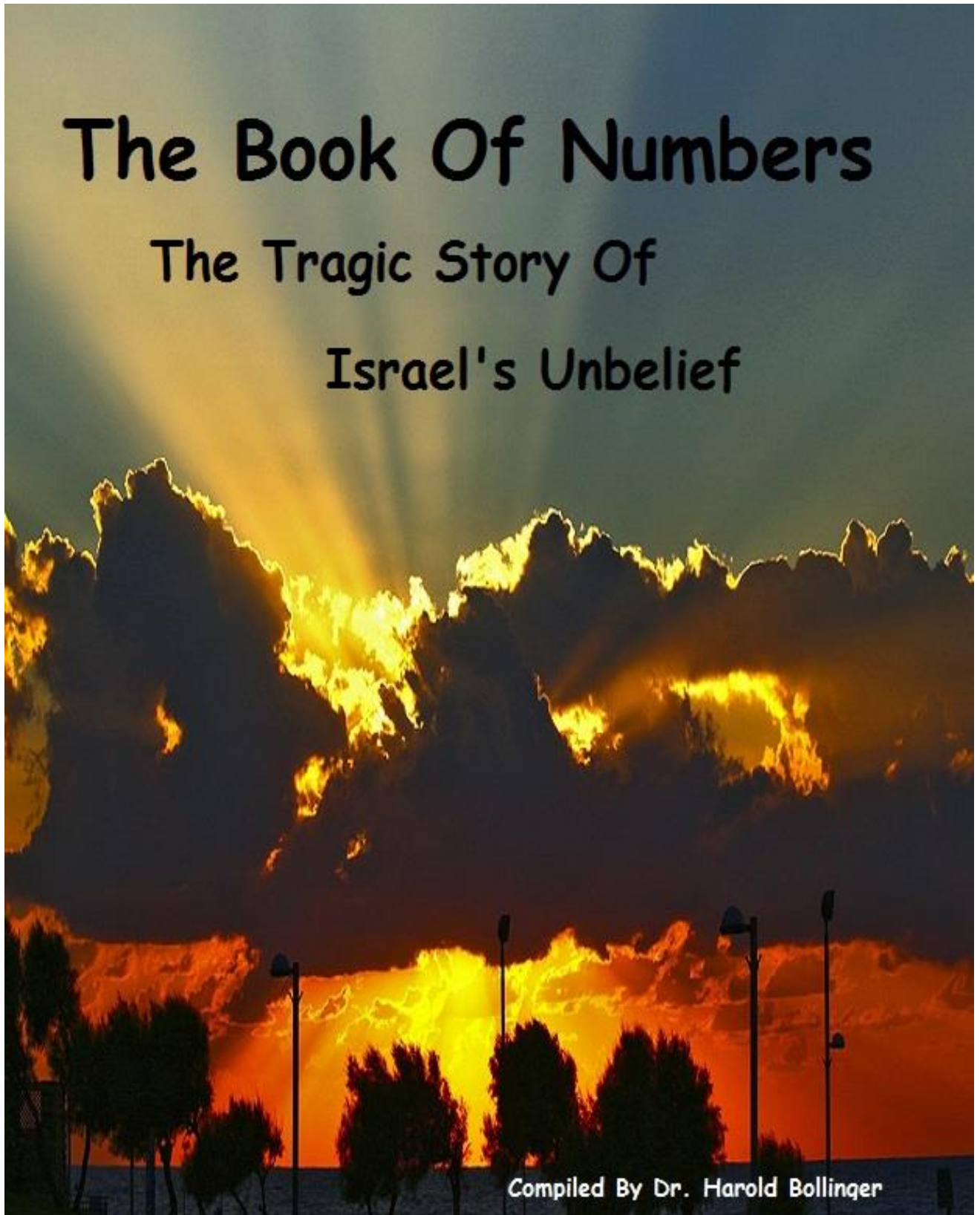


# The Book Of Numbers

The Tragic Story Of

Israel's Unbelief



Compiled By Dr. Harold Bollinger

## Numbers

**OVERVIEW:** EVERY parent knows the shrill whine of a young child—a slow, high-pitched complaint that grates on the eardrums and aggravates the soul. The tone of voice is difficult to bear, but the real irritation is the underlying cause—discontentment and disobedience. As the “children” of Israel journeyed from the foot of Mount Sinai to the land of Canaan, they grumbled, whined, and complained at every turn. They focused on their present discomforts. Faith had fled, and they added an extra 40 years their trip.

Numbers, which records the tragic story of Israel’s unbelief, should serve as a dramatic lesson for all of God’s people. God loves us and wants the very best for us. He can and should be trusted. Numbers also gives a clear portrayal of God’s patience. Again and again he withholds judgment and preserves the nation. But his patience must not be taken for granted. His judgment will come. We must obey.

As Numbers begins, the nation of Israel was camped at the foot of Mount Sinai. The people had received God’s laws and were preparing to move. A census was taken to determine the number of men fit for military service. Next, the people were set apart for God. God was making the people, both spiritually and physically, ready to receive their inheritance.

But then the complaining began. First, the people complained about the food. Next, it was over Moses’ authority. God punished some people but spared the nation because of Moses’ prayers.

The nation then arrived at Kadesh, and spies were sent into Canaan to assess its strength. Ten returned with fearful stories of giants. Only Caleb and Joshua encouraged them to “go up and take possession of the land” (Numbers 13:28).

The minority report fell on deaf ears full of the ominous message of the majority. Because of their unbelief, God declared that the present generation would not live to see the Promised Land. Thus the “wanderings” began.

During these desert wanderings there was a continuous pattern of grumbling, defiance, discipline, and death. How much better it would have been to have trusted God and entered his land! Then the terrible waiting began—waiting for the old generation to die off and waiting to see if the new generation could faithfully obey God.

Numbers ends as it begins, with preparation. This new generation of Israelites were numbered and sanctified. After defeating numerous armies, they settle on the east side of the Jordan River. Then they faced their greatest test: to cross the river and possess the beautiful land God promised them.

The lesson is clear. God's people must trust him, moving ahead by *faith*, if they are to claim his promised land.

## THE BLUEPRINT

### A. PREPARING FOR THE JOURNEY (Numbers 1:1-10:10)

As part of their preparations, the Lord gave strict guidelines to the Israelites regarding purity in the camp. He wanted them to have a life-style distinct from the nations around them. He wanted them to be a holy people. Similarly, we should concern ourselves with purity in the church.

1. The first census of the nation
2. The role of the Levites
3. The purity of the camp
4. Receiving guidance for the journey

#### Numbers 1:1-10:10

One day in midspring, during the second year after Israel's departure from Egypt, the Lord spoke to Moses in the Tabernacle in the wilderness of Sinai. He said, [2] "Take a census of the whole community of Israel by their clans and families. List the names of all the men [3] twenty years old or older who are able to go to war. You and Aaron are to direct the project, [4] assisted by one family leader from each tribe."

[5] These are the tribes and the names of the leaders chosen for the task:

Tribe — Leader

Reuben — Elizur son of Shedeur

[6] Simeon — Shelumiel son of Zurishaddai

[7] Judah — Nahshon son of Amminadab

[8] Issachar — Nethanel son of Zuar

[9] Zebulun — Eliab son of Helon

[10] Ephraim son of Joseph — Elishama son of Ammihud

Manasseh son of Joseph — Gamaliel son of Pedahzur

[11] Benjamin — Abidan son of Gideoni

[12] Dan — Ahiezer son of Ammishaddai

[13] Asher — Pagiel son of Ocran

[14] Gad — Eliasaph son of Deuel

[15] Naphtali — Ahira son of Enan

[16] These tribal leaders, heads of their own families, were chosen from among all the people.

[17] Now Moses and Aaron and the chosen leaders [18] called together the whole community of Israel on that very day. All the people were registered according to their ancestry by their clans and families. The men of Israel twenty years old or older were registered, one by one,

[19] Just as the Lord had commanded Moses. So Moses counted the people there in the wilderness of Sinai.

[20] [20-21] This is the number of men twenty years old or older who were able to go to war, each listed according to his own clan and family:

Tribe — Number

Reuben (Jacob's oldest son) — 46,500 [21]

[22] Simeon — 59,300 [23]

[24] Gad — 45,650 [25]

[26] Judah — 74,600 [27]

[28] Issachar — 54,400 [29]

[30] Zebulun — 57,400 [31]

[32] Ephraim son of Joseph — 40,500 [33]

[34] Manasseh son of Joseph — 32,200 [35]

[36] Benjamin — 35,400 [37]

[38] Dan — 62,700 [39]

[40] Asher — 41,500 [41]

[42] Naphtali — 53,400 [43]

[44] These were the men counted by Moses and Aaron and the twelve leaders of Israel, all listed according to their ancestral descent. [45] They were counted by families—all the men of Israel who were twenty years old or older and able to go to war. [46] The total number was 603,550.

[47] But this total did not include the Levites. [48] For the Lord had said to Moses, [49] "Exempt the tribe of Levi from the census; do not include them when you count the rest of the Israelites. [50] You must put the Levites in charge of the Tabernacle of the Covenant, along with its furnishings and equipment. They must carry the Tabernacle and its equipment as you travel, and they must care for it and camp around it.

[51] Whenever the Tabernacle is moved, the Levites will take it down and set it up again. Anyone else who goes too near the Tabernacle will be executed. [52] Each tribe of Israel will have a designated camping area with its own family banner. [53] But the Levites will camp around the Tabernacle of the Covenant to offer the people of Israel protection from the Lord's fierce anger. The Levites are responsible to stand guard around the Tabernacle."

[54] So the Israelites did everything just as the Lord had commanded Moses.

[2:1] Then the Lord gave these instructions to Moses and Aaron: [2] "Each tribe will be assigned its own area in the camp, and the various groups will camp beneath their family banners. The Tabernacle will be located at the center of these tribal compounds.

[3] [3-4] "The divisions of Judah, Issachar, and Zebulun are to camp toward the sunrise on the east side of the Tabernacle, beneath their family banners.

These are the names of the tribes, their leaders, and the number of their available troops:

Tribe — Leader — Number

Judah — Nahshon son of Amminadab — 74,600 [4]

[5] Issachar — Nethanel son of Zuar — 54,400 [6]

[7] Zebulun — Eliab son of Helon — 57,400 [8]

[9] So the total of all the troops on Judah's side of the camp is 186,400. These three tribes are to lead the way whenever the Israelites travel to a new campsite.

[10] [10-11] "The divisions of Reuben, Simeon, and Gad are to camp on the south side of the Tabernacle, beneath their family banners. These are the names of the tribes, their leaders, and the number of their available troops:

Tribe — Leader — Number

Reuben — Elizur son of Shedeur — 46,500 [11]

[12] Simeon — Shelumiel son of Zurishaddai — 59,300 [13]

[14] Gad — Eliasaph son of Deuel — 45,650 [15]

[16] So the total of all the troops on Reuben's side of the camp is 151,450. These three tribes will be second in line whenever the Israelites travel.

[17] "Then the Levites will set out from the middle of the camp with the Tabernacle. All the tribes are to travel in the same order that they camp, each in position under the appropriate family banner.

[18] [18-19] "The divisions of Ephraim, Manasseh, and Benjamin are to camp on the west side of the Tabernacle, beneath their family banners. These are the names of the tribes, their leaders, and the number of their available troops:

Tribe — Leader — Number

Ephraim — Elishama son of Ammihud — 40,500 [19]

[20] Manasseh — Gamaliel son of Pedahzur — 32,200 [21]

[22] Benjamin — Abidan son of Gideoni — 35,400 [23]

[24] So the total of all the troops on Ephraim's side of the camp is 108,100, and they will follow the Levites in the line of march.

[25] [25-26] "The divisions of Dan, Asher, and Naphtali are to camp on the north side of the Tabernacle, beneath their family banners. These are the names of the tribes, their leaders, and the number of their available troops:

Tribe — Leader — Number

Dan — Ahiezer son of Ammishaddai — 62,700 [26]

[27] Asher — Pagiel son of Ocran — 41,500 [28]

[29] Naphtali — Ahira son of Enan — 53,400 [30]

[31] So the total of all the troops on Dan's side of the camp is 157,600. They are to bring up the rear whenever the Israelites move to a new campsite."

[32] In summary, the troops of Israel listed by their families totaled 603,550. [33] The Levites were exempted from this census by the Lord's command to Moses. [34] So the people of Israel did everything just as the Lord had commanded Moses. Each clan and family set up camp and marched under their banners exactly as the Lord had instructed them.

[3:1] this is the family line of Aaron and Moses as it was recorded when the Lord spoke to Moses on Mount Sinai: [2] Aaron's sons were Nadab (the firstborn), Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar. [3] They were anointed and set apart to minister as priests. [4] But Nadab and Abihu died in the Lord's presence in the wilderness of Sinai when they burned before the Lord a different kind of fire than he had commanded. Since they had no sons, this left only Eleazar and Ithamar to serve as priests with their father, Aaron.

[5] Then the Lord said to Moses, [6] "Call forward the tribe of Levi and present them to Aaron the priest as his assistants. [7] They will serve Aaron and the whole community, performing their sacred duties in and around the Tabernacle. [8] They will also maintain all the furnishings of the sacred tent, serving in the Tabernacle on behalf of all the Israelites. [9] Assign the Levites to Aaron and his sons as their assistants. [10] Appoint Aaron and his sons to carry out the duties of the priesthood. Anyone else who comes too near the sanctuary must be executed!"

[11] And the Lord said to Moses, [12] "I have chosen the Levites from among the Israelites as substitutes for all the firstborn sons of the people of Israel. The Levites are mine [13] because all the firstborn sons are mine. From the day I killed all the firstborn sons of the Egyptians, I set apart for myself all the firstborn in Israel of both men and animals. They are mine; I am the Lord."

[14] The Lord spoke again to Moses, there in the wilderness of Sinai. He said, [15] "Take a census of the tribe of Levi by its families and clans. Count every male who is one month old or older." [16] So Moses counted them, just as the Lord had commanded.

[17] Levi had three sons, who were named Gershon, Kohath, and Merari.

[18] The clans descended from Gershon were named for two of his descendants, Libni and Shimei.

[19] The clans descended from Kohath were named for four of his descendants, Amram, Izhar, Hebron, and Uzziel.

[20] The clans descended from Merari were named for two of his descendants, Mahli and Mushi.

These were the Levite clans, listed according to their family groups.

[21] The descendants of Gershon were composed of the clans descended from Libni and Shimei. [22] There were 7,500 males one month old or older among these Gershonite clans. [23] They were assigned the area to the west of the Tabernacle for their camp. [24] The leader of the Gershonite clans was Eliasaph son of Lael.

[25] These two clans were responsible to care for the tent of the Tabernacle with its layers of coverings, its entry curtains, [26] the curtains of the courtyard that surrounded the Tabernacle and altar, the curtain at the courtyard entrance, the cords, and all the equipment related to their use.

[27] The descendants of Kohath were composed of the clans descended from Amram, Izhar, Hebron, and Uzziel. [28] There were 8,600 males one month old or older among these Kohathite clans. They were responsible for the care of the sanctuary. [29] They were assigned the area south of the Tabernacle for their camp. [30] The leader of the Kohathite clans was Elizaphan son of Uzziel. [31] These four clans were responsible for the care of the Ark, the table, the lampstand, the altars, the various utensils used in the sanctuary, the inner curtain, and all the equipment related to their use. [32] Eleazar the priest, Aaron's son, was the chief administrator over all the Levites, with special responsibility for the oversight of the sanctuary.

[33] The descendants of Merari were composed of the clans descended from Mahli and Mushi. [34] There were 6,200 males one month old or older among these Merarite clans. [35] They were assigned the area north of the Tabernacle for their camp. The leader of the Merarite clans was Zuriel son of Abihail. [36] These two clans were responsible for the care of the frames supporting the Tabernacle, the crossbars, the pillars, the bases, and all the equipment related to their use. [37] They were also responsible for the posts of the courtyard and all their bases, pegs, and cords.

[38] The area in front of the Tabernacle in the east toward the sunrise was reserved for the tents of Moses and of Aaron and his sons, who had the final responsibility for the sanctuary on behalf of the people of Israel. Anyone other than a priest or Levite who came too near the sanctuary was to be executed.

[39] So among the Levite clans counted by Moses and Aaron at the Lord's command, there were 22,000 males one month old or older.

[40] Then the Lord said to Moses, "Now count all the firstborn sons in Israel who are one month old or older, and register each name. [41] The Levites will be reserved for me as substitutes for the firstborn sons of Israel; I am the Lord. And the Levites' livestock are mine as substitutes for the firstborn livestock of the whole nation of Israel."

[42] So Moses counted the firstborn sons of the people of Israel, just as the Lord had commanded. [43] The total number of firstborn sons who were one month old or older was 22,273.

[44] Now the Lord said to Moses, [45] "Take the Levites in place of the firstborn sons of the people of Israel. And take the livestock of the Levites as substitutes for the firstborn livestock of the people of Israel. The Levites will be mine; I am the Lord. [46] To redeem the 273 firstborn sons of Israel who are in excess of the number of Levites, [47] collect five pieces of silver for each person, each piece weighing the same as the standard sanctuary shekel. [48] Give the silver to Aaron and his sons as the redemption price for the extra firstborn sons."



[49] So Moses collected redemption money for the firstborn sons of Israel who exceeded the number of Levites. [50] The silver collected on behalf of these firstborn sons of Israel came to about thirty-four pounds in weight. [51] And Moses gave the redemption money to Aaron and his sons as the Lord had commanded.

[4:1] Then the Lord said to Moses and Aaron, [2] "Take a census of the clans and families of the Kohathite division of the Levite tribe. [3] Count all the men between the ages of thirty and fifty who qualify to work in the Tabernacle.

[4] "The duties of the Kohathites at the Tabernacle will relate to the most sacred objects. [5] When the camp moves, Aaron and his sons must enter the Tabernacle first to take down the inner curtain and cover the Ark of the Covenant with it. [6] Then they must cover the inner curtain with fine goatskin leather, and the goatskin leather with a dark blue cloth. Finally, they must put the carrying poles of the Ark in place.

[7] "Next they must spread a blue cloth over the table, where the Bread of the Presence is displayed, and place the dishes, spoons, bowls, cups, and the special bread on the cloth. [8] They must spread a scarlet cloth over that, and finally a covering of fine goatskin leather on top of the scarlet cloth. Then they must insert the carrying poles into the table.

[9] "Next they must cover the lampstand with a dark blue cloth, along with its lamps, lamp snuffers, trays, and special jars of olive oil. [10] The lampstand with its utensils must then be covered with fine goatskin leather, and the bundle must be placed on a carrying frame.

[11] "Aaron and his sons must also spread a dark blue cloth over the gold altar and cover this cloth with a covering of fine goatskin leather. Then they are to attach the carrying poles to the altar. [12] All the remaining utensils of the sanctuary must be wrapped in a dark blue cloth, covered with fine goatskin leather, and placed on the carrying frame.

[13] "The ashes must be removed from the altar, and the altar must then be covered with a purple cloth. [14] All the altar utensils—the firepans, hooks, shovels, basins, and all the containers—are to be placed on the cloth, and a covering of fine goatskin leather must be spread over them. Finally, the carrying poles must be put in place. [15] When Aaron and his sons have finished covering the sanctuary and all the sacred utensils, the Kohathites will come and carry these things to the next destination. But they must not touch the sacred objects, or they will die. So these are the objects of the Tabernacle that the Kohathites must carry.

[16] "Eleazar son of Aaron the priest will be responsible for the oil of the lampstand, the fragrant incense, the daily grain offering, and the anointing oil. In fact, the supervision of the entire Tabernacle and everything in it will be Eleazar's responsibility."

[17] Then the Lord said to Moses and Aaron, [18] "Don't let the Kohathite clans be destroyed from among the Levites! [19] This is what you must do so they will live and not die when they approach the most sacred objects. Aaron and his sons must always go in with them and assign a specific duty or load to each person. [20] Otherwise they must not approach the sanctuary and look at the sacred objects for even a moment, or they will die."

[21] And the Lord said to Moses, [22] "Take a census of the clans and families of the Gershonite division of the tribe of Levi. [23] Count all the men between the ages of thirty and fifty who are eligible to serve in the Tabernacle.

[24] "The duties of the Gershonites will be in the areas of general service and carrying loads. [25] They must carry the curtains of the Tabernacle, the Tabernacle itself with its coverings, the outer covering of fine goatskin leather, and the curtain for the Tabernacle entrance. [26] They are also to carry the curtains for the courtyard walls that surround the Tabernacle and altar, the curtain across the courtyard entrance, the necessary cords, and all the altar's accessories. The Gershonites are responsible for transporting all these items. [27] Aaron and his sons will direct the Gershonites regarding their duties, whether it involves moving or doing other work. They must assign the Gershonites the loads they are to carry. [28] So these are the duties assigned to the Gershonites at the Tabernacle. They will be directly responsible to Ithamar son of Aaron the priest.

[29] "Now take a census of the clans and families of the Merarite division of the Levite tribe. [30] Count all the men between the ages of thirty and fifty who are eligible to serve in the Tabernacle.

[31] "Their duties at the Tabernacle will consist of carrying loads. They will be required to carry the frames of the Tabernacle, the crossbars, the pillars with their bases, [32] the posts for the courtyard walls with their bases, pegs, cords, accessories, and everything else related to their use. You must assign the various loads to each man by name. [33] So these are the duties of the Merarites at the Tabernacle. They are directly responsible to Ithamar son of Aaron the priest."

[34] So Moses, Aaron, and the other leaders of the community counted the Kohathite division by its clans and families. [35] The count included all the men between thirty and fifty years of age who were eligible for service in the Tabernacle, [36] and the total number came to 2,750. [37] So this was the total of all those from the Kohathite clans who were eligible to serve at the Tabernacle. Moses and Aaron counted them, just as the Lord had commanded through Moses.

[38] The Gershonite division was also counted by its clans and families. [39] The count included all the men between thirty and fifty years of age who were eligible for service in the Tabernacle, [40] and the total number came to 2,630. [41] So this was the total of all those from the Gershonite clans who were eligible to serve at the Tabernacle. Moses and Aaron counted them, just as the Lord had commanded.

[42] The Merarite division was also counted by its clans and families. [43] The count included all the men between thirty and fifty years of age who were eligible for service in the Tabernacle, [44] and the total number came to 3,200. [45] So this was the total of all those from the Merarite clans who were eligible for service. Moses and Aaron counted them, just as the Lord had commanded through Moses.

[46] So Moses, Aaron, and the leaders of Israel counted all the Levites by their clans and families. [47] All the men between thirty and fifty years of age who were eligible for service in the Tabernacle and for its transportation [48] numbered 8,580. [49] Each man was assigned his task and told what to carry, just as the Lord had commanded through Moses.

And so the census was completed, just as the Lord had commanded Moses.

[5:1] The Lord gave these instructions to Moses: [2] "Command the people of Israel to remove anyone from the camp who has a contagious skin disease or a discharge, or who has been defiled by touching a dead person. [3] This applies to men and women alike. Remove them so they will not defile the camp, where I live among you." [4] So the Israelites did just as the Lord had commanded Moses and removed such people from the camp.

[5] Then the Lord said to Moses, [6] "Give these instructions to the people of Israel: If any of the people—men or women—betray the Lord by doing wrong to another person, they are guilty. [7] They must confess their sin and make full restitution for what they have done, adding a penalty of 20 percent and returning it to the person who was wronged. [8] But if the person who was wronged is dead, and there are no near relatives to whom restitution can be made, it belongs to the Lord and must be given to the priest, along with a ram for atonement. [9] All the sacred gifts that the Israelites bring to a priest will belong to him. [10] Each priest may keep the sacred donations that he receives."

[11] And the Lord said to Moses, [12] "Say to the people of Israel: 'Suppose a man's wife goes astray and is unfaithful to her husband. [13] Suppose she sleeps with another man, but there is no witness since she was not caught in the act. [14] If her husband becomes jealous and suspicious of his wife, even if she has not defiled herself, [15] the husband must bring his wife to the priest with an offering of two quarts of barley flour to be presented on her behalf. Do not mix it with olive oil or frankincense, for it is a jealousy offering—an offering of inquiry to find out if she is guilty.

[16] "The priest must then present her before the Lord. [17] He must take some holy water in a clay jar and mix it with dust from the Tabernacle floor. [18] When he has presented her before the Lord, he must unbind her hair and place the offering of inquiry—the jealousy offering—in her hands to determine whether or not her husband's suspicions are justified. The priest will stand before her, holding the jar of bitter water that brings a curse to those who are guilty.

[19] The priest will put the woman under oath and say to her, "If no other man has slept with you, and you have not defiled yourself by being unfaithful, may you be immune from the effects of this bitter water that causes the curse. [20] But if you have gone astray while under your husband's authority and defiled yourself by sleeping with another man"— [21] at this point the priest must put the woman under this oath—"then may the people see that the Lord's curse is upon you when he makes you infertile.

[22] Now may this water that brings the curse enter your body and make you infertile." And the woman will be required to say, "Yes, let it be so." [23] Then the priest will write these curses on a piece of leather and wash them off into the bitter water. [24] He will then make the woman drink the bitter water, so it may bring on the curse and cause bitter suffering in cases of guilt.

[25] " Then the priest will take the jealousy offering from the woman's hand, lift it up before the Lord, and carry it to the altar. [26] He will take a handful as a token portion and burn it on the altar. Then he will require the woman to drink the water.

[27] If she has defiled herself by being unfaithful to her husband, the water that brings the curse will cause bitter suffering. She will become infertile, and her name will become a curse word among her people. [28] But if she has not defiled herself and is pure, she will be unharmed and will still be able to have children.

[29] " This is the ritual law for dealing with jealousy. If a woman defiles herself by being unfaithful to her husband, [30] or if a man is overcome with jealousy and suspicion that his wife has been unfaithful, the husband must present his wife before the Lord, and the priest will apply this entire ritual law to her. [31] The husband will be innocent of any guilt in this matter, but his wife will be held accountable for her sin.' "

[6:1] Then the Lord said to Moses, "Speak to the people of Israel and give them these instructions: [2] If some of the people, either men or women, take the special vow of a Nazirite, setting themselves apart to the Lord in a special way, [3] they must give up wine and other alcoholic drinks. They must not use vinegar made from wine, they must not drink other fermented drinks or fresh grape juice, and they must not eat grapes or raisins. [4] As long as they are bound by their Nazirite vow, they are not allowed to eat or drink anything that comes from a grapevine, not even the grape seeds or skins.

[5] "They must never cut their hair throughout the time of their vow, for they are holy and set apart to the Lord. That is why they must let their hair grow long. [6] And they may not go near a dead body during the entire period of their vow to the Lord, [7] even if their own father, mother, brother, or sister has died. They must not defile the hair on their head, because it is the symbol of their separation to God. [8] This applies as long as they are set apart to the Lord.

[9] "If their hair is defiled because someone suddenly falls dead beside them, they must wait for seven days and then shave their heads. Then they will be cleansed from their defilement. [10] On the eighth day they must bring two turtledoves or two young pigeons to the priest at the entrance of the Tabernacle. [11] The priest will offer one of the birds for a sin offering and the other for a burnt offering. In this way, he will make atonement for the guilt they incurred from the dead body. Then they must renew their vow that day and let their hair begin to grow again. [12] The days of their vow that were completed before their defilement no longer count. They must rededicate themselves to the Lord for the full term of their vow, and each must bring a one-year-old male lamb for a guilt offering.

[13] "This is the ritual law of the Nazirites. At the conclusion of their time of separation as Nazirites, they must each go to the entrance of the Tabernacle [14] and offer these sacrifices to the Lord: a one-year-old male lamb without defect for a burnt offering, a one-year-old female lamb without defect for a sin offering, a ram without defect for a peace offering, [15] a basket of bread made without yeast—cakes of choice flour mixed with olive oil and wafers spread with olive oil—along with their prescribed grain offerings and drink offerings.

[16] The priest will present these offerings before the Lord: first the sin offering and the burnt offering; [17] then the ram for a peace offering, along with the basket of bread made without yeast. The priest must also make the prescribed grain offering and drink offering.

[18] "Then the Nazirites will shave their hair at the entrance of the Tabernacle and put it on the fire beneath the peace-offering sacrifice. [19] After each Nazirite's head has been shaved, the priest will take for each of them the boiled shoulder of the ram, one cake made without yeast, and one wafer made without yeast, and put them all into the Nazirite's hands.

[20] The priest will then lift the gifts up before the Lord in a gesture of offering. These are holy portions for the priest, along with the breast and thigh pieces that were lifted up before the Lord. After this ceremony the Nazirites may again drink wine.

[21] "This is the ritual law of the Nazirites. If any Nazirites have vowed to give the Lord anything else beyond what is required by their normal Nazirite vow, they must fulfill their special vow exactly as they have promised."

[22] Then the Lord said to Moses, [23] "Instruct Aaron and his sons to bless the people of Israel with this special blessing:

[24] 'May the Lord bless you  
and protect you.

[25] May the Lord smile on you  
and be gracious to you.

[26] May the Lord show you his favor  
and give you his peace.'

[27] This is how Aaron and his sons will designate the Israelites as my people, and I myself will bless them."

[7:1] On the day Moses set up the Tabernacle, he anointed it and set it apart as holy, along with all its furnishings and the altar with its utensils. [2] Then the leaders of Israel—the tribal leaders who had organized the census—came and brought their offerings. [3] Together they brought six carts and twelve oxen. There was a cart for every two leaders and an ox for each leader. They presented these to the Lord in front of the Tabernacle.

[4] Then the Lord said to Moses, [5] "Receive their gifts and use these oxen and carts for the work of the Tabernacle. Distribute them among the Levites according to the work they have to do." [6] So Moses presented the carts and oxen to the Levites. [7] He gave two carts and four oxen to the Gershonite division for their work, [8] and four carts and eight oxen to the Merarite division for their work. All their work was done under the leadership of Ithamar son of Aaron the priest. [9] But he gave none of the carts or oxen to the Kohathite division, since they were required to carry the sacred objects of the Tabernacle on their shoulders.

[10] The leaders also presented dedication gifts for the altar at the time it was anointed. They each placed their gifts before the altar. [11] The Lord said to Moses, "Let each leader bring his gift on a different day for the dedication of the altar."

[12] On the first day Nahshon son of Amminadab, leader of the tribe of Judah, presented his offering.

[13] The offering consisted of a silver platter weighing about 3 1/4 pounds and a silver basin of about 1 3/4 pounds. These were both filled with grain offerings of choice flour mixed with olive oil. [14] He also brought a gold container weighing about four ounces, which was filled with incense. [15] He brought a young bull, a ram, and a one-year-old male lamb as a burnt offering; [16] a male goat for a sin offering; [17] and two oxen, five rams, five male goats, and five one-year-old male lambs for a peace offering. This was the offering brought by Nahshon son of Amminadab.

[18] On the second day Nethanel son of Zuar, leader of the tribe of Issachar, presented his offering.

[19] The offering consisted of a silver platter weighing about 3 1/4 pounds and a silver basin of about 1 3/4 pounds. These were both filled with grain offerings of choice flour mixed with olive oil. [20] He also brought a gold container weighing about four ounces, which was filled with incense. [21] He brought a young bull, a ram, and a one-year-old male lamb as a burnt offering; [22] a male goat for a sin offering; [23] and two oxen, five rams, five male goats, and five one-year-old male lambs for a peace offering. This was the offering brought by Nethanel son of Zuar.

[24] On the third day Eliab son of Helon, leader of the tribe of Zebulun, presented his offering.

[25] The offering consisted of a silver platter weighing about 3 1/4 pounds and a silver basin of about 1 3/4 pounds. These were both filled with grain offerings of choice flour mixed with olive oil. [26] He also brought a gold container weighing about four ounces, which was filled with incense. [27] He brought a young bull, a ram, and a one-year-old male lamb as a burnt offering; [28] a male goat for a sin offering; [29] and two oxen, five rams, five male goats, and five one-year-old male lambs for a peace offering. This was the offering brought by Eliab son of Helon.

[30] On the fourth day Elizur son of Shedeur, leader of the tribe of Reuben, presented his offering.

[31] The offering consisted of a silver platter weighing about 3 1/4 pounds and a silver basin of about 1 3/4 pounds. These were both filled with grain offerings of choice flour mixed with olive oil. [32] He also brought a gold container weighing about four ounces, which was filled with incense. [33] He brought a young bull, a ram, and a one-year-old male lamb as a burnt offering; [34] a male goat for a sin offering; [35] and two oxen, five rams, five male goats, and five one-year-old male lambs for a peace offering. This was the offering brought by Elizur son of Shedeur.

[36] On the fifth day Shelumiel son of Zurishaddai, leader of the tribe of Simeon, presented his offering.

[37] The offering consisted of a silver platter weighing about 3 1/4 pounds and a silver basin of about 1 3/4 pounds. These were both filled with grain offerings of choice flour mixed with olive oil. [38] He also brought a gold container weighing about four ounces, which was filled with incense. [39] He brought a young bull, a ram, and a one-year-old male lamb as a burnt offering; [40] a male goat for a sin offering; [41] and two oxen, five rams, five male goats, and five one-year-old male lambs for a peace offering. This was the offering brought by Shelumiel son of Zurishaddai.

[42] On the sixth day Eliasaph son of Deuel, leader of the tribe of Gad, presented his offering. [43] The offering consisted of a silver platter weighing about 3 1/4 pounds and a silver basin of about 1 3/4 pounds. These were both filled with grain offerings of choice flour mixed with olive oil. [44] He also brought a gold container weighing about four ounces, which was filled with incense. [45] He brought a young bull, a ram, and a one-year-old male lamb as a burnt offering; [46] a male goat for a sin offering; [47] and two oxen, five rams, five male goats, and five one-year-old male lambs for a peace offering. This was the offering brought by Eliasaph son of Deuel.

[48] On the seventh day Elishama son of Ammihud, leader of the tribe of Ephraim, presented his offering.

[49] The offering consisted of a silver platter weighing about 3 1/4 pounds and a silver basin of about 1 3/4 pounds. These were both filled with grain offerings of choice flour mixed with olive oil. [50] He also brought a gold container weighing about four ounces, which was filled with incense. [51] He brought a young bull, a ram, and a one-year-old male lamb as a burnt offering; [52] a male goat for a sin offering; [53] and two oxen, five rams, five male goats, and five one-year-old male lambs for a peace offering. This was the offering brought by Elishama son of Ammihud.

[54] On the eighth day Gamaliel son of Pedahzur, leader of the tribe of Manasseh, presented his offering.

[55] The offering consisted of a silver platter weighing about 3 1/4 pounds and a silver basin of about 1 3/4 pounds. These were both filled with grain offerings of choice flour mixed with olive oil. [56] He also brought a gold container weighing about four ounces, which was filled with incense. [57] He brought a young bull, a ram, and a one-year-old male lamb as a burnt offering; [58] a male goat for a sin offering; [59] and two oxen, five rams, five male goats, and five one-year-old male lambs for a peace offering. This was the offering brought by Gamaliel son of Pedahzur.

[60] On the ninth day Abidan son of Gideoni, leader of the tribe of Benjamin, presented his offering.

[61] The offering consisted of a silver platter weighing about 3 1/4 pounds and a silver basin of about 1 3/4 pounds. These were both filled with grain offerings of choice flour mixed with olive oil. [62] He also brought a gold container weighing about four ounces, which was filled with incense. [63] He brought a young bull, a ram, and a one-year-old male lamb as a burnt offering; [64] a male goat for a sin offering; [65] and two oxen, five rams, five male goats, and five one-year-old male lambs for a peace offering. This was the offering brought by Abidan son of Gideoni.

[66] On the tenth day Ahiezer son of Ammishaddai, leader of the tribe of Dan, presented his offering.

[67] The offering consisted of a silver platter weighing about 3 1/4 pounds and a silver basin of about 1 3/4 pounds. These were both filled with grain offerings of choice flour mixed with olive oil. [68] He also brought a gold container weighing about four ounces, which was filled with incense. [69] He brought a young bull, a ram, and a one-year-old male lamb as a burnt offering; [70] a male goat for a sin offering; [71] and two oxen, five rams, five male goats, and five one-year-old male lambs for a peace offering. This was the offering brought by Ahiezer son of Ammishaddai.

[72] On the eleventh day Pagiel son of Ocran, leader of the tribe of Asher, presented his offering.

[73] The offering consisted of a silver platter weighing about 3 1/4 pounds and a silver basin of about 1 3/4 pounds. These were both filled with grain offerings of choice flour mixed with olive oil. [74] He also brought a gold container weighing about four ounces, which was filled with incense. [75] He brought a young bull, a ram, and a one-year-old male lamb as a burnt offering; [76] a male goat for a sin offering; [77] and two oxen, five rams, five male goats, and five one-year-old male lambs for a peace offering. This was the offering brought by Pagiel son of Ocran.

[78] On the twelfth day Ahira son of Enan, leader of the tribe of Naphtali, presented his offering.

[79] The offering consisted of a silver platter weighing about 3 1/4 pounds and a silver basin of about 1 3/4 pounds. These were both filled with grain offerings of choice flour mixed with olive oil. [80] He also brought a gold container weighing about four ounces, which was filled with incense. [81] He brought a young bull, a ram, and a one-year-old male lamb as a burnt offering; [82] a male goat for a sin offering; [83] and two oxen, five rams, five male goats, and five one-year-old male lambs for a peace offering. This was the offering brought by Ahira son of Enan.

[84] So this was the dedication offering for the altar, brought by the leaders of Israel at the time it was anointed: twelve silver platters, twelve silver basins, and twelve gold incense containers. [85] In all, the silver objects weighed about 60 pounds, about 3 1/4 pounds for each platter and 1 3/4 pounds for each basin. [86] The weight of the donated gold came to about three pounds, about four ounces for each of the gold containers that were filled with incense. [87] Twelve bulls, twelve rams, and twelve one-year-old male lambs were donated for the burnt offerings, along with their prescribed grain offerings. Twelve male goats were brought for the sin offerings. [88] Twenty-four young bulls, sixty rams, sixty male goats, and sixty one-year-old male lambs were donated for the peace offerings. This was the dedication offering for the altar after it was anointed.

[89] Whenever Moses went into the Tabernacle to speak with the Lord, he heard the voice speaking to him from between the two cherubim above the Ark's cover—the place of atonement—that rests on the Ark of the Covenant. The Lord spoke to him from there.

[8:1] The Lord said to Moses, [2] "Tell Aaron that when he sets up the seven lamps in the lampstand, he is to place them so their light shines forward." [3] So Aaron did this. He set up the seven lamps so they reflected their light forward, just as the Lord had commanded Moses. [4] The entire lampstand, from its base to its decorative blossoms, was made of beaten gold. It was built according to the exact design the Lord had shown Moses.



[5] Then the Lord said to Moses, [6] "Now set the Levites apart from the rest of the people of Israel and make them ceremonially clean. [7] Do this by sprinkling them with the water of purification. And have them shave their entire body and wash their clothing. Then they will be ceremonially clean. [8] Have them bring a young bull and a grain offering of choice flour mixed with olive oil, along with a second young bull for a sin offering. [9] Then assemble the whole community of Israel and present the Levites at the entrance of the Tabernacle. [10] When you bring the Levites before the Lord, the people of Israel must lay their hands on them. [11] Aaron must present the Levites to the Lord as a special offering from the people of Israel, thus dedicating them to the Lord's service.

[12] "Next the Levites will lay their hands on the heads of the young bulls and present them to the Lord. One will be for a sin offering and the other for a burnt offering, to make atonement for the Levites. [13] Then have the Levites stand in front of Aaron and his sons, and present them as a special offering to the Lord. [14] In this way, you will set the Levites apart from the rest of the people of Israel, and the Levites will belong to me. [15] After this, they may go in and out of the Tabernacle to do their work, because you have purified them and presented them as a special offering.

[16] "Of all the people of Israel, the Levites are reserved for me. I have claimed them for myself in place of all the firstborn sons of the Israelites; I have taken the Levites as their substitutes. [17] For all the firstborn males among the people of Israel are mine, both people and animals. I set them apart for myself on the night I killed all the firstborn sons of the Egyptians. [18] Yes, I claim the Levites in place of all the firstborn sons of Israel. [19] And of all the Israelites, I have assigned the Levites to Aaron and his sons. They will serve in the Tabernacle on behalf of the Israelites and make atonement for them so no plague will strike them when they approach the sanctuary."

[20] So Moses, Aaron, and the whole community of Israel dedicated the Levites, carefully following all the Lord's instructions to Moses. [21] The Levites purified themselves and washed their clothes, and Aaron presented them to the Lord as a special offering. He then performed the rite of atonement over them to purify them. [22] From then on the Levites went into the Tabernacle to perform their duties, helping Aaron and his sons. So they carried out all the commands that the Lord gave Moses concerning the Levites.

[23] The Lord also instructed Moses, [24] "This is the rule the Levites must follow: They must begin serving in the Tabernacle at the age of twenty-five, [25] and they must retire at the age of fifty. [26] After retirement they may assist their fellow Levites by performing guard duty at the Tabernacle, but they may not officiate in the service. This is how you will assign duties to the Levites."

[9:1] The Lord gave these instructions to Moses in early spring, during the second year after Israel's departure from Egypt, while he and the rest of the Israelites were in the wilderness of Sinai: [2] "Tell the Israelites to celebrate the Passover at the proper time, [3] at twilight on the appointed day in early spring. Be sure to follow all my laws and regulations concerning this celebration."

[4] So Moses told the people to celebrate the Passover [5] in the wilderness of Sinai as twilight fell on the appointed day. And they celebrated the festival there, just as the Lord had commanded Moses. [6] But some of the men had been ceremonially defiled by touching a dead person, so they could not offer their Passover lambs that day. So they came to Moses and Aaron that day [7] and said, "We have become ceremonially unclean by touching a dead person. But why should we be excluded from presenting the Lord's offering at the proper time with the rest of the Israelites?"

[8] Moses answered, "Wait here until I have received instructions for you from the Lord."

[9] This was the Lord's reply: [10] "Say to the Israelites: 'If any of the people now or in future generations are ceremonially unclean at Passover time because of touching a dead body, or if they are on a journey and cannot be present at the ceremony, they may still celebrate the Lord's Passover. [11] They must offer the Passover sacrifice one month later, at twilight on the appointed day. They must eat the lamb at that time with bitter herbs and bread made without yeast.

[12] They must not leave any of the lamb until the next morning, and they must not break any of its bones. They must follow all the normal regulations concerning the Passover.

[13] " 'But those who are ceremonially clean and not away on a trip, yet still refuse to celebrate the Passover at the regular time, will be cut off from the community of Israel for failing to present the Lord's offering at the proper time. They will suffer the consequences of their guilt. [14] And if foreigners living among you want to celebrate the Passover to the Lord, they must follow these same laws and regulations. The same laws apply both to you and to the foreigners living among you.' "

[15] The Tabernacle was set up, and on that day the cloud covered it. Then from evening until morning the cloud over the Tabernacle appeared to be a pillar of fire. [16] This was the regular pattern—at night the cloud changed to the appearance of fire. [17] When the cloud lifted from over the sacred tent, the people of Israel followed it. And wherever the cloud settled, the people of Israel camped. [18] In this way, they traveled at the Lord's command and stopped wherever he told them to. Then they remained where they were as long as the cloud stayed over the Tabernacle.

[19] If the cloud remained over the Tabernacle for a long time, the Israelites stayed for a long time, just as the Lord commanded. [20] Sometimes the cloud would stay over the Tabernacle for only a few days, so the people would stay for only a few days. Then at the Lord's command they would break camp. [21] Sometimes the cloud stayed only overnight and moved on the next morning. But day or night, when the cloud lifted, the people broke camp and followed.

[22] Whether the cloud stayed above the Tabernacle for two days, a month, or a year, the people of Israel stayed in camp and did not move on. But as soon as it lifted, they broke camp and moved on. [23] So they camped or traveled at the Lord's command, and they did whatever the Lord told them through Moses.

[10:1] Now the Lord said to Moses, [2] "Make two trumpets of beaten silver to be used for summoning the people to assemble and for signaling the breaking of camp. [3] When both trumpets are blown, the people will know that they are to gather before you at the entrance of the Tabernacle. [4] But if only one is blown, then only the leaders of the tribes of Israel will come to you.

[5] "When you sound the signal to move on, the tribes on the east side of the Tabernacle will break camp and move forward. [6] When you sound the signal a second time, the tribes on the south will follow. You must sound short blasts to signal moving on. [7] But when you call the people to an assembly, blow the trumpets using a different signal. [8] Only the priests, Aaron's descendants, are allowed to blow the trumpets. This is a permanent law to be followed from generation to generation.

[9] "When you arrive in your own land and go to war against your enemies, you must sound the alarm with these trumpets so the Lord your God will remember you and rescue you from your enemies. [10] Blow the trumpets in times of gladness, too, sounding them at your annual festivals and at the beginning of each month to rejoice over your burnt offerings and peace offerings. The trumpets will remind the Lord your God of his covenant with you. I am the Lord your God."

## **B. FIRST APPROACH TO THE PROMISED LAND (Numbers 10:11-14:45)**

The Israelites were prevented from entering the Promised Land because of their unbelief. Throughout history, God's people have continued to struggle with lack of faith. We must prevent unbelief from gaining a foothold in our lives, for it will keep us from enjoying the blessings that God has promised.

1. The people complain
2. Miriam and Aaron oppose Moses
3. The spies incite rebellion

### **Numbers 10:11-14:45**

One day in midspring, during the second year after Israel's departure from Egypt, the cloud lifted from the Tabernacle of the Covenant. [12] So the Israelites set out from the wilderness of Sinai and traveled on in stages until the cloud stopped in the wilderness of Paran.

[13] When the time to move arrived, the Lord gave the order through Moses. [14] The tribes that camped with Judah headed the march with their banner, under the leadership of Nahshon son of Amminadab. [15] The tribe of Issachar was led by Nethanel son of Zuar. [16] The tribe of Zebulun was led by Eliab son of Helon.

[17] Then the Tabernacle was taken down, and the Gershonite and Merarite divisions of the Levites were next in the line of march, carrying the Tabernacle with them. [18] Then the tribes that camped with Reuben set out with their banner, under the leadership of Elizur son of Shedeur. [19] The tribe of Simeon was led by Shelumiel son of Zurishaddai. [20] The tribe of Gad was led by Eliasaph son of Deuel.

[21] Next came the Kohathite division of the Levites, carrying the sacred objects from the Tabernacle. When they arrived at the next camp, the Tabernacle would already be set up at its new location. [22] Then the tribes that camped with Ephraim set out with their banner, under the leadership of Elishama son of Ammihud. [23] The tribe of Manasseh was led by Gamaliel son of Pedahzur. [24] The tribe of Benjamin was led by Abidan son of Gideoni.

[25] Last of all, the tribes that camped with Dan set out under their banner. They served as the rear guard for all the tribal camps. The tribe of Dan headed this group, under the leadership of Ahiezer son of Ammishaddai. [26] The tribe of Asher was led by Pagiel son of Ocran. [27] The tribe of Naphtali was led by Ahira son of Enan.

[28] This was the order in which the tribes marched, division by division.

[29] One day Moses said to his brother-in-law, Hobab son of Reuel the Midianite, "We are on our way to the Promised Land. Come with us and we will treat you well, for the Lord has given wonderful promises to Israel!"

[30] But Hobab replied, "No, I will not go. I must return to my own land and family."

[31] "Please don't leave us," Moses pleaded. "You know the places in the wilderness where we should camp. [32] Come, be our guide and we will share with you all the good things that the Lord does for us."

[33] They marched for three days after leaving the mountain of the Lord, with the Ark of the Lord's covenant moving ahead of them to show them where to stop and rest. [34] As they moved on each day, the cloud of the Lord hovered over them. [35] And whenever the Ark set out, Moses would cry, "Arise, O Lord, and let your enemies be scattered! Let them flee before you!" [36] And when the Ark was set down, he would say, "Return, O Lord, to the countless thousands of Israel!"

[11:1] The people soon began to complain to the Lord about their hardships; and when the Lord heard them, his anger blazed against them. Fire from the Lord raged among them and destroyed the outskirts of the camp. [2] The people screamed to Moses for help; and when he prayed to the Lord, the fire stopped. [3] After that, the area was known as Taberah—"the place of burning"—because fire from the Lord had burned among them there.

[4] Then the foreign rabble who were traveling with the Israelites began to crave the good things of Egypt, and the people of Israel also began to complain. "Oh, for some meat!" they exclaimed. [5] "We remember all the fish we used to eat for free in Egypt. And we had all the cucumbers, melons, leeks, onions, and garlic that we wanted. [6] But now our appetites are gone, and day after day we have nothing to eat but this manna!"

[7] The manna looked like small coriander seeds, pale yellow in color. [8] The people gathered it from the ground and made flour by grinding it with hand mills or pounding it in mortars. Then they boiled it in a pot and made it into flat cakes. These cakes tasted like they had been cooked in olive oil. [9] The manna came down on the camp with the dew during the night.

[10] Moses heard all the families standing in front of their tents weeping, and the Lord became extremely angry. Moses was also very aggravated. [11] And Moses said to the Lord, "Why are you treating me, your servant, so miserably? What did I do to deserve the burden of a people like this? [12] Are they my children? Am I their father? Is that why you have told me to carry them in my arms—like a nurse carries a baby—to the land you swore to give their ancestors? [13] Where am I supposed to get meat for all these people? They keep complaining and saying, 'Give us meat!' [14] I can't carry all these people by myself! The load is far too heavy! [15] I'd rather you killed me than treat me like this. Please spare me this misery!"

[16] Then the Lord said to Moses, "Summon before me seventy of the leaders of Israel. Bring them to the Tabernacle to stand there with you. [17] I will come down and talk to you there. I will take some of the Spirit that is upon you, and I will put the Spirit upon them also. They will bear the burden of the people along with you, so you will not have to carry it alone.

[18] "And tell the people to purify themselves, for tomorrow they will have meat to eat. Tell them, "The Lord has heard your whining and complaints: "If only we had meat to eat! Surely we were better off in Egypt!" Now the Lord will give you meat, and you will have to eat it. [19] And it won't be for just a day or two, or for five or ten or even twenty. [20] You will eat it for a whole month until you gag and are sick of it. For you have rejected the Lord, who is here among you, and you have complained to him, "Why did we ever leave Egypt?" ' "

[21] But Moses said, "There are 600,000 foot soldiers here with me, and yet you promise them meat for a whole month! [22] Even if we butchered all our flocks and herds, would that satisfy them? Even if we caught all the fish in the sea, would that be enough?"

[23] Then the Lord said to Moses, "Is there any limit to my power? Now you will see whether or not my word comes true!"

[24] So Moses went out and reported the Lord's words to the people. Then he gathered the seventy leaders and stationed them around the Tabernacle. [25] And the Lord came down in the cloud and spoke to Moses. He took some of the Spirit that was upon Moses and put it upon the seventy leaders. They prophesied as the Spirit rested upon them, but that was the only time this happened.

[26] Two men, Eldad and Medad, were still in the camp when the Spirit rested upon them. They were listed among the leaders but had not gone out to the Tabernacle, so they prophesied there in the camp. [27] A young man ran and reported to Moses, "Eldad and Medad are prophesying in the camp!" [28] Joshua son of Nun, who had been Moses' personal assistant since his youth, protested, "Moses, my master, make them stop!"

[29] But Moses replied, "Are you jealous for my sake? I wish that all the Lord's people were prophets, and that the Lord would put his Spirit upon them all!" [30] Then Moses returned to the camp with the leaders of Israel.

[31] Now the Lord sent a wind that brought quail from the sea and let them fall into the camp and all around it! For many miles in every direction from the camp there were quail flying about three feet above the ground. [32] So the people went out and caught quail all that day and throughout the night and all the next day, too. No one gathered less than fifty bushels! They spread the quail out all over the camp. [33] But while they were still eating the meat, the anger of the Lord blazed against the people, and he caused a severe plague to break out among them. [34] So that place was called Kibroth-hattaavah—"the graves of craving"—because they buried the people there who had craved meat from Egypt. [35] From there the Israelites traveled to Hazeroth, where they stayed for some time.

[12:1] While they were at Hazeroth, Miriam and Aaron criticized Moses because he had married a Cushite woman. [2] They said, "Has the Lord spoken only through Moses? Hasn't he spoken through us, too?" But the Lord heard them.

[3] Now Moses was more humble than any other person on earth. [4] So immediately the Lord called to Moses, Aaron, and Miriam and said, "Go out to the Tabernacle, all three of you!" And the three of them went out. [5] Then the Lord descended in the pillar of cloud and stood at the entrance of the Tabernacle. "Aaron and Miriam!" he called, and they stepped forward. [6] And the Lord said to them, "Now listen to me! Even with prophets, I the Lord communicate by visions and dreams. [7] But that is not how I communicate with my servant Moses. He is entrusted with my entire house. [8] I speak to him face to face, directly and not in riddles! He sees the Lord as he is. Should you not be afraid to criticize him?"

[9] The Lord was furious with them, and he departed. [10] As the cloud moved from above the Tabernacle, Miriam suddenly became white as snow with leprosy. When Aaron saw what had happened, [11] he cried out to Moses, "Oh, my lord! Please don't punish us for this sin we have so foolishly committed. [12] Don't let her be like a stillborn baby, already decayed at birth."

[13] So Moses cried out to the Lord, "Heal her, O God, I beg you!"

[14] And the Lord said to Moses, "If her father had spit in her face, wouldn't she have been defiled for seven days? Banish her from the camp for seven days, and after that she may return."

[15] So Miriam was excluded from the camp for seven days, and the people waited until she was brought back before they traveled again. [16] Then they left Hazeroth and camped in the wilderness of Paran.

[13:1] The Lord now said to Moses, [2] "Send men to explore the land of Canaan, the land I am giving to Israel. Send one leader from each of the twelve ancestral tribes." [3] So Moses did as the Lord commanded him. He sent out twelve men, all tribal leaders of Israel, from their camp in the wilderness of Paran. [4] These were the tribes and the names of the leaders:

Tribe — Leader

Reuben — Shammua son of Zaccur

[5] Simeon — Shaphat son of Hori

[6] Judah — Caleb son of Jephunneh

[7] Issachar — Igal son of Joseph

[8] Ephraim — Hoshea son of Nun

[9] Benjamin — Palti son of Raphu

[10] Zebulun — Gaddiel son of Sodi

[11] Manasseh son of Joseph — Gaddi son of Susi

[12] Dan — Ammiel son of Gemalli

[13] Asher — Sethur son of Michael

[14] Naphtali — Nahbi son of Vophsi

[15] Gad — Geuel son of Maki

[16] These are the names of the men Moses sent to explore the land. By this time Moses had changed Hoshea's name to Joshua.

[17] Moses gave the men these instructions as he sent them out to explore the land: "Go northward through the Negev into the hill country. [18] See what the land is like and find out whether the people living there are strong or weak, few or many. [19] What kind of land do they live in? Is it good or bad? Do their towns have walls or are they unprotected? [20] How is the soil? Is it fertile or poor? Are there many trees? Enter the land boldly, and bring back samples of the crops you see." (It happened to be the season for harvesting the first ripe grapes.)

[21] So they went up and explored the land from the wilderness of Zin as far as Rehob, near Lebo-hamath. [22] Going northward, they passed first through the Negev and arrived at Hebron, where Ahiman, Sheshai, and Talmi—all descendants of Anak—lived. (The ancient town of Hebron was founded seven years before the Egyptian city of Zoan.) [23] When they came to what is now known as the valley of Eshcol, they cut down a cluster of grapes so large that it took two of them to carry it on a pole between them! They also took samples of the pomegranates and figs. [24] At that time the Israelites renamed the valley Eshcol—"cluster"—because of the cluster of grapes they had cut there.

[25] After exploring the land for forty days, the men returned [26] to Moses, Aaron, and the people of Israel at Kadesh in the wilderness of Paran. They reported to the whole community what they had seen and showed them the fruit they had taken from the land.

[27] This was their report to Moses: "We arrived in the land you sent us to see, and it is indeed a magnificent country—a land flowing with milk and honey. Here is some of its fruit as proof. [28] But the people living there are powerful, and their cities and towns are fortified and very large. We also saw the descendants of Anak who are living there! [29] The Amalekites live in the Negev, and the Hittites, Jebusites, and Amorites live in the hill country. The Canaanites live along the coast of the Mediterranean Sea and along the Jordan Valley."

[30] But Caleb tried to encourage the people as they stood before Moses. "Let's go at once to take the land," he said. "We can certainly conquer it!"

[31] But the other men who had explored the land with him answered, "We can't go up against them! They are stronger than we are!" [32] So they spread discouraging reports about the land among the Israelites: "The land we explored will swallow up any who go to live there. All the people we saw were huge. [33] We even saw giants there, the descendants of Anak. We felt like grasshoppers next to them, and that's what we looked like to them!"

[14:1] Then all the people began weeping aloud, and they cried all night. [2] Their voices rose in a great chorus of complaint against Moses and Aaron. "We wish we had died in Egypt, or even here in the wilderness!" they wailed. [3] "Why is the Lord taking us to this country only to have us die in battle? Our wives and little ones will be carried off as slaves! Let's get out of here and return to Egypt!" [4] Then they plotted among themselves, "Let's choose a leader and go back to Egypt!"



[5] Then Moses and Aaron fell face down on the ground before the people of Israel. [6] Two of the men who had explored the land, Joshua son of Nun and Caleb son of Jephunneh, tore their clothing. [7] They said to the community of Israel, "The land we explored is a wonderful land! [8] And if the Lord is pleased with us, he will bring us safely into that land and give it to us. It is a rich land flowing with milk and honey, and he will give it to us! [9] Do not rebel against the Lord, and don't be afraid of the people of the land. They are only helpless prey to us! They have no protection, but the Lord is with us! Don't be afraid of them!"

[10] But the whole community began to talk about stoning Joshua and Caleb. Then the glorious presence of the Lord appeared to all the Israelites from above the Tabernacle. [11] And the Lord said to Moses, "How long will these people reject me? Will they never believe me, even after all the miraculous signs I have done among them? [12] I will disown them and destroy them with a plague. Then I will make you into a nation far greater and mightier than they are!"

[13] "But what will the Egyptians think when they hear about it?" Moses pleaded with the Lord. "They know full well the power you displayed in rescuing these people from Egypt. [14] They will tell this to the inhabitants of this land, who are well aware that you are with this people. They know, Lord, that you have appeared in full view of your people in the pillar of cloud that hovers over them. They know that you go before them in the pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night. [15] Now if you slaughter all these people, the nations that have heard of your fame will say, [16] 'The Lord was not able to bring them into the land he swore to give them, so he killed them in the wilderness.'

[17] "Please, Lord, prove that your power is as great as you have claimed it to be. For you said, [18] 'The Lord is slow to anger and rich in unfailing love, forgiving every kind of sin and rebellion. Even so he does not leave sin unpunished, but he punishes the children for the sins of their parents to the third and fourth generations.' [19] Please pardon the sins of this people because of your magnificent, unfailing love, just as you have forgiven them ever since they left Egypt."

[20] Then the Lord said, "I will pardon them as you have requested. [21] But as surely as I live, and as surely as the earth is filled with the Lord's glory, [22] not one of these people will ever enter that land. They have seen my glorious presence and the miraculous signs I performed both in Egypt and in the wilderness, but again and again they tested me by refusing to listen. [23] They will never even see the land I swore to give their ancestors. None of those who have treated me with contempt will enter it. [24] But my servant Caleb is different from the others. He has remained loyal to me, and I will bring him into the land he explored. His descendants will receive their full share of that land. [25] Now turn around and don't go on toward the land where the Amalekites and Canaanites live. Tomorrow you must set out for the wilderness in the direction of the Red Sea."

[26] Then the Lord said to Moses and Aaron, [27] "How long will this wicked nation complain about me? I have heard everything the Israelites have been saying. [28] Now tell them this: 'As surely as I live, I will do to you the very things I heard you say. I, the Lord, have spoken! [29] You will all die here in this wilderness! Because you complained against me, none of you who are twenty years old or older and were counted in the census [30] will enter the land I swore to give you. The only exceptions will be Caleb son of Jephunneh and Joshua son of Nun.

[31] " 'You said your children would be taken captive. Well, I will bring them safely into the land, and they will enjoy what you have despised. [32] But as for you, your dead bodies will fall in this wilderness. [33] And your children will be like shepherds, wandering in the wilderness forty years. In this way, they will pay for your faithlessness, until the last of you lies dead in the wilderness.

[34] " 'Because the men who explored the land were there for forty days, you must wander in the wilderness for forty years—a year for each day, suffering the consequences of your sins. You will discover what it is like to have me for an enemy.' [35] I, the Lord, have spoken! I will do these things to every member of the community who has conspired against me. They will all die here in this wilderness!"

[36] Then the ten scouts who had incited the rebellion against the Lord by spreading discouraging reports about the land [37] were struck dead with a plague before the Lord. [38] Of the twelve who had explored the land, only Joshua and Caleb remained alive.

[39] When Moses reported the Lord's words to the Israelites, there was much sorrow among the people. [40] So they got up early the next morning and set out for the hill country of Canaan. "Let's go," they said. "We realize that we have sinned, but now we are ready to enter the land the Lord has promised us."

[41] But Moses said, "Why are you now disobeying the Lord's orders to return to the wilderness? It won't work. [42] Do not go into the land now. You will only be crushed by your enemies because the Lord is not with you. [43] When you face the Amalekites and Canaanites in battle, you will be slaughtered. The Lord will abandon you because you have abandoned the Lord."

[44] But the people pushed ahead toward the hill country of Canaan, despite the fact that neither Moses nor the Ark of the Lord's covenant left the camp. [45] Then the Amalekites and the Canaanites who lived in those hills came down and attacked them and chased them as far as Hormah.

## C. WANDERING IN THE DESERT (Numbers 15:1-21:35)

When the people complained against God and criticized Moses they were severely punished. Over 14,000 people died as a result of rebellion against Moses. As a result of Korah's rebellion, Korah, Dathan, and Abiram and their households died, along with 250 false priests. Dissatisfaction and discontent, if allowed to remain in our lives, can easily lead to disaster. We should refrain from complaining and criticizing our leaders.

1. Additional regulations
2. Many leaders rebel against Moses
3. Duties of priests and Levites
4. The new generation

### Numbers 15:1-21:35

The Lord told Moses to give these instructions to the people of Israel: [2] "When you finally settle in the land I am going to give you, [3] and you want to please the Lord with a burnt offering or any other offering given by fire, the sacrifice must be an animal from your flocks of sheep and goats or from your herds of cattle. When it is an ordinary burnt offering, a sacrifice to fulfill a vow, a freewill offering, or a special sacrifice at any of the annual festivals, [4] whoever brings it must also give to the Lord a grain offering of two quarts of choice flour mixed with one quart of olive oil. [5] For each lamb offered as a whole burnt offering, you must also present one quart of wine for a drink offering.

[6] "If the sacrifice is a ram, give three quarts of choice flour mixed with two and a half pints of olive oil, [7] and give two and a half pints of wine for a drink offering. This sacrifice will be very pleasing to the Lord.

[8] "When you present a young bull as a burnt offering or a sacrifice in fulfillment of a special vow or as a peace offering to the Lord, [9] then the grain offering accompanying it must include five quarts of choice flour mixed with two quarts of olive oil, [10] plus two quarts of wine for the drink offering. This will be an offering made by fire, very pleasing to the Lord.

[11] "These are the instructions for what is to accompany each sacrificial bull, ram, lamb, or young goat.

[12] Each of you must do this with each offering you present. [13] If you native Israelites want to present an offering by fire that is pleasing to the Lord, you must follow all these instructions. [14] And if any foreigners living among you want to present an offering by fire, pleasing to the Lord, they must follow the same procedures. [15] Native Israelites and foreigners are the same before the Lord and are subject to the same laws. This is a permanent law for you. [16] The same instructions and regulations will apply both to you and to the foreigners living among you."

[17] The Lord also said to Moses at this time, [18] "Give the people of Israel the following instructions: When you arrive in the land where I am taking you, [19] you will eat from the crops that grow there. But you must set some aside as a gift to the Lord. [20] Present a cake from the first of the flour you grind and set it aside as a gift, as you do with the first grain from the threshing floor. [21] Throughout the generations to come, you are to present this offering to the Lord each year from the first of your ground flour.

[22] "But suppose some of you unintentionally fail to carry out all these commands that the Lord has given you through Moses. [23] And suppose some of your descendants in the future fail to do everything the Lord has commanded through Moses. [24] If the mistake was done unintentionally, and the community was unaware of it, the whole community must present a young bull for a burnt offering. It will be pleasing to the Lord, and it must be offered along with the prescribed grain offering and drink offering and with one male goat for a sin offering.

[25] With it the priest will make atonement for the whole community of Israel, and they will be forgiven. For it was an unintentional sin, and they have corrected it with their offering given to the Lord by fire and by their sin offering. [26] The whole community of Israel will be forgiven, including the foreigners living among you, for the entire population was involved in the sin.

[27] "If the unintentional sin is committed by an individual, the guilty person must bring a one-year-old female goat for a sin offering. [28] The priest will make atonement for the guilty person before the Lord, and that person will be forgiven. [29] This same law applies both to native Israelites and the foreigners living among you.

[30] "But those who brazenly violate the Lord's will, whether native Israelites or foreigners, blaspheme the Lord, and they must be cut off from the community. [31] Since they have treated the Lord's word with contempt and deliberately disobeyed his commands, they must be completely cut off and suffer the consequences of their guilt."

[32] One day while the people of Israel were in the wilderness, they caught a man gathering wood on the Sabbath day. [33] He was apprehended and taken before Moses, Aaron, and the rest of the community. [34] They held him in custody because they did not know what to do with him. [35] Then the Lord said to Moses, "The man must be put to death! The whole community must stone him outside the camp." [36] So the whole community took the man outside the camp and stoned him to death, just as the Lord had commanded Moses.

[37] And the Lord said to Moses, [38] "Say to the people of Israel: "Throughout the generations to come you must make tassels for the hems of your clothing and attach the tassels at each corner with a blue cord. [39] The tassels will remind you of the commands of the Lord, and that you are to obey his commands instead of following your own desires and going your own ways, as you are prone to do. [40] The tassels will help you remember that you must obey all my commands and be holy to your God. [41] I am the Lord your God who brought you out of the land of Egypt that I might be your God. I am the Lord your God!" "

[16:1] One day Korah son of Izhar, a descendant of Kohath son of Levi, conspired with Dathan and Abiram, the sons of Eliab, and the son of Peleth, from the tribe of Reuben. [2] They incited a rebellion against Moses, involving 250 other prominent leaders, all members of the assembly. [3] They went to Moses and Aaron and said, "You have gone too far! Everyone in Israel has been set apart by the Lord, and he is with all of us. What right do you have to act as though you are greater than anyone else among all these people of the Lord?"

[4] When Moses heard what they were saying, he threw himself down with his face to the ground. [5] Then he said to Korah and his followers, "Tomorrow morning the Lord will show us who belongs to him and who is holy. The Lord will allow those who are chosen to enter his holy presence. [6] You, Korah, and all your followers must do this: Take incense burners, [7] and burn incense in them tomorrow before the Lord. Then we will see whom the Lord chooses as his holy one. You Levites are the ones who have gone too far!"

[8] Then Moses spoke again to Korah: "Now listen, you Levites! [9] Does it seem a small thing to you that the God of Israel has chosen you from among all the people of Israel to be near him as you serve in the Lord's Tabernacle and to stand before the people to minister to them? [10] He has given this special ministry only to you and your fellow Levites, but now you are demanding the priesthood as well! [11] The one you are really revolting against is the Lord! And who is Aaron that you are complaining about him?"

[12] Then Moses summoned Dathan and Abiram, the sons of Eliab, but they replied, "We refuse to come! [13] Isn't it enough that you brought us out of Egypt, a land flowing with milk and honey, to kill us here in this wilderness, and that you now treat us like your subjects? [14] What's more, you haven't brought us into the land flowing with milk and honey or given us an inheritance of fields and vineyards. Are you trying to fool us? We will not come."

[15] Then Moses became very angry and said to the Lord, "Do not accept their offerings! I have not taken so much as a donkey from them, and I have never hurt a single one of them." [16] And Moses said to Korah, "Come here tomorrow and present yourself before the Lord with all your followers. Aaron will also be here. [17] Be sure that each of your 250 followers brings an incense burner with incense on it, so you can present them before the Lord. Aaron will also bring his incense burner."

[18] So these men came with their incense burners, placed burning coals and incense on them, and stood at the entrance of the Tabernacle with Moses and Aaron. [19] Meanwhile, Korah had stirred up the entire community against Moses and Aaron, and they all assembled at the Tabernacle entrance. Then the glorious presence of the Lord appeared to the whole community, [20] and the Lord said to Moses and Aaron, [21] "Get away from these people so that I may instantly destroy them!"

[22] But Moses and Aaron fell face down on the ground. "O God, the God and source of all life," they pleaded. "Must you be angry with all the people when only one man sins?"

[23] And the Lord said to Moses, [24] "Then tell all the people to get away from the tents of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram."

[25] So Moses got up and rushed over to the tents of Dathan and Abiram, followed closely by the Israelite leaders. [26] "Quick!" he told the people. "Get away from the tents of these wicked men, and don't touch anything that belongs to them. If you do, you will be destroyed for their sins." [27] So all the people stood back from the tents of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram. Then Dathan and Abiram came out and stood at the entrances of their tents with their wives and children and little ones.

[28] And Moses said, "By this you will know that the Lord has sent me to do all these things that I have done—for I have not done them on my own. [29] If these men die a natural death, then the Lord has not sent me. [30] But if the Lord performs a miracle and the ground opens up and swallows them and all their belongings, and they go down alive into the grave, then you will know that these men have despised the Lord."

[31] He had hardly finished speaking the words when the ground suddenly split open beneath them. [32] The earth opened up and swallowed the men, along with their households and the followers who were standing with them, and everything they owned. [33] So they went down alive into the grave, along with their belongings. The earth closed over them, and they all vanished. [34] All of the people of Israel fled as they heard their screams, fearing that the earth would swallow them, too. [35] Then fire blazed forth from the Lord and burned up the 250 men who were offering incense.

[36] And the Lord said to Moses, [37] "Tell Eleazar son of Aaron the priest to pull all the incense burners from the fire, for they are holy. Also tell him to scatter the burning incense [38] from the burners of these men who have sinned at the cost of their lives. He must then hammer the metal of the incense burners into a sheet as a covering for the altar, for these burners have become holy because they were used in the Lord's presence. The altar covering will then serve as a warning to the people of Israel."

[39] So Eleazar the priest collected the 250 bronze incense burners that had been used by the men who died in the fire, and they were hammered out into a sheet of metal to cover the altar. [40] This would warn the Israelites that no unauthorized man—no one who was not a descendant of Aaron—should ever enter the Lord's presence to burn incense. If anyone did, the same thing would happen to him as happened to Korah and his followers. Thus, the Lord's instructions to Moses were carried out.

[41] But the very next morning the whole community began muttering again against Moses and Aaron, saying, "You two have killed the Lord's people!" [42] As the people gathered to protest to Moses and Aaron, they turned toward the Tabernacle and saw that the cloud had covered it, and the glorious presence of the Lord appeared.

[43] Moses and Aaron came and stood at the entrance of the Tabernacle, [44] and the Lord said to Moses, [45] "Get away from these people so that I can instantly destroy them!" But Moses and Aaron fell face down on the ground.

[46] And Moses said to Aaron, "Quick, take an incense burner and place burning coals on it from the altar. Lay incense on it and carry it quickly among the people to make atonement for them. The Lord's anger is blazing among them—the plague has already begun."

[47] Aaron did as Moses told him and ran out among the people. The plague indeed had already begun, but Aaron burned the incense and made atonement for them. [48] He stood between the living and the dead until the plague was stopped. [49] But 14,700 people died in that plague, in addition to those who had died in the incident involving Korah. [50] Then because the plague had stopped, Aaron returned to Moses at the entrance of the Tabernacle.

[17:1] Then the Lord said to Moses, [2] "Take twelve wooden staffs, one from each of Israel's ancestral tribes, and inscribe each tribal leader's name on his staff. [3] Inscribe Aaron's name on the staff of the tribe of Levi, for there must be one staff for the leader of each ancestral tribe. [4] Put these staffs in the Tabernacle in front of the Ark of the Covenant, where I meet with you. [5] Buds will sprout on the staff belonging to the man I choose. Then I will finally put an end to this murmuring and complaining against you."

[6] So Moses gave the instructions to the people of Israel, and each of the twelve tribal leaders, including Aaron, brought Moses a staff. [7] Moses put the staffs in the Lord's presence in the Tabernacle of the Covenant. [8] When he went into the Tabernacle of the Covenant the next day, he found that Aaron's staff, representing the tribe of Levi, had sprouted, blossomed, and produced almonds!

[9] When Moses brought all the staffs out from the Lord's presence, he showed them to the people. Each man claimed his own staff. [10] And the Lord said to Moses: "Place Aaron's staff permanently before the Ark of the Covenant as a warning to rebels. This should put an end to their complaints against me and prevent any further deaths." [11] So Moses did as the Lord commanded him.

[12] Then the people of Israel said to Moses, "We are as good as dead! We are ruined! [13] Everyone who even comes close to the Tabernacle of the Lord dies. We are all doomed!"

[18:1] The Lord now said to Aaron: "You, your sons, and your relatives from the tribe of Levi will be held responsible for any offenses related to the sanctuary. But you and your sons alone will be held liable for violations connected with the priesthood.

[2] "Bring your relatives of the tribe of Levi to assist you and your sons as you perform the sacred duties in front of the Tabernacle of the Covenant. [3] But as the Levites go about their duties under your supervision, they must be careful not to touch any of the sacred objects or the altar. If they do, both you and they will die. [4] The Levites must join with you to fulfill their responsibilities for the care and maintenance of the Tabernacle, but no one who is not a Levite may officiate with you.

[5] "You yourselves must perform the sacred duties within the sanctuary and at the altar. If you follow these instructions, the Lord's anger will never again blaze against the people of Israel. [6] I myself have chosen your fellow Levites from among the Israelites to be your special assistants. They are dedicated to the Lord for service in the Tabernacle. [7] But you and your sons, the priests, must personally handle all the sacred service associated with the altar and everything within the inner curtain. I am giving you the priesthood as your special gift of service. Any other person who comes too near the sanctuary will be put to death."

[8] The Lord gave these further instructions to Aaron: "I have put the priests in charge of all the holy gifts that are brought to me by the people of Israel. I have given these offerings to you and your sons as your regular share. [9] You are allotted the portion of the most holy offerings that is kept from the fire. From all the most holy offerings—including the grain offerings, sin offerings, and guilt offerings—that portion belongs to you and your sons. [10] You must eat it as a most holy offering. All the males may eat of it, and you must treat it as most holy.

[11] "All the other offerings presented to me by the Israelites by lifting them up before the altar also belong to you as your regular share. Any member of your family who is ceremonially clean, male and female alike, may eat of these offerings.

[12] "I also give you the harvest gifts brought by the people as offerings to the Lord—the best of the olive oil, wine, and grain. [13] All the firstfruits of the land that the people present to the Lord belong to you. Any member of your family who is ceremonially clean may eat this food.

[14] "Whatever is specially set apart for the Lord also belongs to you.

[15] "The firstborn of every mother, whether human or animal, that is offered to the Lord will be yours. But you must always redeem your firstborn sons and the firstborn males of ritually unclean animals. [16] Redeem them when they are one month old. The redemption price is five pieces of silver, each piece weighing the same as the standard sanctuary shekel.

[17] "However, you may not redeem the firstborn of cattle, sheep, or goats. They are holy and have been set apart for the Lord. Sprinkle their blood on the altar, and burn their fat as an offering given by fire, very pleasing to the Lord. [18] The meat of these animals will be yours, just like the breast and right thigh that are presented by lifting them up before the altar. [19] Yes, I am giving you all these holy offerings that the people of Israel bring to the Lord. They are for you and your sons and daughters, to be eaten as your regular share. This is an unbreakable covenant between the Lord and you and your descendants."

[20] And the Lord said to Aaron, "You priests will receive no inheritance of land or share of property among the people of Israel. I am your inheritance and your share. [21] As for the tribe of Levi, your relatives, I will pay them for their service in the Tabernacle with the tithes from the entire land of Israel.

[22] "From now on, Israelites other than the priests and Levites are to stay away from the Tabernacle. If they come too near, they will be judged guilty and die. [23] The Levites must serve at the Tabernacle, and they will be held responsible for any offenses against it. This is a permanent law among you. But the Levites will receive no inheritance of land among the Israelites, [24] because I have given them the Israelites' tithes, which have been set apart as offerings to the Lord. This will be the Levites' share. That is why I said they would receive no inheritance of land among the Israelites."

[25] The Lord also told Moses, [26] "Say this to the Levites: 'When you receive the tithes from the Israelites, give a tenth of the tithes you receive—a tithe of the tithe—to the Lord as a gift. [27] The Lord will consider this to be your harvest offering, as though it were the first grain from your own threshing floor or wine from your own winepress.



[28] You must present one-tenth of the tithe received from the Israelites as a gift to the Lord. From this you must present the Lord's portion to Aaron the priest. [29] Be sure to set aside the best portions of the gifts given to you as your gifts to the Lord.'

[30] "Also say to the Levites: 'When you present the best part, it will be considered as though it came from your own threshing floor or winepress. [31] You Levites and your families may eat this food anywhere you wish, for it is your compensation for serving in the Tabernacle. [32] You will not be considered guilty for accepting the Lord's tithes if you give the best portion to the priests. But be careful not to treat the holy gifts of the people of Israel as though they were common. If you do, you will die.' "

[19:1] The Lord said to Moses and Aaron, [2] "Here is another ritual law required by the Lord: Tell the people of Israel to bring you a red heifer that has no physical defects and has never been yoked to a plow. [3] Give it to Eleazar the priest, and it will be taken outside the camp and slaughtered in his presence. [4] Eleazar will take some of its blood on his finger and sprinkle it seven times toward the front of the Tabernacle. [5] As Eleazar watches, the heifer must be burned—its hide, meat, blood, and dung. [6] Eleazar the priest must then take cedar wood, a hyssop branch, and scarlet thread and throw them into the fire where the heifer is burning.

[7] "Then the priest must wash his clothes and bathe himself in water. Afterward he may return to the camp, though he will remain ceremonially unclean until evening. [8] The man who burns the animal must also wash his clothes and bathe in water, and he, too, will remain unclean until evening. [9] Then someone who is ceremonially clean will gather up the ashes of the heifer and place them in a purified place outside the camp. They will be kept there for the people of Israel to use in the water for the purification ceremony. This ceremony is performed for the removal of sin. [10] The man who gathers up the ashes of the heifer must also wash his clothes, and he will remain ceremonially unclean until evening. This is a permanent law for the people of Israel and any foreigners who live among them.

[11] "All those who touch a dead human body will be ceremonially unclean for seven days. [12] They must purify themselves on the third and seventh days with the water of purification; then they will be purified. But if they do not do this on the third and seventh days, they will continue to be unclean even after the seventh day. [13] All those who touch a dead body and do not purify themselves in the proper way defile the Lord's Tabernacle and will be cut off from the community of Israel. Since the water of purification was not sprinkled on them, their defilement continues.

[14] "This is the ritual law that applies when someone dies in a tent: Those who enter that tent, and those who were inside when the death occurred, will be ceremonially unclean for seven days. [15] Any container in the tent that was not covered with a lid is also defiled. [16] And if someone outdoors touches the corpse of someone who was killed with a sword or who died a natural death, or if someone touches a human bone or a grave, that person will be unclean for seven days.

[17] "To remove the defilement, put some of the ashes from the burnt purification offering in a jar and pour fresh water over them. [18] Then someone who is ceremonially clean must take a hyssop branch and dip it into the water. That person must sprinkle the water on the tent, on all the furnishings in the tent, and on anyone who was in the tent, or anyone who has touched a human bone, or has touched a person who was killed or who died naturally, or has touched a grave. [19] On the third and seventh days the ceremonially clean person must sprinkle the water on those who are unclean. Then on the seventh day the people being cleansed must wash their clothes and bathe themselves, and that evening they will be cleansed of their defilement.

[20] "But those who become defiled and do not purify themselves will be cut off from the community, for they have defiled the sanctuary of the Lord. Since the water of purification has not been sprinkled on them, they remain defiled. [21] This is a permanent law. Those who sprinkle the water of purification must afterward wash their clothes, and anyone who touches the water of purification will remain defiled until evening. [22] Anything and anyone that a defiled person touches will be ceremonially defiled until evening."

[20:1] In early spring the people of Israel arrived in the wilderness of Zin and camped at Kadesh. While they were there, Miriam died and was buried.

[2] There was no water for the people to drink at that place, so they rebelled against Moses and Aaron. [3] The people blamed Moses and said, "We wish we had died in the Lord's presence with our brothers! [4] Did you bring the Lord's people into this wilderness to die, along with all our livestock? [5] Why did you make us leave Egypt and bring us here to this terrible place? This land has no grain, figs, grapes, or pomegranates. And there is no water to drink!"

[6] Moses and Aaron turned away from the people and went to the entrance of the Tabernacle, where they fell face down on the ground. Then the glorious presence of the Lord appeared to them, [7] and the Lord said to Moses, [8] "You and Aaron must take the staff and assemble the entire community. As the people watch, command the rock over there to pour out its water. You will get enough water from the rock to satisfy all the people and their livestock."

[9] So Moses did as he was told. He took the staff from the place where it was kept before the Lord. [10] Then he and Aaron summoned the people to come and gather at the rock. "Listen, you rebels!" he shouted. "Must we bring you water from this rock?" [11] Then Moses raised his hand and struck the rock twice with the staff, and water gushed out. So all the people and their livestock drank their fill.

[12] But the Lord said to Moses and Aaron, "Because you did not trust me enough to demonstrate my holiness to the people of Israel, you will not lead them into the land I am giving them!" [13] This place was known as the waters of Meribah, because it was where the people of Israel argued with the Lord, and where he demonstrated his holiness among them.

[14] While Moses was at Kadesh, he sent ambassadors to the king of Edom with this message:

"This message is from your relatives, the people of Israel: You know all the hardships we have been through, [15] and that our ancestors went down to Egypt. We lived there a long time and suffered as slaves to the Egyptians. [16] But when we cried out to the Lord, he heard us and sent an angel who brought us out of Egypt. Now we are camped at Kadesh, a town on the border of your land. [17] Please let us pass through your country. We will be careful not to go through your fields and vineyards. We won't even drink water from your wells. We will stay on the king's road and never leave it until we have crossed the opposite border."

[18] But the king of Edom said, "Stay out of my land or I will meet you with an army!"

[19] The Israelites answered, "We will stay on the main road. If any of our livestock drinks your water, we will pay for it. We only want to pass through your country and nothing else."

[20] But the king of Edom replied, "Stay out! You may not pass through our land." With that he mobilized his army and marched out to meet them with an imposing force. [21] Because Edom refused to allow Israel to pass through their country, Israel was forced to turn around.

[22] The whole community of Israel left Kadesh as a group and arrived at Mount Hor. [23] Then the Lord said to Moses and Aaron at Mount Hor on the border of the land of Edom, [24] "The time has come for Aaron to join his ancestors in death. He will not enter the land I am giving the people of Israel, because the two of you rebelled against my instructions concerning the waters of Meribah. [25] Now take Aaron and his son Eleazar up Mount Hor. [26] There you will remove Aaron's priestly garments and put them on Eleazar, his son. Aaron will die there and join his ancestors."

[27] So Moses did as the Lord commanded. The three of them went up Mount Hor together as the whole community watched. [28] At the summit, Moses removed the priestly garments from Aaron and put them on Eleazar, Aaron's son. Then Aaron died there on top of the mountain, and Moses and Eleazar went back down. [29] When the people realized that Aaron had died, all Israel mourned for him thirty days.

[21:1] The Canaanite king of Arad, who lived in the Negev, heard that the Israelites were approaching on the road to Atharim. So he attacked the Israelites and took some of them as prisoners. [2] Then the people of Israel made this vow to the Lord: "If you will help us conquer these people, we will completely destroy all their towns." [3] The Lord heard their request and gave them victory over the Canaanites. The Israelites completely destroyed them and their towns, and the place has been called Hormah ever since.

[4] Then the people of Israel set out from Mount Hor, taking the road to the Red Sea to go around the land of Edom. But the people grew impatient along the way, [5] and they began to murmur against God and Moses. "Why have you brought us out of Egypt to die here in the wilderness?" they complained. "There is nothing to eat here and nothing to drink. And we hate this wretched manna!"

[6] So the Lord sent poisonous snakes among them, and many of them were bitten and died. [7] Then the people came to Moses and cried out, "We have sinned by speaking against the Lord and against you. Pray that the Lord will take away the snakes." So Moses prayed for the people.

[8] Then the Lord told him, "Make a replica of a poisonous snake and attach it to the top of a pole. Those who are bitten will live if they simply look at it!" [9] So Moses made a snake out of bronze and attached it to the top of a pole. Whenever those who were bitten looked at the bronze snake, they recovered!

[10] The Israelites traveled next to Oboth and camped there. [11] Then they went on to Iye-abarim, in the wilderness on the eastern border of Moab. [12] From there they traveled to the valley of Zered Brook and set up camp. [13] Then they moved to the far side of the Arnon River, in the wilderness adjacent to the territory of the Amorites. The Arnon is the boundary line between the Moabites and the Amorites. [14] For this reason The Book of the Wars of the Lord speaks of "the town of Waheb in the area of Suphah, and the ravines; and the Arnon River

[15] And its ravines, which extend as far as the settlement of Ar on the border of Moab."

[16] From there the Israelites traveled to Beer, which is the well where the Lord said to Moses, "Assemble the people, and I will give them water." [17] There the Israelites sang this song:

"Spring up, O well!

Yes, sing about it!

[18] Sing of this well,

which princes dug,

which great leaders hollowed out

with their scepters and staffs."

Then the Israelites left the wilderness and proceeded on through Mattanah, [19] Nahaliel, and Bamoth. [20] Then they went to the valley in Moab where Pisgah Peak overlooks the wasteland.

[21] The Israelites now sent ambassadors to King Sihon of the Amorites with this message:

[22] "Let us travel through your land. We will stay on the king's road until we have crossed your territory. We will not trample your fields or touch your vineyards or drink your well water."

[23] But King Sihon refused to let them cross his land. Instead, he mobilized his entire army and attacked Israel in the wilderness, engaging them in battle at Jahaz. [24] But the Israelites slaughtered them and occupied their land from the Arnon River to the Jabbok River. They went only as far as the Ammonite border because the boundary of the Ammonites was fortified.

[25] So Israel captured all the towns of the Amorites and settled in them, including the city of Heshbon and its surrounding villages. [26] Heshbon had been the capital of King Sihon of the Amorites. He had conquered a former Moabite king and seized all his land as far as the Arnon River. [27] For this reason the ancient poets wrote this about him:

"Come to Heshbon, city of Sihon!

May it be restored and rebuilt.

[28] A fire flamed forth from Heshbon,

a blaze from the city of Sihon.  
It burned the city of Ar in Moab;  
it destroyed the rulers of the Arnon heights.  
[29] Your destruction is certain, O people of Moab!  
You are finished, O worshipers of Chemosh!  
Chemosh has left his sons as refugees,  
and his daughters as captives of Sihon, the Amorite king.  
[30] We have utterly destroyed them,  
all the way from Heshbon to Dibon.  
We have completely wiped them out  
as far away as Nophah and Medeba."

[31] So the people of Israel occupied the territory of the Amorites. [32] After Moses sent men to explore the Jazer area, they captured all the towns in the region and drove out the Amorites who lived there. [33] Then they turned and marched toward Bashan, but King Og of Bashan and all his people attacked them at Edrei.

[34] The Lord said to Moses, "Do not be afraid of him, for I have given you victory over Og and his entire army, giving you all his land. You will do the same to him as you did to King Sihon of the Amorites, who ruled in Heshbon." [35] And Israel was victorious and killed King Og, his sons, and his subjects; not a single survivor remained. Then Israel occupied their land.

## **D. SECOND APPROACH TO THE PROMISED LAND (Numbers 22:1-36:13)**

The Moabites and Midianites could not get Balaam to curse Israel, but they did get him to give advice on how to draw the Israelites to idol worship. Balaam knew what was right, but he gave in to the temptation of material rewards and sinned. Knowing what is right alone is never enough. We must also do what is right.

1. The story of Balaam
2. The second census of the nation
3. Instructions concerning offerings
4. Vengeance on the Midianites
5. The Transjordan tribes
6. Camped on the plains of Moab

### **Numbers 22:1-36:13**

Then the people of Israel traveled to the plains of Moab and camped east of the Jordan River, across from Jericho. [2] Balak son of Zippor, the Moabite king, knew what the Israelites had done to the Amorites. [3] And when they saw how many Israelites there were, he and his people were terrified. [4] The king of Moab said to the leaders of Midian, "This mob will devour everything in sight, like an ox devours grass!"

So Balak, king of Moab, [5] sent messengers to Balaam son of Beor, who was living in his native land of Pethor near the Euphrates River. He sent this message to request that Balaam come to help him:

"A vast horde of people has arrived from Egypt. They cover the face of the earth and are threatening me. [6] Please come and curse them for me because they are so numerous. Then perhaps I will be able to conquer them and drive them from the land. I know that blessings fall on the people you bless. I also know that the people you curse are doomed."

[7] Balak's messengers, officials of both Moab and Midian, set out and took money with them to pay Balaam to curse Israel. They went to Balaam and urgently explained to him what Balak wanted. [8] "Stay here overnight," Balaam said. "In the morning I will tell you whatever the Lord directs me to say." So the officials from Moab stayed there with Balaam.

[9] That night God came to Balaam and asked him, "Who are these men with you?"

[10] So Balaam said to God, "Balak son of Zippor, king of Moab, has sent me this message:

[11] 'A vast horde of people has come from Egypt and has spread out over the whole land. Come at once to curse them. Perhaps then I will be able to conquer them and drive them from the land.'

[12] "Do not go with them," God told Balaam. "You are not to curse these people, for I have blessed them!"

[13] The next morning Balaam got up and told Balak's officials, "Go on home! The Lord will not let me go with you."

[14] So the Moabite officials returned to King Balak and reported, "Balaam refused to come with us." [15] Then Balak tried again. This time he sent a larger number of even more distinguished officials than those he had sent the first time. [16] They went to Balaam and gave him this message:

"This is what Balak son of Zippor says: Please don't let anything stop you from coming. [17] I will pay you well and do anything you ask of me. Just come and curse these people for me!"

[18] But Balaam answered them, "Even if Balak were to give me a palace filled with silver and gold, I would be powerless to do anything against the will of the Lord my God. [19] But stay here one more night to see if the Lord has anything else to say to me."

[20] That night God came to Balaam and told him, "Since these men have come for you, get up and go with them. But be sure to do only what I tell you to do."

[21] So the next morning Balaam saddled his donkey and started off with the Moabite officials. [22] But God was furious that Balaam was going, so he sent the angel of the Lord to stand in the road to block his way. As Balaam and two servants were riding along, [23] Balaam's donkey suddenly saw the angel of the Lord standing in the road with a drawn sword in his hand. The donkey bolted off the road into a field, but Balaam beat it and turned it back onto the road.

[24] Then the angel of the Lord stood at a place where the road narrowed between two vineyard walls. [25] When the donkey saw the angel of the Lord standing there, it tried to squeeze by and crushed Balaam's foot against the wall. So Balaam beat the donkey again. [26] Then the angel of the Lord moved farther down the road and stood in a place so narrow that the donkey could not get by at all. [27] This time when the donkey saw the angel, it lay down under Balaam. In a fit of rage Balaam beat it again with his staff.

[28] Then the Lord caused the donkey to speak. "What have I done to you that deserves your beating me these three times?" it asked Balaam.

[29] "Because you have made me look like a fool!" Balaam shouted. "If I had a sword with me, I would kill you!"

[30] "But I am the same donkey you always ride on," the donkey answered. "Have I ever done anything like this before?"

"No," he admitted.

[31] Then the Lord opened Balaam's eyes, and he saw the angel of the Lord standing in the roadway with a drawn sword in his hand. Balaam fell face down on the ground before him.

[32] "Why did you beat your donkey those three times?" the angel of the Lord demanded. "I have come to block your way because you are stubbornly resisting me. [33] Three times the donkey saw me and shied away; otherwise, I would certainly have killed you by now and spared the donkey."

[34] Then Balaam confessed to the angel of the Lord, "I have sinned. I did not realize you were standing in the road to block my way. I will go back home if you are against my going."

[35] But the angel of the Lord told him, "Go with these men, but you may say only what I tell you to say." So Balaam went on with Balak's officials. [36] When King Balak heard that Balaam was on the way, he went out to meet him at a Moabite town on the Arnon River at the border of his land.

[37] "Did I not send you an urgent invitation? Why didn't you come right away?" Balak asked Balaam. "Didn't you believe me when I said I would reward you richly?"

[38] Balaam replied, "I have come, but I have no power to say just anything. I will speak only the messages that God gives me." [39] Then Balaam accompanied Balak to Kiriath-huzoth, [40] where the king sacrificed cattle and sheep. He sent portions of the meat to Balaam and the officials who were with him. [41] The next morning Balak took Balaam up to Bamoth-baal. From there he could see the people of Israel spread out below him.

[23:1] Balaam said to King Balak, "Build me seven altars here, and prepare seven young bulls and seven rams for a sacrifice." [2] Balak followed his instructions, and the two of them sacrificed a young bull and a ram on each altar.

[3] Then Balaam said to Balak, "Stand here by your burnt offerings, and I will go to see if the Lord will respond to me. Then I will tell you whatever he reveals to me." So Balaam went alone to the top of a hill, [4] and God met him there. Balaam said to him, "I have prepared seven altars and have sacrificed a young bull and a ram on each altar."

[5] Then the Lord gave Balaam a message for King Balak and said, "Go back to Balak and tell him what I told you."

[6] When Balaam returned, the king was standing beside his burnt offerings with all the officials of Moab. [7] This was the prophecy Balaam delivered:

"Balak summoned me to come from Aram;  
the king of Moab brought me from the eastern hills.  
'Come,' he said, 'curse Jacob for me!  
Come and announce Israel's doom.'

[8] But how can I curse  
those whom God has not cursed?  
How can I condemn  
those whom the Lord has not condemned?

[9] I see them from the cliff tops;  
I watch them from the hills.



I see a people who live by themselves,  
set apart from other nations.

[10] Who can count Jacob's descendants, as numerous as dust?

Who can count even a fourth of Israel's people?

Let me die like the righteous;

let my life end like theirs."

[11] Then King Balak demanded of Balaam, "What have you done to me? I brought you to curse my enemies. Instead, you have blessed them!"

[12] But Balaam replied, "Can I say anything except what the Lord tells me?"

[13] Then King Balak told him, "Come with me to another place. There you will see only a portion of the nation of Israel. Curse at least that many!" [14] So Balak took Balaam to the plateau of Zophim on Pisgah Peak. He built seven altars there and offered a young bull and a ram on each altar.

[15] Then Balaam said to the king, "Stand here by your burnt offering while I go to meet the Lord."

[16] So the Lord met Balaam and gave him a message. Then he said, "Go back to Balak and give him this message."

[17] So Balaam returned to the place where the king and the officials of Moab were standing beside Balak's burnt offerings. "What did the Lord say?" Balak asked eagerly.

[18] This was the prophecy Balaam delivered:

"Rise up, Balak, and listen!

Hear me, son of Zippor.

[19] God is not a man that he should lie.

He is not a human, that he should change his mind.

Has he ever spoken and failed to act?

Has he ever promised and not carried it through?

[20] I received a command to bless;

he has blessed, and I cannot reverse it!

[21] No misfortune is in sight for Jacob;

no trouble is in store for Israel.

For the Lord their God is with them;

he has been proclaimed their king.

[22] God has brought them out of Egypt;

he is like a strong ox for them.

[23] No curse can touch Jacob;

no sorcery has any power against Israel.

For now it will be said of Jacob,

'What wonders God has done for Israel!'

[24] These people rise up like a lioness;

like a majestic lion they stand.

They refuse to rest

until they have feasted on prey,

drinking the blood of the slaughtered!"

[25] Then Balak said to Balaam, "If you aren't going to curse them, at least don't bless them!"  
[26] But Balaam replied, "Didn't I tell you that I must do whatever the Lord tells me?"

[27] Then King Balak said to Balaam, "Come, I will take you to yet another place. Perhaps it will please God to let you curse them from there."

[28] So Balak took Balaam to the top of Mount Peor, overlooking the wasteland. [29] Balaam again told Balak, "Build me seven altars and prepare me seven young bulls and seven rams for a sacrifice." [30] So Balak did as Balaam ordered and offered a young bull and a ram on each altar.

[24:1] By now Balaam realized that the Lord intended to bless Israel, so he did not resort to divination as he often did. Instead, he turned and looked out toward the wilderness, [2] where he saw the people of Israel camped, tribe by tribe. Then the Spirit of God came upon him, [3] and this is the prophecy he delivered:

"This is the prophecy of Balaam son of Beor,  
the prophecy of the man whose eyes see clearly,  
[4] who hears the words of God,  
who sees a vision from the Almighty,  
Who falls down with eyes wide open:  
[5] How beautiful are your tents, O Jacob;  
how lovely are your homes, O Israel!  
[6] They spread before me like groves of palms,  
like fruitful gardens by the riverside.  
They are like aloes planted by the Lord,  
like cedars beside the waters.

[7] Water will gush out in buckets;  
their offspring are supplied with all they need.  
Their king will be greater than Agag;  
their kingdom will be exalted.  
[8] God brought them up from Egypt,  
drawing them along like a wild ox.  
He devours all the nations that oppose him,  
breaking their bones in pieces,  
shooting them with arrows.

[9] Like a lion, Israel crouches and lies down;  
like a lioness, who dares to arouse her?  
Blessed is everyone who blesses you, O Israel,  
and cursed is everyone who curses you."

[10] King Balak flew into a rage against Balaam. He angrily clapped his hands and shouted, "I called you to curse my enemies! Instead, you have blessed them three times. [11] Now get out of here! Go back home! I had planned to reward you richly, but the Lord has kept you from your reward."

[12] Balaam told Balak, "Don't you remember what I told your messengers? I said, [13] 'Even if Balak were to give me a palace filled with silver and gold, I am powerless to do anything against the will of the Lord.' I told you that I could say only what the Lord says! [14] Now I am returning to my own people. But first let me tell you what the Israelites will do to your people in the future."

[15] This is the prophecy Balaam delivered:

"This is the message of Balaam son of Beor,  
the prophecy of the man whose eyes see clearly,

[16] who hears the words of God,  
who has knowledge from the Most High,  
who sees a vision from the Almighty,  
who falls down with eyes wide open:

[17] I see him, but not in the present time.  
I perceive him, but far in the distant future.

A star will rise from Jacob;  
a scepter will emerge from Israel.  
It will crush the foreheads of Moab's people,  
cracking the skulls of the people of Sheth.

[18] Edom will be taken over,  
and Seir, its enemy, will be conquered,  
while Israel continues on in triumph.

[19] A ruler will rise in Jacob  
who will destroy the survivors of Ir."

[20] Then Balaam looked over at the people of Amalek and delivered this prophecy:

"Amalek was the greatest of nations,  
but its destiny is destruction!"

[21] Then he looked over at the Kenites and prophesied:

"You are strongly situated;  
your nest is set in the rocks.

[22] But the Kenites will be destroyed  
when Assyria takes you captive."

[23] Balaam concluded his prophecies by saying:

"Alas, who can survive when God does this?  
[24] Ships will come from the coasts of Cyprus;  
they will oppress both Assyria and Eber,  
but they, too, will be utterly destroyed."

[25] Then Balaam and Balak returned to their homes.

[25:1] While the Israelites were camped at Acacia, some of the men defiled themselves by sleeping with the local Moabite women. [2] These women invited them to attend sacrifices to their gods, and soon the Israelites were feasting with them and worshiping the gods of Moab. [3] Before long Israel was joining in the worship of Baal of Peor, causing the Lord's anger to blaze against his people.

[4] The Lord issued the following command to Moses: "Seize all the ringleaders and execute them before the Lord in broad daylight, so his fierce anger will turn away from the people of Israel." [5] So Moses ordered Israel's judges to execute everyone who had joined in worshiping Baal of Peor.

[6] Just then one of the Israelite men brought a Midianite woman into the camp, right before the eyes of Moses and all the people, as they were weeping at the entrance of the Tabernacle. [7] When Phinehas son of Eleazar and grandson of Aaron the priest saw this, he jumped up and left the assembly. Then he took a spear [8] and rushed after the man into his tent. Phinehas thrust the spear all the way through the man's body and into the woman's stomach. So the plague against the Israelites was stopped, [9] but not before 24,000 people had died.

[10] Then the Lord said to Moses, [11] "Phinehas son of Eleazar and grandson of Aaron the priest has turned my anger away from the Israelites by displaying passionate zeal among them on my behalf. So I have stopped destroying all Israel as I had intended to do in my anger. [12] So tell him that I am making my special covenant of peace with him. [13] In this covenant, he and his descendants will be priests for all time, because he was zealous for his God and made atonement for the people of Israel."

[14] The Israelite man killed with the Midianite woman was named Zimri son of Salu, the leader of a family from the tribe of Simeon. [15] The woman's name was Cozbi; she was the daughter of Zur, the leader of a Midianite clan.

[16] Then the Lord said to Moses, [17] "Attack the Midianites and destroy them, [18] because they assaulted you with deceit by tricking you into worshiping Baal of Peor, and because of Cozbi, the daughter of a Midianite leader, who was killed on the day of the plague at Peor."

[26:1] After the plague had ended, the Lord said to Moses and to Eleazar son of Aaron, the priest, [2] "Take a census of all the men of Israel who are twenty years old or older, to find out how many of each family are of military age." [3] At that time the entire nation of Israel was camped on the plains of Moab beside the Jordan River, across from Jericho.

So Moses and Eleazar the priest issued these census instructions to the leaders of Israel: [4] "Count all the men of Israel twenty years old and older, just as the Lord commanded Moses." This is the census record of all the descendants of Israel who came out of Egypt.

[5] These were the clans descended from Reuben, Jacob's oldest son:  
The Hanochite clan, named after its ancestor Hanoch.

The Palluite clan, named after its ancestor Pallu.

[6] The Hezronite clan, named after its ancestor Hezron.

The Carmite clan, named after its ancestor Carmi.

[7] The men from all the clans of Reuben numbered 43,730.

[8] Pallu was the ancestor of Eliab, [9] and Eliab was the father of Nemuel, Dathan, and Abiram. This Dathan and Abiram are the same community leaders who conspired with Korah against Moses and Aaron, defying the Lord. [10] But the earth opened up and swallowed them with Korah, and 250 of their followers were destroyed that day by fire from the Lord. This served as a warning to the entire nation of Israel. [11] However, the sons of Korah did not die that day.

[12] These were the clans descended from the sons of Simeon:

The Nemuelite clan, named after its ancestor Nemuel.

The Jaminite clan, named after its ancestor Jamin.

The Jakinite clan, named after its ancestor Jakin.

[13] The Zerahite clan, named after its ancestor Zerah.

The Shaulite clan, named after its ancestor Shaul.

[14] The men from all the clans of Simeon numbered 22,200.

[15] These were the clans descended from the sons of Gad:

The Zephonite clan, named after its ancestor Zephon.

The Haggite clan, named after its ancestor Haggi.

The Shunite clan, named after its ancestor Shuni.

[16] The Oznite clan, named after its ancestor Ozni.

The Erite clan, named after its ancestor Eri.

[17] The Arodite clan, named after its ancestor Arodi.

The Arelite clan, named after its ancestor Areli.

[18] The men from all the clans of Gad numbered 40,500.

[19] Judah had two sons, Er and Onan, who had died in the land of Canaan. [20] But the following clans descended from Judah's surviving sons:

The Shelanite clan, named after its ancestor Shelah.

The Perezite clan, named after its ancestor Perez.

The Zerahite clan, named after its ancestor Zerah.

[21] These were the subclans descended from the Perezites:

The Hezronites, named after their ancestor Hezron.

The Hamulites, named after their ancestor Hamul.

[22] The men from all the clans of Judah numbered 76,500.

[23] These were the clans descended from the sons of Issachar:

The Tolaite clan, named after its ancestor Tola.

The Puite clan, named after its ancestor Puah.

[24] The Jashubite clan, named after its ancestor Jashub.

The Shimronite clan, named after its ancestor Shimron.

[25] The men from all the clans of Issachar numbered 64,300.

[26] These were the clans descended from the sons of Zebulun:

The Seredite clan, named after its ancestor Sered.

The Elonite clan, named after its ancestor Elon.

The Jahleelite clan, named after its ancestor Jahleel.

[27] The men from all the clans of Zebulun numbered 60,500.

[28] Two clans were descended from Joseph through Manasseh and Ephraim.

[29] These were the clans descended from Manasseh:

The Makirite clan, named after its ancestor Makir.

The Gileadite clan, named after its ancestor Gilead, Makir's son.

[30] These were the subclans descended from the Gileadites:

The Iezerites, named after their ancestor Iezer.

The Helekites, named after their ancestor Helek.

[31] The Asrielites, named after their ancestor Asriel.

The Shechemites, named after their ancestor Shechem.

[32] The Shemidaites, named after their ancestor Shemida.

The Hephherites, named after their ancestor Hephher.

[33] Hephher's son, Zelophehad, had no sons, but his daughters' names were Mahlah, Noah, Hoglah, Milcah, and Tirzah.

[34] The men from all the clans of Manasseh numbered 52,700.

[35] These were the clans descended from the sons of Ephraim:

The Shuthelahite clan, named after its ancestor Shuthelah.

The Bekerite clan, named after its ancestor Beker.

The Tahanite clan, named after its ancestor Tahan.

[36] This was the subclan descended from the Shuthelahites:

The Eranites, named after their ancestor Eran.

[37] The men from all the clans of Ephraim numbered 32,500.

These clans of Manasseh and Ephraim were all descendants of Joseph.

[38] These were the clans descended from the sons of Benjamin:

The Belaite clan, named after its ancestor Bela.

The Ashbelite clan, named after its ancestor Ashbel.  
The Ahiramite clan, named after its ancestor Ahiram.  
[39] The Shuphamite clan, named after its ancestor Shupham.  
The Huphamite clan, named after its ancestor Hupham.

[40] These were the subclans descended from the Belaites:  
The Ardites, named after their ancestor Ard.  
The Naamites, named after their ancestor Naaman.

[41] The men from all the clans of Benjamin numbered 45,600.

[42] These were the clans descended from the sons of Dan:  
The Shuhamite clan, named after its ancestor Shuham.

[43] All the clans of Dan were Shuhamite clans, and the men from these clans numbered 64,400.

[44] These were the clans descended from the sons of Asher:  
The Imnite clan, named after its ancestor Imnah.  
The Ishvite clan, named after its ancestor Ishvi.  
The Beriite clan, named after its ancestor Beriah.

[45] These were the subclans descended from the Beriites:  
The Heberites, named after their ancestor Heber.  
The Malkielites, named after their ancestor Malkiel.

[46] Asher also had a daughter named Serah.

[47] The men from all the clans of Asher numbered 53,400.

[48] These were the clans descended from the sons of Naphtali:  
The Jahzeelite clan, named after its ancestor Jahzeel.  
The Gunitite clan, named after its ancestor Guni.  
[49] The Jezerite clan, named after its ancestor Jezer.  
The Shillemite clan, named after its ancestor Shillemit.

[50] The men from all the clans of Naphtali numbered 45,400.

[51] So the total number of Israelite men counted in the census numbered 601,730.

[52] Then the Lord said to Moses, [53] "Divide the land among the tribes in proportion to their populations, as indicated by the census. [54] Give the larger tribes more land and the smaller tribes less land, each group's inheritance reflecting the size of its population. [55] Make sure you assign the land by lot, and define the inheritance of each ancestral tribe by means of the census listings. [56] Each inheritance must be assigned by lot among the larger and smaller tribal groups."

[57] This is the census record for the Levites who were counted according to their clans:  
The Gershonite clan, named after its ancestor Gershon.  
The Kohathite clan, named after its ancestor Kohath.  
The Merarite clan, named after its ancestor Merari.

[58] The Libnites, the Hebronites, the Mahlites, the Mushites, and the Korahites were all subclans of the Levites.

Now Kohath was the ancestor of Amram, [59] and Amram's wife was named Jochebed. She also was a descendant of Levi, born among the Levites in the land of Egypt. Amram and Jochebed became the parents of Aaron, Moses, and their sister, Miriam. [60] To Aaron were born Nadab, Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar. [61] But Nadab and Abihu died when they burned before the Lord a different kind of fire than he had commanded.

[62] The men from the Levite clans who were one month old or older numbered 23,000. But the Levites were not included in the total census figure of the people of Israel because they were not given an inheritance of land when it was divided among the Israelites.

[63] So these are the census figures of the people of Israel as prepared by Moses and Eleazar the priest on the plains of Moab beside the Jordan River, across from Jericho. [64] Not one person that Moses and Aaron counted in this census had been among those counted in the previous census taken in the wilderness of Sinai. [65] For the Lord had said of them, "They will all die in the wilderness." The only exceptions were Caleb son of Jephunneh and Joshua son of Nun.

[27:1] One day a petition was presented by the daughters of Zelophehad—Mahlah, Noah, Hoglah, Milcah, and Tirzah. Their father, Zelophehad, was the son of Hopher, son of Gilead, son of Makir, son of Manasseh, son of Joseph. [2] These women went and stood before Moses, Eleazar the priest, the tribal leaders, and the entire community at the entrance of the Tabernacle. [3] "Our father died in the wilderness without leaving any sons," they said. "But he was not among Korah's followers, who rebelled against the Lord. He died because of his own sin. [4] Why should the name of our father disappear just because he had no sons? Give us property along with the rest of our relatives."

[5] So Moses brought their case before the Lord. [6] And the Lord replied to Moses, [7] "The daughters of Zelophehad are right. You must give them an inheritance of land along with their father's relatives. Assign them the property that would have been given to their father. [8] Moreover announce this to the people of Israel: 'If a man dies and has no sons, then give his inheritance to his daughters. [9] And if he has no daughters, turn his inheritance over to his brothers. [10] If he has no brothers, give his inheritance to his father's brothers. [11] But if his father has no brothers, pass on his inheritance to the nearest relative in his clan. The Israelites must observe this as a general legal requirement, just as the Lord commanded Moses.' "

[12] One day the Lord said to Moses, "Climb to the top of the mountains east of the river, and look out over the land I have given the people of Israel. [13] After you have seen it, you will die as Aaron your brother did, [14] for you both rebelled against my instructions in the wilderness of



Zin. When the people of Israel rebelled, you failed to demonstrate my holiness to them at the waters." (These are the waters of Meribah at Kadesh in the wilderness of Zin.)

[15] Then Moses said to the Lord, [16] "O Lord, the God of the spirits of all living things, please appoint a new leader for the community. [17] Give them someone who will lead them into battle, so the people of the Lord will not be like sheep without a shepherd."

[18] The Lord replied, "Take Joshua son of Nun, who has the Spirit in him, and lay your hands on him. [19] Present him to Eleazar the priest before the whole community, and publicly commission him with the responsibility of leading the people. [20] Transfer your authority to him so the whole community of Israel will obey him. [21] When direction from the Lord is needed, Joshua will stand before Eleazar the priest, who will determine the Lord's will by means of sacred lots. This is how Joshua and the rest of the community of Israel will discover what they should do."

[22] So Moses did as the Lord commanded and presented Joshua to Eleazar the priest and the whole community. [23] Moses laid his hands on him and commissioned him to his responsibilities, just as the Lord had commanded through Moses.

[28:1] The Lord said to Moses, [2] "Give these instructions to the people of Israel: The offerings you present to me by fire on the altar are my food, and they are very pleasing to me. See to it that they are brought at the appointed times and offered according to my instructions.

[3] "Say to them: When you present your daily whole burnt offerings to the Lord, you must offer two one-year-old male lambs with no physical defects. [4] One lamb will be sacrificed in the morning and the other in the evening.

[5] With each lamb you must offer a grain offering of two quarts of choice flour mixed with one quart of olive oil. [6] This is the regular burnt offering ordained at Mount Sinai, an offering made by fire, very pleasing to the Lord. [7] Along with it you must present the proper drink offering, consisting of one quart of fermented drink with each lamb, poured out in the Holy Place as an offering to the Lord. [8] Offer the second lamb in the evening with the same grain offering and drink offering. It, too, is an offering made by fire, very pleasing to the Lord.

[9] "On the Sabbath day, sacrifice two one-year-old male lambs with no physical defects. They must be accompanied by a grain offering of three quarts of choice flour mixed with olive oil, and a drink offering. [10] This is the whole burnt offering to be presented each Sabbath day, in addition to the regular daily burnt offering and its accompanying drink offering.

[11] "On the first day of each month, present an extra burnt offering to the Lord of two young bulls, one ram, and seven one-year-old male lambs, all with no physical defects. [12] These will be accompanied by grain offerings of choice flour mixed with olive oil—five quarts with each bull, three quarts with the ram, [13] and two quarts with each lamb. This burnt offering must be presented by fire, and it will be very pleasing to the Lord. [14] You must also give a drink offering with each sacrifice: two quarts of wine with each bull, two and a half pints for the ram, and one quart for each lamb. Present this monthly burnt offering on the first day of each month throughout the year.

[15] "Also, on the first day of each month you must offer one male goat for a sin offering to the Lord. This is in addition to the regular daily burnt offering and its accompanying drink offering.

[16] "On the appointed day in early spring, you must celebrate the Lord's Passover. [17] On the following day a joyous, seven-day festival will begin, but no bread made with yeast may be eaten. [18] On the first day of the festival you must call a sacred assembly of the people. None of your regular work may be done on that day. [19] You must present as a burnt offering to the Lord two young bulls, one ram, and seven one-year-old male lambs, all with no physical defects. [20] These will be accompanied by grain offerings of choice flour mixed with olive oil—five quarts with each bull, three quarts with the ram,

[21] and two quarts with each of the seven lambs. [22] You must also offer a male goat as a sin offering, to make atonement for yourselves. [23] You will present these offerings in addition to your regular morning sacrifices. [24] On each of the seven days of the festival, this is how you will prepare the food offerings to be presented by fire, very pleasing to the Lord. These will be offered in addition to the regular whole burnt offerings and drink offerings. [25] On the seventh day of the festival you must call another holy assembly of the people. None of your regular work may be done on that day.

[26] "On the first day of the Festival of Harvest, when you present the first of your new grain to the Lord, you must call a holy assembly of the people. None of your regular work may be done on that day. [27] A special whole burnt offering will be offered that day, very pleasing to the Lord. It will consist of two young bulls, one ram, and seven one-year-old male lambs. [28] These will be accompanied by grain offerings of choice flour mixed with olive oil—five quarts with each bull, three quarts with the ram, [29] and two quarts with each of the seven lambs. [30] Also, offer one male goat to make atonement for yourselves. [31] These special burnt offerings, along with their drink offerings, are in addition to the regular daily burnt offering and its accompanying grain offering. Be sure that all the animals you sacrifice have no physical defects.

[29:1] "The Festival of Trumpets will be celebrated on the appointed day in early autumn each year. You must call a solemn assembly of all the people on that day, and no regular work may be done. [2] On that day you must present a burnt offering, very pleasing to the Lord. It will consist of one young bull, one ram, and seven one-year-old male lambs, all with no physical defects. [3] These must be accompanied by grain offerings of choice flour mixed with olive oil—five quarts with the bull, three quarts with the ram, [4] and two quarts with each of the seven lambs. [5] In addition, you must sacrifice a male goat as a sin offering, to make atonement for yourselves. [6] These special sacrifices are in addition to your regular monthly and daily burnt offerings, and they must be given with their prescribed grain offerings and drink offerings. These offerings are given to the Lord by fire and are very pleasing to him.

[7] "Ten days later, you must call another holy assembly of all the people. On that day, the Day of Atonement, the people must go without food, and no regular work may be done. [8] You must present a burnt offering, very pleasing to the Lord. It will consist of one young bull, one ram, and seven one-year-old male lambs, all with no physical defects.

[9] These offerings must be accompanied by the prescribed grain offerings of choice flour mixed with olive oil—five quarts of choice flour with the bull, three quarts of choice flour with the ram, [10] and two quarts of choice flour with each of the seven lambs. [11] You must also sacrifice one male goat for a sin offering. This is in addition to the sin offering of atonement and the regular daily burnt offering with its grain offering, and their accompanying drink offerings.

[12] "Five days later, you must call yet another holy assembly of all the people, and on that day no regular work may be done. It is the beginning of the Festival of Shelters, a seven-day festival to the Lord. [13] That day you must present a special whole burnt offering by fire, very pleasing to the Lord. It will consist of thirteen young bulls, two rams, and fourteen one-year-old male lambs, all with no physical defects. [14] Each of these offerings must be accompanied by a grain offering of choice flour mixed with olive oil—five quarts for each of the thirteen bulls, three quarts for each of the two rams,

[15] and two quarts for each of the fourteen lambs. [16] You must also sacrifice a male goat as a sin offering, in addition to the regular daily burnt offering with its accompanying grain offering and drink offering.

[17] "On the second day of this seven-day festival, sacrifice twelve young bulls, two rams, and fourteen one-year-old male lambs, all with no physical defects. [18] Each of these offerings of bulls, rams, and lambs must be accompanied by the prescribed grain offering and drink offering. [19] You must also sacrifice a male goat as a sin offering, in addition to the regular daily burnt offering with its accompanying grain offering and drink offering.

[20] "On the third day of the festival, sacrifice eleven young bulls, two rams, and fourteen one-year-old male lambs, all with no physical defects. [21] Each of these offerings of bulls, rams, and lambs must be accompanied by the prescribed grain offering and drink offering. [22] You must also sacrifice a male goat as a sin offering, in addition to the regular daily burnt offering with its accompanying grain offering and drink offering.

[23] "On the fourth day of the festival, sacrifice ten young bulls, two rams, and fourteen one-year-old male lambs, all with no physical defects. [24] Each of these offerings of bulls, rams, and lambs must be accompanied by the prescribed grain offering and drink offering. [25] You must also sacrifice a male goat as a sin offering, in addition to the regular daily burnt offering with its accompanying grain offering and drink offering.

[26] "On the fifth day of the festival, sacrifice nine young bulls, two rams, and fourteen one-year-old male lambs, all with no physical defects. [27] Each of these offerings of bulls, rams, and lambs must be accompanied by the prescribed grain offering and drink offering. [28] You must also sacrifice a male goat as a sin offering, in addition to the regular daily burnt offering with its accompanying grain offering and drink offering.

[29] "On the sixth day of the festival, sacrifice eight young bulls, two rams, and fourteen one-year-old male lambs, all with no physical defects. [30] Each of these offerings of bulls, rams, and lambs must be accompanied by the prescribed grain offering and drink offering.

[31] You must also sacrifice a male goat as a sin offering, in addition to the regular daily burnt offering with its accompanying grain offering and drink offering.

[32] "On the seventh day of the festival, sacrifice seven young bulls, two rams, and fourteen one-year-old male lambs, all with no physical defects. [33] Each of these offerings of bulls, rams, and lambs must be accompanied by the prescribed grain offering and drink offering. [34] You must also sacrifice one male goat as a sin offering, in addition to the regular daily burnt offering with its accompanying grain offering and drink offering.

[35] "On the eighth day of the festival, call all the people to another holy assembly. You must do no regular work on that day. [36] You must present a burnt offering, very pleasing to the Lord. It will consist of one young bull, one ram, and seven one-year-old male lambs, all with no physical defects. [37] Each of these offerings must be accompanied by the prescribed grain offering and drink offering. [38] You must also sacrifice one male goat as a sin offering, in addition to the regular daily burnt offering with its accompanying grain offering and drink offering.

[39] "You must present these offerings to the Lord at your annual festivals. These are in addition to the sacrifices and offerings you present in connection with vows, or as freewill offerings, burnt offerings, grain offerings, drink offerings, or peace offerings."

[40] So Moses gave all of these instructions to the people of Israel, just as the Lord had commanded him.

[30:1] Now Moses summoned the leaders of the tribes of Israel and told them, "This is what the Lord has commanded: [2] A man who makes a vow to the Lord or makes a pledge under oath must never break it. He must do exactly what he said he would do.

[3] "If a young woman makes a vow to the Lord or a pledge under oath while she is still living at her father's home, [4] and her father hears of the vow or pledge but says nothing, then all her vows and pledges will stand. [5] But if her father refuses to let her fulfill the vow or pledge on the day he hears of it, then all her vows and pledges will become invalid. The Lord will forgive her because her father would not let her fulfill them.

[6] "Now suppose a young woman takes a vow or makes an impulsive pledge and later marries. [7] If her husband learns of her vow or pledge and raises no objections on the day he hears of it, her vows and pledges will stand. [8] But if her husband refuses to accept her vow or impulsive pledge on the day he hears of it, he nullifies her commitments, and the Lord will forgive her. [9] If, however, a woman is a widow or is divorced, she must fulfill all her vows and pledges no matter what.

[10] "Suppose a woman is married and living in her husband's home when she makes a vow or pledge. [11] If her husband hears of it and does nothing to stop her, her vow or pledge will stand. [12] But if her husband refuses to accept it on the day he hears of it, her vow or pledge will be nullified, and the Lord will forgive her. [13] So her husband may either confirm or nullify any vows or pledges she makes to deny herself. [14] But if he says nothing on the day he hears of it, then he is agreeing to it. [15] If he waits more than a day and then tries to nullify a vow or pledge, he will suffer the consequences of her guilt."

[16] These are the regulations the Lord gave Moses concerning relationships between a man and his wife, and between a father and a young daughter who still lives at home.

[31:1] Then the Lord said to Moses, [2] "Take vengeance on the Midianites for leading the Israelites into idolatry. After that, you will die and join your ancestors."

[3] So Moses said to the people, "Choose some men to fight the Lord's war of vengeance against Midian. [4] From each tribe of Israel, send one thousand men into battle." [5] So they chose one thousand men from each tribe of Israel, a total of twelve thousand men armed for battle. [6] Then Moses sent them out, a thousand men from each tribe, and Phinehas son of Eleazar the priest led them into battle. They carried along the holy objects of the sanctuary and the trumpets for sounding the charge.

[7] They attacked Midian just as the Lord had commanded Moses, and they killed all the men. [8] All five of the Midianite kings—Evi, Rekem, Zur, Hur, and Reba—died in the battle. They also killed Balaam son of Beor with the sword.

[9] Then the Israelite army captured the Midianite women and children and seized their cattle and flocks and all their wealth as plunder. [10] They burned all the towns and villages where the Midianites had lived. [11] After they had gathered the plunder and captives, both people and animals, [12] they brought them all to Moses and Eleazar the priest, and to the whole community of Israel, which was camped on the plains of Moab beside the Jordan River, across from Jericho. [13] Moses, Eleazar the priest, and all the leaders of the people went to meet them outside the camp. [14] But Moses was furious with all the military commanders who had returned from the battle.

[15] "Why have you let all the women live?" he demanded. [16] "These are the very ones who followed Balaam's advice and caused the people of Israel to rebel against the Lord at Mount Peor. They are the ones who caused the plague to strike the Lord's people. [17] Now kill all the boys and all the women who have slept with a man. [18] Only the young girls who are virgins may live; you may keep them for yourselves. [19] And all of you who have killed anyone or touched a dead body must stay outside the camp for seven days. You must purify yourselves and your captives on the third and seventh days. [20] Also, purify all your clothing and everything made of leather, goat hair, or wood."

[21] Then Eleazar the priest said to the men who were in the battle, "The Lord has given Moses this requirement of the law: [22] Anything made of gold, silver, bronze, iron, tin, or lead— [23] that is, metals that do not burn—must be passed through fire in order to be made ceremonially pure. These metal objects must then be further purified with the water of purification. But everything that burns must be purified by the water alone. [24] On the seventh day you must wash your clothes and be purified. Then you may return to the camp."

[25] And the Lord said to Moses, [26] "You and Eleazar the priest and the family leaders of each tribe are to make a list of all the plunder taken in the battle, including the people and animals. [27] Then divide the plunder into two parts, and give half to the men who fought the battle and half to the rest of the people. [28] But first give the Lord his share of the captives, cattle, donkeys, sheep, and goats that belong to the army. Set apart one out of every five hundred as the Lord's share.

[29] Give this share of their half to Eleazar the priest as an offering to the Lord. [30] Also take one of every fifty of the captives, cattle, donkeys, sheep, and goats in the half that belongs to the people of Israel. Give this share to the Levites in charge of maintaining the Lord's Tabernacle." [31] So Moses and Eleazar the priest did as the Lord commanded Moses.

[32] The plunder remaining from the spoils that the fighting men had taken totaled 675,000 sheep, [33] 72,000 cattle, [34] 61,000 donkeys, [35] and 32,000 young girls.

[36] So the half of the plunder given to the fighting men totaled 337,500 sheep, [37] of which 675 were the Lord's share; [38] 36,000 cattle, of which 72 were the Lord's share; [39] 30,500 donkeys, of which 61 were the Lord's share; [40] 16,000 young girls, of whom 32 were the Lord's share. [41] Moses gave all the Lord's share to Eleazar the priest, just as the Lord had directed him.

[42] The half of the plunder belonging to the people of Israel, which Moses had separated from the half belonging to the fighting men, [43] amounted to 337,500 sheep, [44] 36,000 cattle, [45] 30,500 donkeys, [46] and 16,000 young girls. [47] From the half-share given to the people, Moses took one of every fifty prisoners and animals and gave them to the Levites who maintained the Lord's Tabernacle. All this was done just as the Lord had commanded Moses.

[48] Then all the military commanders came to Moses [49] and said, "Sir, we have accounted for all the men who went out to battle under our command; not one of us is missing! [50] So we are presenting the items of gold we captured as an offering to the Lord from our share of the plunder—armbands, bracelets, rings, earrings, and necklaces. This will make atonement for our lives before the Lord."

[51] So Moses and Eleazar the priest received the gold from all the military commanders, all kinds of jewelry and crafted objects. [52] In all, the gold that the commanders presented as a gift to the Lord weighed about 420 pounds. [53] All the fighting men had taken some of the plunder for themselves. [54] So Moses and Eleazar the priest accepted the gifts from the military commanders and brought the gold to the Tabernacle as a reminder to the Lord that the people of Israel belong to him.

[32:1] Now the tribes of Reuben and Gad owned vast numbers of livestock. So when they saw that the lands of Jazer and Gilead were ideally suited for their flocks and herds, [2] they came to Moses, Eleazar the priest, and the other leaders of the people. They said, [3] "Ataroth, Dibon, Jazer, Nimrah, Heshbon, Elealeh, Sebam, Nebo, and Beon— [4] the Lord has conquered this whole area for the people of Israel. It is ideally suited for all our flocks and herds. [5] If we have found favor with you, please let us have this land as our property instead of giving us land across the Jordan River."

[6] "Do you mean you want to stay back here while your brothers go across and do all the fighting?" Moses asked the Reubenites and Gadites. [7] "Are you trying to discourage the rest of the people of Israel from going across to the land the Lord has given them? [8] This is what your ancestors did when I sent them from Kadesh-barnea to explore the land. [9] After they went up to the valley of Eshcol and scouted the land, they discouraged the people of Israel from entering the land the Lord was giving them. [10] Then the Lord was furious with them, and he vowed, [11] 'Of all those I rescued from Egypt, no one who is twenty years old or older will ever see the land I solemnly promised to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, for they have not obeyed me completely. [12] The only exceptions are Caleb son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite and Joshua son of Nun, for they have wholeheartedly followed the Lord.'

[13] "The Lord was furious with Israel and made them wander in the wilderness for forty years until the whole generation that sinned against him had died. [14] But here you are, a brood of sinners, doing exactly the same thing! You are making the Lord even angrier with Israel. [15] If you turn away from him like this and he abandons them again in the wilderness, you will be responsible for destroying this entire nation!"

[16] But they responded to Moses, "We simply want to build sheepfolds for our flocks and fortified cities for our wives and children. [17] Then we will arm ourselves and lead our fellow Israelites into battle until we have brought them safely to their inheritance. Meanwhile, our families will stay in the fortified cities we build here, so they will be safe from any attacks by the local people. [18] We will not return to our homes until all the people of Israel have received their inheritance of land. [19] But we do not want any of the land on the other side of the Jordan. We would rather live here on the east side where we have received our inheritance."

[20] Then Moses said, "If you keep your word and arm yourselves for the Lord's battles, [21] and if your troops cross the Jordan until the Lord has driven out his enemies, [22] then you may return when the land is finally subdued before the Lord. You will have discharged your duty to the Lord and to the rest of the people of Israel. And the land on the east side of the Jordan will be your inheritance from the Lord. [23] But if you fail to keep your word, then you will have sinned against the Lord, and you may be sure that your sin will find you out. [24] Go ahead and build towns for your families and sheepfolds for your flocks, but do everything you have said."

[25] Then the people of Gad and Reuben replied, "We are your servants and will follow your instructions exactly. [26] Our children, wives, flocks, and cattle will stay here in the towns of Gilead. [27] But, sir, all who are able to bear arms will cross over to fight for the Lord, just as you have said."

[28] So Moses gave orders to Eleazar, Joshua, and the tribal leaders of Israel. [29] He said, "If all the men of Gad and Reuben who are able to fight the Lord's battles cross the Jordan with you, then when the land is conquered, you must give them the land of Gilead as their property. [30] But if they refuse to cross over and march ahead of you, then they must accept land with the rest of you in the land of Canaan."

[31] The tribes of Gad and Reuben said again, "Sir, we will do as the Lord has commanded!  
[32] We will cross the Jordan into Canaan fully armed to fight for the Lord, but our inheritance of land will be here on this side of the Jordan."

[33] So Moses assigned to the tribes of Gad, Reuben, and half the tribe of Manasseh son of Joseph the territory of King Sihon of the Amorites and the land of King Og of Bashan—the whole land with its towns and surrounding lands.

[34] The people of Gad built the towns of Dibon, Ataroth, Aroer, [35] Atroth-shophan, Jazer, Jogbehah, [36] Beth-nimrah, and Beth-haran. These were all fortified cities with sheepfolds for their flocks.

[37] The people of Reuben built the towns of Heshbon, Elealeh, Kiriathaim, [38] Nebo, Baal-meon, and Sibmah. They changed the names of some of the towns they conquered and rebuilt.

[39] Then the descendants of Makir of the tribe of Manasseh went to Gilead and conquered it, and they drove out the Amorites, who were living there. [40] So Moses gave Gilead to the Makirites, descendants of Manasseh, and they lived there. [41] The people of Jair, another clan of the tribe of Manasseh, captured many of the towns in Gilead and changed the name of that region to the Towns of Jair. [42] Meanwhile, a man named Nobah captured the town of Kenath and its surrounding villages, and he renamed that area Nobah after himself.

[33:1] This is the itinerary the Israelites followed as they marched out of Egypt under the leadership of Moses and Aaron. [2] At the Lord's direction, Moses kept a written record of their progress. These are the stages of their march, identified by the different places they stopped along the way.

[3] They set out from the city of Rameses on the morning after the first Passover celebration in early spring. The people of Israel left defiantly, in full view of all the Egyptians. [4] Meanwhile, the Egyptians were burying all their firstborn sons, whom the Lord had killed the night before. The Lord had defeated the gods of Egypt that night with great acts of judgment!

[5] After leaving Rameses, the Israelites set up camp at Succoth.

[6] Then they left Succoth and camped at Etham on the edge of the wilderness.

[7] They left Etham and turned back toward Pi-hahiroth, opposite Baal-zephon, and camped near Migdol.

[8] They left Pi-hahiroth and crossed the Red Sea into the wilderness beyond. Then they traveled for three days into the Etham wilderness and camped at Marah.

[9] They left Marah and camped at Elim, where there are twelve springs of water and seventy palm trees.

[10] They left Elim and camped beside the Red Sea.

[11] They left the Red Sea and camped in the Sin Desert.

[12] They left the Sin Desert and camped at Dophkah.

[13] They left Dophkah and camped at Alush.



[14] They left Alush and camped at Rephidim, where there was no water for the people to drink.

[15] They left Rephidim and camped in the wilderness of Sinai.

[16] They left the wilderness of Sinai and camped at Kibroth-hattaavah.

[17] They left Kibroth-hattaavah and camped at Hazeroth.

[18] They left Hazeroth and camped at Rithmah.

[19] They left Rithmah and camped at Rimmon-perez.

[20] They left Rimmon-perez and camped at Libnah.

[21] They left Libnah and camped at Rissah.

[22] They left Rissah and camped at Kehelathah.

[23] They left Kehelathah and camped at Mount Shepher.

[24] They left Mount Shepher and camped at Haradah.

[25] They left Haradah and camped at Makheloth.

[26] They left Makheloth and camped at Tahath.

[27] They left Tahath and camped at Terah.

[28] They left Terah and camped at Mithcah.

[29] They left Mithcah and camped at Hashmonah.

[30] They left Hashmonah and camped at Moseroth.

[31] They left Moseroth and camped at Bene-jaakan.

[32] They left Bene-jaakan and camped at Hor-haggidgad.

[33] They left Hor-haggidgad and camped at Jotbathah.

[34] They left Jotbathah and camped at Abronah.

[35] They left Abronah and camped at Ezion-geber.

[36] They left Ezion-geber and camped at Kadesh in the wilderness of Zin.

[37] They left Kadesh and camped at Mount Hor, at the border of Edom. [38] While they were at the foot of Mount Hor, Aaron the priest was directed by the Lord to go up the mountain, and there he died. This happened on a day in midsummer, during the fortieth year after Israel's departure from Egypt. [39] Aaron was 123 years old when he died there on Mount Hor.

[40] It was then that the Canaanite king of Arad, who lived in the Negev in the land of Canaan, heard that the people of Israel were approaching his land.

[41] Meanwhile, the Israelites left Mount Hor and camped at Zalmonah.

[42] Then they left Zalmonah and camped at Punon.

[43] They left Punon and camped at Oboth.

[44] They left Oboth and camped at Iye-abarim on the border of Moab.

[45] They left Iye-abarim and camped at Dibon-gad.

[46] They left Dibon-gad and camped at Almon-diblathaim.

[47] They left Almon-diblathaim and camped in the mountains east of the river, near Mount Nebo.

[48] They left the mountains east of the river and camped on the plains of Moab beside the Jordan River, across from Jericho. [49] Along the Jordan River they camped from Beth-jeshimoth as far as Abel-shittim on the plains of Moab.

[50] While they were camped near the Jordan River on the plains of Moab opposite Jericho, the Lord said to Moses, [51] "Speak to the Israelites and tell them: 'When you cross the Jordan River into the land of Canaan, [52] you must drive out all the people living there. You must destroy all their carved and molten images and demolish all their pagan shrines. [53] Take possession of the land and settle in it, because I have given it to you to occupy.

[54] You must distribute the land among the clans by sacred lot and in proportion to their size. A larger inheritance of land will be allotted to each of the larger clans, and a smaller inheritance will be allotted to each of the smaller clans. The decision of the sacred lot is final. In this way, the land will be divided among your ancestral tribes. [55] But if you fail to drive out the people who live in the land, those who remain will be like splinters in your eyes and thorns in your sides. They will harass you in the land where you live. [56] And I will do to you what I had planned to do to them.' "

[34:1] Then the Lord said to Moses, [2] "Give these instructions to the Israelites: When you come into the land of Canaan, which I am giving you as your special possession, these will be the boundaries. [3] The southern portion of your country will extend from the wilderness of Zin, along the edge of Edom. The southern boundary will begin on the east at the Dead Sea. [4] It will then run south past Scorpion Pass in the direction of Zin. Its southernmost point will be Kadesh-barnea, from which it will go to Hazar-addar, and on to Azmon. [5] From Azmon the boundary will turn toward the brook of Egypt and end at the Mediterranean Sea.

[6] "Your western boundary will be the coastline of the Mediterranean Sea.

[7] "Your northern boundary will begin at the Mediterranean Sea and run eastward to Mount Hor, [8] then to Lebo-hamath, and on through Zedad [9] and Ziphron to Hazar-enan. This will be your northern boundary.

[10] "The eastern boundary will start at Hazar-enan and run south to Shepham, [11] then down to Riblah on the east side of Ain. From there the boundary will run down along the eastern edge of the Sea of Galilee, [12] and then along the Jordan River to the Dead Sea. These are the boundaries of your land."

[13] Then Moses told the Israelites, "This is the territory you are to divide among yourselves by sacred lot. The Lord commands that the land be divided up among the nine and a half remaining tribes. [14] The families of the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and half the tribe of Manasseh have already received their inheritance of land [15] on the east side of the Jordan River, across from Jericho."

[16] And the Lord said to Moses, [17] "These are the men who are to divide the land among the people: Eleazar the priest and Joshua son of Nun. [18] Also enlist one leader from each tribe to help them with the task.

[19] These are the tribes and the names of the leaders:

Tribe — Leader

Judah — Caleb son of Jephunneh

[20] Simeon — Shemuel son of Ammihud

[21] Benjamin — Elidad son of Kislou

[22] Dan — Bukki son of Jogli

[23] Manasseh son of Joseph — Hanniel son of Ephod

[24] Ephraim son of Joseph — Kemuel son of Shiphtan

[25] Zebulun — Elizaphan son of Parnach

[26] Issachar — Paltiel son of Azzan

[27] Asher — Ahihud son of Shelomi

[28] Naphtali — Pedahel son of Ammihud

[29] These are the men the Lord has appointed to oversee the dividing of the land of Canaan among the Israelites."

[35:1] While Israel was camped beside the Jordan on the plains of Moab, across from Jericho, the Lord said to Moses, [2] "Instruct the people of Israel to give to the Levites from their property certain towns to live in, along with the surrounding pasturelands. [3] These towns will be their homes, and the surrounding lands will provide pasture for their cattle, flocks, and other livestock. [4] The pastureland assigned to the Levites around these towns will extend 1,500 feet from the town walls in every direction. [5] Measure off 3,000 feet outside the town walls in every direction—east, south, west, north—with the town at the center. This area will serve as the larger pastureland for the towns.

[6] "You must give the Levites six cities of refuge, where a person who has accidentally killed someone can flee for safety. In addition, give them forty-two other towns. [7] In all, forty-eight towns with the surrounding pastureland will be given to the Levites. [8] These towns will come from the property of the people of Israel. The larger tribes will give more towns to the Levites, while the smaller tribes will give fewer. Each tribe will give in proportion to its inheritance."

[9] And the Lord said to Moses, [10] "Say this to the people of Israel: 'When you cross the Jordan into the land of Canaan, [11] designate cities of refuge for people to flee to if they have killed someone accidentally. [12] These cities will be places of protection from a dead person's relatives who want to avenge the death. The slayer must not be killed before being tried by the community. [13] Designate six cities of refuge for yourselves, [14] three on the east side of the Jordan River and three on the west in the land of Canaan. [15] These cities are for the protection of Israelites, resident foreigners, and traveling merchants. Anyone who accidentally kills someone may flee there for safety.

[16] " 'But if someone strikes and kills another person with a piece of iron, it must be presumed to be murder, and the murderer must be executed. [17] Or if someone strikes and kills another person with a large stone, it is murder, and the murderer must be executed. [18] The same is true if someone strikes and kills another person with a wooden weapon. It must be presumed to be murder, and the murderer must be executed.

[19] The victim's nearest relative is responsible for putting the murderer to death. When they meet, the avenger must execute the murderer. [20] So if in premeditated hostility someone pushes another person or throws a dangerous object and the person dies, it is murder. [21] Or if someone angrily hits another person with a fist and the person dies, it is murder. In such cases, the victim's nearest relative must execute the murderer when they meet.

[22] " 'But suppose someone pushes another person without premeditated hostility, or throws something that unintentionally hits another person, [23] or accidentally drops a stone on someone, though they were not enemies, and the person dies. [24] If this should happen, the assembly must follow these regulations in making a judgment between the slayer and the avenger, the victim's nearest relative. [25] They must protect the slayer from the avenger, and they must send the slayer back to live in a city of refuge until the death of the high priest.

[26] " 'But if the slayer leaves the city of refuge, [27] and the victim's nearest relative finds him outside the city limits and kills him, it will not be considered murder. [28] The slayer should have stayed inside the city of refuge until the death of the high priest. But after the death of the high priest, the slayer may return to his own property. [29] These are permanent laws for you to observe from generation to generation, wherever you may live.

[30] " 'All murderers must be executed, but only if there is more than one witness. No one may be put to death on the testimony of only one witness. [31] Also, you must never accept a ransom payment for the life of someone judged guilty of murder and subject to execution; murderers must always be put to death. [32] And never accept a ransom payment from someone who has fled to a city of refuge, allowing the slayer to return to his property before the death of the high priest. [33] This will ensure that the land where you live will not be polluted, for murder pollutes the land. And no atonement can be made for murder except by the execution of the murderer. [34] You must not defile the land where you are going to live, for I live there myself. I am the Lord, who lives among the people of Israel.' "

[36:1] Then the heads of the clan of Gilead—descendants of Makir, son of Manasseh, son of Joseph—came to Moses and the family leaders of Israel with a petition. [2] They said, "Sir, the Lord instructed you to divide the land by sacred lot among the people of Israel. You were told by the Lord to give the inheritance of our brother Zelophehad to his daughters. [3] But if any of them marries a man from another tribe, their inheritance of land will go with them to the tribe into which they marry. In this way, the total area of our tribal land will be reduced. [4] Then when the Year of Jubilee comes, their inheritance of land will be added to that of the new tribe, causing it to be lost forever to our ancestral tribe."

[5] So Moses gave the Israelites this command from the Lord: "The men of the tribe of Joseph are right. [6] This is what the Lord commands concerning the daughters of Zelophehad: Let them marry anyone they like, as long as it is within their own ancestral tribe. [7] None of the inherited land may pass from tribe to tribe, for the inheritance of every tribe must remain fixed as it was first allotted. [8] The daughters throughout the tribes of Israel who are in line to inherit property must marry within their tribe, so that all the Israelites will keep their ancestral property. [9] No inheritance may pass from one tribe to another; each tribe of Israel must hold on to its allotted inheritance of land."

[10] The daughters of Zelophehad did as the Lord commanded Moses. [11] Mahlah, Tirzah, Hoglah, Milcah, and Noah all married cousins on their father's side. [12] They married into the clans of Manasseh son of Joseph. Thus, their inheritance of land remained within their ancestral tribe.

[13] These are the commands and regulations that the Lord gave to the people of Israel through Moses while they were camped on the plains of Moab beside the Jordan River, across from Jericho.

## **MEGATHEMES**

### **THEME: Census**

#### **EXPLANATION:**

Moses counted the Israelites twice. The first census organized the people into marching units to better defend themselves. The second prepared them to conquer the country east of the Jordan River.

#### **IMPORTANCE:**

People have to be organized, trained, and led to be effective in great movements. It is always wise to count the cost before setting out on some great undertaking. When we are aware of the obstacles before us we can more easily avoid them. In God's work, we must remove barriers in our relationships with others so that our effectiveness is not diminished.

### **THEME: Rebellion**

#### **EXPLANATION:**

At Kadesh, 12 spies were sent out into the land of Canaan to report on the fortifications of the enemies. When the spies returned, 10 said that they should give up and go back to Egypt. As a result, the people refused to enter the land. Faced with a choice, Israel rebelled against God. Rebellion did not start with an uprising, but with griping and murmuring against Moses and God.

## **IMPORTANCE:**

Rebellion against God is always a serious matter. It is not something to take lightly, for God's punishment for sin is often very severe. Our rebellion does not usually begin with all-out warfare, but in subtle ways—with griping and criticizing. Make sure your negative comments are not the product of a rebellious spirit.

## **TIMELINE**

Joseph dies 1805 B.C. (1640 B.C.)

**SLAVERY IN EGYPT**

Exodus from Egypt 1446 (1280)

Ten Commandments given 1445 (1279)

First census 1444 (1278)

First spy mission 1443 (1277)

**DESERT WANDERINGS**

Second census, Balaam prophesies 1407 (1241)

Joshua appointed, Canaan entered 1406 (1240)

Judges begin to rule 1375 (1220)

United Kingdom under Saul 1050 (1045)

**An invitation is given to open your heart's door.**

**Rev. 3:20**

Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.

**To ask Jesus to come into your heart please pray this Prayer:**

Dear Lord Jesus, I believe you are the Christ, the Son of the Living God. I ask you to forgive me of my sins and coming into my heart. I accept you as savior and will follow you as Lord. Amen.

References:

Holy Bible: King James Translation

Holy Bible: Living Bible Translation

Additional comments and charts are taken from: *Life Application Study Bible*. Illinois: Tyndale House 2007. Print