



CAPITOL COMMISSION™

Wandering In The Wilderness – Book of Numbers

JANUARY 28, 2015

Dave DePue / PO Box 1775, Topeka, KS 66603 / dave.depue@capitolcom.org

God calls to leadership those that are available and have demonstrated that they can be trustworthy. Our role is to be faithful to the trust while God causes us to grow through success and failure. Our survey of the Book of Numbers highlights the high cost of disobedience paid by an entire generation.

INTRODUCTION

The title “Numbers” comes from the Greek term for numberings or census. This book reveals the count of men, over 600,000, able to serve in war. There were also women, children, and the Levites, a priestly tribe. Moses, writing in about 1405 B.C., recounted the wilderness trek of those more than two million people as they moved from the Red Sea, below today’s Cairo in Egypt, to Mt Nebo, in today’s Jordan, just east of Jericho, Israel. The 200 mile journey took nearly forty years. It might have been done in a few weeks, if they had been faithful and obedient to God. How far would you be today if you were more trusting of God’s Word and direction in your life?

OBEDIENT PEOPLE ARE BLESSED

Numbers 6:24-26 The LORD bless you and keep you; the LORD make His face to shine upon you and be gracious to you; the LORD lift up His countenance upon you and give you peace.

LORD, as in all caps is the transliteration of the Hebrew “Yahweh” the personal name of God. He spoke through Moses, giving instructions for a vertical relationship with God and horizontal relationships with one another. The first ten chapters detail the rules and items of worship, including the tabernacle, the symbolic residence of God. His presence was evident in a hovering cloud to guide them as they traveled by day and a fiery ball of protection as they rested at night. How has your obedience resulted in direction, protection, and peace?

REBELLIOUS PEOPLE ARE NOT BLESSED

Numbers 11:1a Now the people complained about their hardships in the hearing of the LORD;

The people complained about water, the variety of food, their leaders, and even questioned God’s ways. Ten outright rebellious actions are detailed in chapters 11-25. **God judged the leaders much more severely** while the people suffered consequences, including a greatly extended journey. God pardoned the body but kept their generation from entering the land promised to Abraham. *“Those who have seen My glory, My miracles, yet put Me to the test...and have not listened to My voice, shall not see the land”* (Numbers 14:22-23). Caleb and Joshua were set apart because of their willing spirit and faithful obedience. What consequences have you seen as a result of grumbling, complaining, and rebellion?

RENEWED OBEDIENCE IS REWARDED

Numbers 34:1-2a Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, “Command the sons of Israel and say to them, ‘When you enter the land of Canaan, this is the land that shall fall to you as an inheritance,...’”

The second generation of the exodus inherited the promise. A second census, taken at Jericho, revealed that there were just over 600,000 fit for military service and a total population of over two million people. Chapters 26-36 detail God’s rules for inheritance, offerings, vows, marriage, and settlement in the land. How are you being faithful to the promise of your inheritance in this life and eternity?

THE LORD IS FAITHFUL

We see that The Lord is a God of judgment as He responded to the sin of His people Israel. However, the faithfulness of the Lord to keep his promise is most profound! Numbers ends with the Israel camped on the edge of the land promised to Abraham for his descendants. The books of Deuteronomy, Joshua, and Judges detail their struggles with sin and the military action needed to take and remain in possession. What spiritual training are you doing to keep your territory?

A PRAYER

LORD, help me to learn from the problems others have caused for themselves on life’s journey. Please continue to be patient when I take the long route to obedience. In Your Son’s Name.