name from the two censuses recorded in chapters 1 and 26. C. H. Mackintosh called it “a divine history of the wanderings of the Israelites in the wilderness for about 38 years and 10 months, commencing with the first movement of the camp after the tabernacle was reared.”

Source: Keener, Craig S. (2014). The IVP Bible Background Commentary: New Testament, Second Edition. InterVarsity Press.

Part I



EGYPT

EXODUS 1-11

EGYPT TO SINAI

EXODUS 12-18

SINAI

EXODUS 19-40

LEVITICUS 1-27

NUMBERS 1¹-10¹⁰

SINAI TO KADESH

NUMBERS 10¹¹-12¹⁶

KADESH

NUMBERS 13¹-20²¹

KADESH TO MOAB

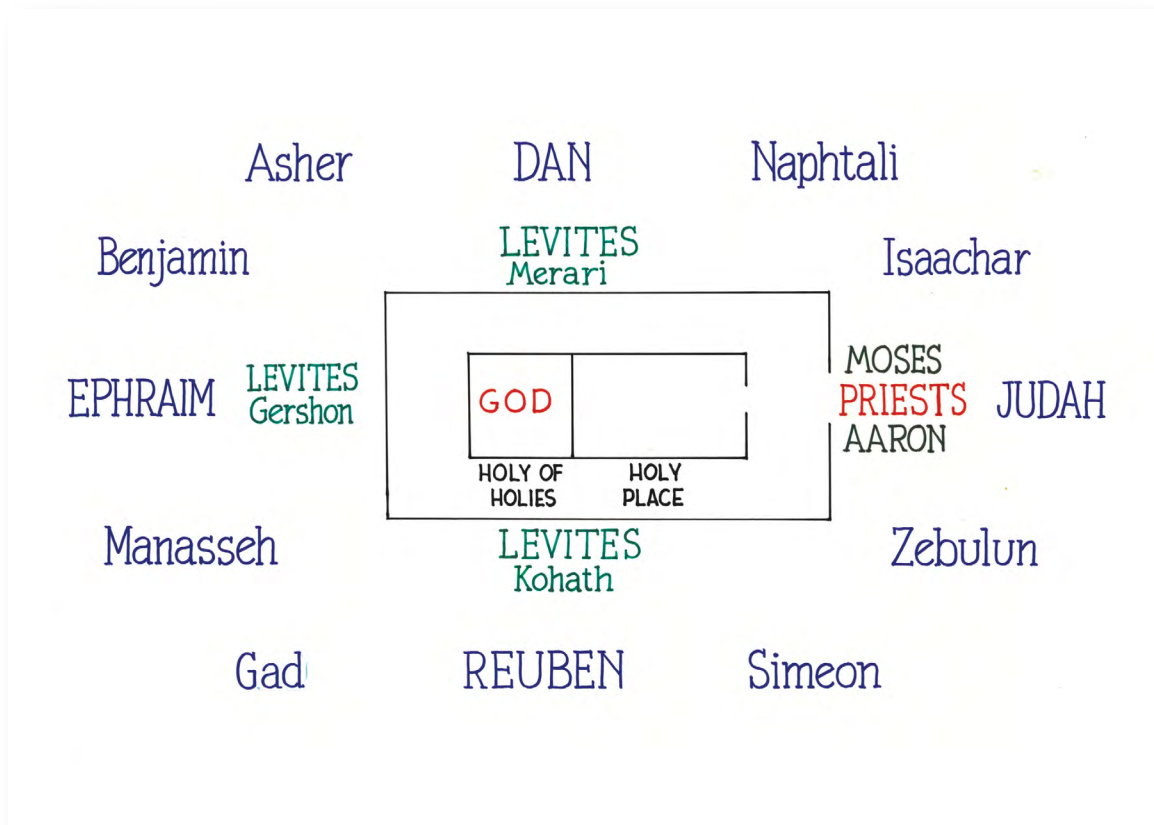
NUMBERS 20²²-21³⁵

MOAB

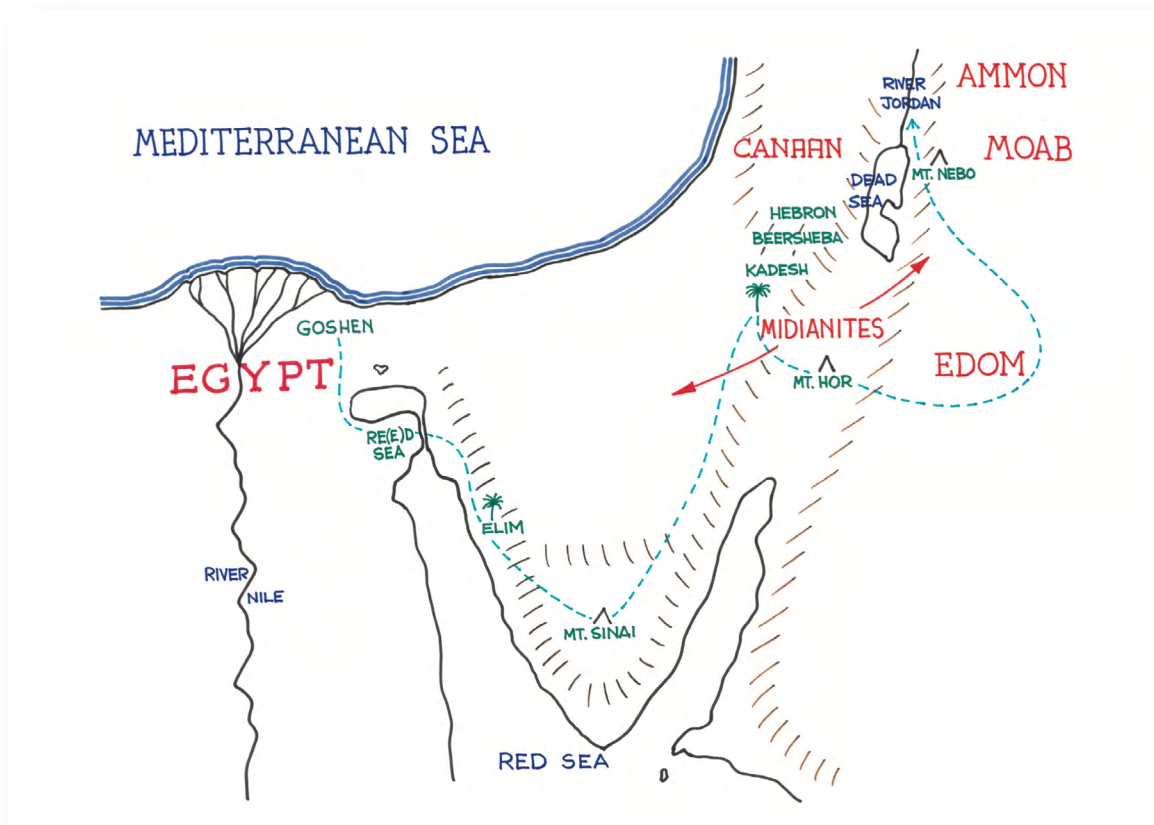
NUMBERS 22¹-36¹³

DEUTERONOMY 1-34

Part I



Part II



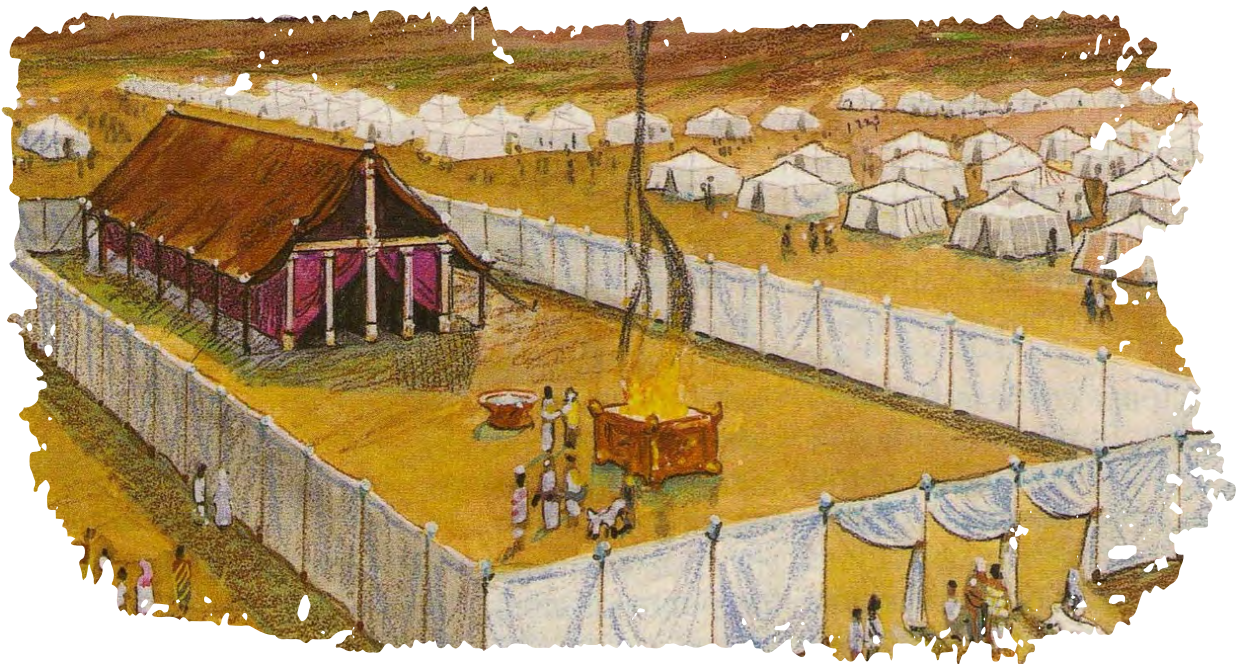
I. Fitting out the nation Israel for wilderness march

Chapters 1–8 (Preparation for the pilgrimage)

A. Order of the camp Chapters 1–4

“Let everything be done...in order.”

1. First census, Chapter 1
 - 603,550 of those able to go to war (v. 3). Probably 2 1/2 million came out of Egypt.
 - An Israelite must be able to declare his pedigree, know who he is in order to serve and fight.
 - A Christian must know his pedigree — “Now are we the children of God” (1 John 3:2).
2. Standards and position of the 12 tribes on wilderness march, Chapter 2
They had to know where they belonged (see chart) and rally around their standard. Each had his God- appointed place and service.
3. Census, position, and service of Levites on wilderness march, Chapter 3 (Census of firstborn)
 - a. Aaron and Moses, vv. 1-4
 - b. Tribe of Levi given to Aaron, vv. 5-13 (cf. John 17:6, 9)
 - c. Three families of Levi, vv. 14-20
 - d. Gershon — in charge of curtains, coverings, and cords, vv. 21-26
 - e. Kohath — in charge of articles of furniture, vv. 27-32
 - f. Merari — in charge of boards, bars, pillars, sockets, and vessels, vv. 33-37
 - g. Total of Levites (22,000), vv. 38, 39
 - h. Census of firstborn of all Israel (22,273), vv. 40-51
4. Service of Levites about the tabernacle, Chapter 4 (census of Levites [ages 30-50] for service)



B. Cleansing the camp Chapters 5–8

Reason: “Our God is a consuming fire” (Hebrews 12:29)

1. Restitution and jealousy offering, Chapter 5
 - a. Defilement by disease and death, vv. 1-4
For the Christian, lepers represent the flesh; the dead represent the world.
 - b. Restitution, vv. 5-10
Repentance is more than saying, “I am sorry” (2 Corinthians 7:10).
 - c. Jealousy offering, vv. 11-31
“I am a jealous God.”

2. Vow of the Nazarite: the triune blessing, Chapter 6
 - a. Nazarite vow, vv. 1-21
Voluntary and temporary
 - (1) Not to drink wine or strong drink, v. 3
His joy is to be in the Lord.
 - (2) Not to shave head, v. 5
He is to bear shame (1 Corinthians 11:14).
 - (3) Not to touch dead body, v. 7
He is to forsake father and mother.
 - b. Triune blessing, vv. 22-27

3. Gifts of the princes, Chapter 7
All give the same. The smallest gift is recorded.

4. Light of lampstand and laver for Levites, Chapter 8
 - a. Light of lampstand, vv. 1-4
(Walking in the Light)
 - b. Levites cleansed, vv. 5-26
The Christian’s cleansing is by the Word.



II. Forward March!

Chapters 9, 10

A. Passover and covering cloud Chapter 9

1. Passover observed by all on wilderness march, vv. 1-14
2. Pillar of cloud by day; pillar of fire by night, vv. 15-23

B. Silver trumpets Chapter 10:1-10

(Used for moving Israel on wilderness march and calling an assembly)

C. Forward march! Order of march Chapter 10:11-32

D. Halt! Chapter 10:33-36



III. From Sinai to Kadesh

Chapters 11, 12

A. Complaining and murmuring of people displeasing to the Lord Chapter 11

- Complaining is initiated by the “mixed multitude” (vv. 4-6).
- God provides quail because of dissatisfaction with manna (v. 31).
- When Moses complains, God permits the appointment of elders (v. 16).

B. Jealousy of Miriam and Aaron; judgment of Miriam Chapter 12

(Rebellion in high places, an infection which delays the march)

IV. Failure at Kadesh

Chapters 13, 14

(Place of decision; great breach of the covenant)

A. Spies chosen and sent into land of Canaan; return and report Chapter 13

1. Cause for sending spies (cf. Deuteronomy 1:22), vv. 1-3
2. Choice of spies, vv. 4-16
3. Commission of spies, vv. 17-20
4. Conduct of spies, vv. 21-25
(Did a thorough job)
5. Confirmation of facts, vv. 26, 27
6. Misinterpretation of facts, vv. 28, 29; 31-33
(Majority report: giants vs. grasshoppers)
7. Right interpretation of facts, v. 30
(Minority report: reliance upon God)



B. Israel refuses to enter because of unbelief Chapter 14

"So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief" (Hebrews 3:19).

V. Faltering, fumbling and fussing through the wilderness

Chapters 15, 25

Silent years — only 4 incidents recorded — no connected history:

- (1) log, Numbers 33:19-37;
- (2) did not circumcise children, Joshua 5:5, 6;
- (3) did not offer sacrifices to God, Amos 5:25, 26;
- (4) worshiped idols, Acts 7:42, 43.

A. Delay God's blessing; do not destroy God's purpose Chapter 15

- God goes forward; the people go backward. He gives rules for the land. God said they would enter — it was as good as done. Thirty-eight years later, Israel, in new generation, enters land. These are the children that the fathers thought might perish (Numbers 14:31).
- (Death penalty for breaking sabbath, vv. 32-36. Do all commandments carry death penalty?)

B. Incidents relating to the priesthood Chapters 16 – 19

1. Gainsaying of Korah, Chapter 16
 - 5th murmuring, vv. 1-3
Rebellion against divinely constituted authority. Korah, a man of great authority, has his place in the camp; Moses has his. Rebellion must be dealt with.
 - 6th murmuring, v. 41
Judgment is stayed by Moses.
2. Aaron's rod that budded, Chapter 17
 - Office of Aaron is attested by resurrection (v. 8).
 - Christ is priest after order of Melchizedec, established as priest after His resurrection from the dead.
3. Confirmation of priesthood, Chapter 18
(Charge and position of Aaron and Levites)
Levites receive tithes and give tithes (v. 26).
4. Offering and ashes of red heifer, Chapter 19
(Purpose: cleansing the redeemed, cf. Galatians 6:1)
5. Deaths of Miriam and Aaron; water from the rock, Chapter 20
 - a. At Kadesh again (after 37 years), v. 1
 - b. 7th murmuring, vv. 2-6
 - c. Water from rock; disobedience of Moses, vv. 7-13
 - d. Edom refuses Israel passage through their land, vv. 14-21
 - e. Death of Aaron, vv. 22-29
6. First victory of Israel; first song; serpent of brass, Chapter 21
 - a. 8th murmuring, v. 5
 - b. Serpent of brass, v. 9 (cf. John 3:14)
 - c. Israel sings, vv. 17



7. The prophet Balaam, Chapters 22 – 25

- a. “The way of Balaam” – covetousness, (cf. 2 Peter 2:15, 16), 22
- b. “The error of Balaam” – ignorance of God’s righteousness (cf. Romans 8:31-34), 23
- c. “The doctrine of Balaam” – fornication with Moabites; embrace their idolatry, 24, 25



VI. Future (new) generation prepares to enter land

Chapters 26, 36

A. Census of new generation (v. 64) Chapter 26

Less than first census (cf. Numbers 1:46 with Numbers 26:51)

B. Woman’s place under law Chapter 27

Daughters of Zelophehad claim possession of their father. Moses appeals to God for a decision. God grants their request.

C. The law of offerings Chapters 28, 29

The offerings illustrate the abiding preciousness of Christ, what God thinks of Christ. True worship is thinking God’s thoughts after Him.

D. Law of vows Chapter 30

A vow is inviolate. A woman’s vow depends upon her father or husband. The vow of a widow or divorced woman must stand.

E. Judgment of Midian Chapter 31

(Moses' last act)

Midian in the wilderness is a type of the world.

The Christian is to be separated from the world (cf. Galatians 6:14; 1 John 2:15-17).

F. Reuben and Gad ask for land on wrong side of Jordan Chapter 32

Jordan is a type of death and resurrection of Christ.

G. Log of the journeys Chapter 33**H. Borders of promised land Chapter 34****I. Cities of refuge given to Levites Chapter 35**

(To be used as refuge for manslayers)

J. Law of land regarding inheritance Chapter 36

(Land to remain in tribe and family)



Quiz on Numbers

1. Why did Moses strike the rock twice instead of doing what God commanded?

2. Who was the diviner hired by the king of Moab to curse Israel?

3. In the book of Numbers, who was the leader of the tribe of Judah?

4. Which tribe was to be Aaron the priest's assistants?

5. How long was Miriam banished from the camp for criticizing Moses?

6. Which of the 12 tribes were the largest when Moses conducted a census?

7. What was the youngest age counted in the census in the book of Numbers?

8. What was unique about Balaam's donkey?

9. Who is Israel's eldest son?

10. Because of their complaining and rebellion, how long did God have the people of Israelites eat meat?

GENEVA
BIBLE SCHOOL

