



2020 → Year of Transformation

Numbers

Introduction to Numbers

The book of Numbers is the 4th book in the Pentateuch. The book was written by Moses between 1440- 1440 B.C. The purpose of the book of Numbers is to tell about how Israel prepared to enter the promise land, but sinned and was punished. It describes Moses taking two population censuses, hence the name Numbers.

The book is basically the sacred history of the Israelites as they wandered in the wilderness following the departure from Mt. Sinai where they received the law and before their occupation of Canaan, which is the Promised Land

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.

The book of Numbers is the 4th book in the Pentateuch. The book was written by Moses between 1440-1440 B.C. The purpose of the book of Numbers is to tell about how Israel prepared to enter the promise land, but sinned and was punished. It describes Moses taking two population censuses, hence the name Numbers.

Outline

Numbers consists of three major blocks of material describing the events and laws associated with three centers where Israel encamped for a significant time. These centers are Sinai (ch. 1–10), Kadesh (ch. 13-19), and the plains of Moab (ch. 22-33). They are linked by two short travelogues recording what occurred as Israel journeyed from one camp to the next.

- I. Israel Prepares to Enter the Land (1:1-10:10)
- II. Marching from Sinai to Kadesh (10:11-12:16)
- III. Forty Years near Kadesh (13:1-19:22)
- IV. Marching from Kadesh to the Plains of Moab (20:1-21:35)
- V. Israel in the Plains of Moab (22:1-36:13)

Christ in Numbers

We see Jesus in multiple ways in the book of numbers. In chapters 1-9 , He is represented in the tabernacle itself. In Numbers 6, Jesus is represented as the cloud and the fire. In the new testament, Jesus is referred to as the light of the world (John 8:12). Jesus is represented in the bronze snake. This was a powerful sign God used to save his people from death. The waters of separation, parallels the cleansing of sin by Jesus (Numbers 19), the prophecy of Balaam, Jesus is referred to as the "Star out of Jacob" and the phrase "Scepter shall rise out of Israel, all points to Jesus (Numbers 24:17-19). Jesus is present in the entire book of Numbers.

Week 7: “Fear is A Liar”

Numbers 13 & 14

Teacher notes: This guide is meant to be used as a resource to help you go deeper in your small group discussion. While it is not exhaustive, it is a guide to help you. Think of it as a launching pad to help you facilitate discussion. Please feel free to go deeper, study on your own, pull in other scripture, share your personal story, or bring in other illustrations. It is just a resource to help you take your group on a journey with God.

Introduction: A few years ago, we took our family to see the USS North Carolina Battleship in Wilmington. I was ready for an exciting day exploring the ship. My oldest son, Austin, was 6 years old at the time, and I thought he would love it. We decided to go below deck to check out the interior, and the rest of the ship. As we went down below deck, Austin became paralyzed by fear when we had to walk across metal grates that allowed you to see a floor below you. As a result, he did not like being below deck on the battleship. It caused him to physically start to shake and cry because he is afraid of heights. He thought the ship was cool when we were on deck, but because of his fear, he didn't enjoy the ship

Fear is a very real, and powerful emotion that causes people to act in a way that does not look like they have self-control. Fear can keep us from taking action or thinking clearly. It can create doubt in our minds and cause us to respond in ways that make us look crazy.

This is a battle most of us face daily; FEAR of failure, FEAR of regret, FEAR of rejection. FEAR is an enemy that knows and leverages your weakness to render you powerless. It wages war on your heart and mind. It is a formidable opponent.

Isaiah 41:10 says this, “fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God; I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.”

Reflecting on this verse, think about how God wants us to live our lives in response to the gospel. Fear or timidity creates the exact opposite for us, which causes us to not move or respond to what God has told us. The devil wants to use fear to steal from you the blessing of what God has already given to you, which is a new spirit.

Today, we will look at Numbers 13 & 14; Joshua 1:1-9

Read Numbers 13:16-14:1-45

Discussion Questions

Question 1: What is in Numbers 13 & 14

- What promise is God reminding the Israelites about?
- How should this help encourage us?

Question 2: Why did Moses send them out?

- What information did Moses want to gain from sending them out?
- Describe why this information was important!

Question 3: In Numbers 13:30-31, we see two different accounts reported back to Moses about the people of the land. What was the difference in Caleb's response?

- Where did this confidence come from?
- How did he know they could take the land?
- Who would you naturally identify with Caleb or the other spies? Explain!

Question 4: What was the reason they were afraid?

- What are Nephilim? (see Gen 6:1-4)
- Why would the presence of Nephilim make them afraid?
- Give an example of a time when you have been afraid! What caused this fear? (Allow a couple people to share)

(Leader Insight) The word "**Nephilim**" means giants. Some people believe that the Nephilim are the offspring of sexual relations between fallen angels and human women. This would mean that the fallen angels (The Hebrew naphal means 'to fall') had sexual intercourse with women. Another view held by Christians is that the Nephilim are the descendants of Seth, the son of Adam. The term "sons of God" would designate great power and authority the same way a king would be addressed with the term "your Majesty." In this view, the men who were supposed to be godly took wives who were unbelievers and their offspring are said to have been fallen ones. Either way the **Nephilim** people were very large people that caused the spies fear them because of their size. They were described as giants, and the spies compared themselves as grasshoppers in their presence. These people were fierce and were known to be very destructive in their nature.

Question 5: How does fear affect our trust in God?

- What happened as a result of these men spreading fear? (see Numbers 14:1-4)
- Explain how fear cause us to doubt God!
- Compare and contrast the confidence that Moses, Joshua, and Caleb have with that of the Israelites. Why were they so confident? Explain!

Question 6: Describe the relationship between fear and complaining? How do these go hand in hand?

- How did God respond to their complaining?
- What was the direct result of this sin? (See Numbers 14:23-35)
- Does our unbelief and doubt anger God? Why or Why Not?

Read Joshua 1:1-9

Question 7: What is God reminding Joshua?

- Did God change his promise?
- How should this give us encouragement for our lives?
- What did God tell Joshua would be the key to him being successful? (see verses 7-9)

(Leader Insight) In the book of Joshua the phrase Be strong and Courageous appears at least 6 times throughout the book. Most of these references appear in the first chapter. Joshua becomes the leader of God's people when Moses dies. Joshua is charged to lead the Israelites into the promised land that God promised Moses. It has been a 40-year journey in the wilderness to get to this point because the children of Israel did not listen to God. God told Moses that he would not see the promise land, but that Joshua would lead them in. Now Joshua has assumed command and he hears these words from God, *“Be strong and courageous, because you will lead these people to inherit the land I swore to their ancestors to give them... Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go.”* Here God is telling Joshua to not be afraid, but to trust him and obey his word.

Question 8: Discuss how this promise to Joshua relates to us today!

- Is this hard for you to believe and put into your faith walk? Explain
- What are the things that make it difficult for you to trust God even when you are afraid?

Next Steps:

1. Write down something you learned from this week's study? (Beginner)
2. Write down steps do you need to take when faced with fear? (Beginner)
3. Pray and ask God to show you how fear keeps you from moving where God has told you to move (intermediate)
4. Share with someone in the group where fear has caused you to complain and doubt God (Intermediate)
5. Ask the group to pray for you right now about a fear you face (Next Level)
6. Write down 5 verses that will help you face your fears (Next level)