

## Numbers: The Consequences of Disobedience

The book of Numbers is about the believer's **walk with God**. Israel wandered in the wilderness because of disobedience. The people routinely **criticized** Moses.

“The book of Numbers tells the story of Israel’s experience, ranging from their exodus out of Egypt to their entrance into the Promised Land. The lives of two generations are recorded: the first lacking in faith and receiving their just punishment from God, and the second believing the Word of God and so entering into their inheritance as His children. Like those generations of Israelites, Christians today are also on a journey between events of deepest significance—from the work of Christ that provides our exodus from bondage to sin and death to Jesus’ second coming that ushers His children into the true and final promised land of Heaven.”

Three movements help **outline** the book of Numbers: (1) from Sinai to Kadesh-barnea (1-12); (2) from Kadesh-barnea through various wilderness wanderings and back to Kadesh-barnea (13-19); and (3) from Kadesh-barnea to Jordan (20-36).

What are many of the spiritual **principles** found in the book of Numbers?

- The Lord isn't **silent** with His leaders and people

**Numbers 1:1** – *The Lord spoke to Moses in the wilderness of Sinai, in the tent of meeting, on the first day of the second month, in the second year after they had come out of the land of Egypt, saying...*

- The **burden** of spiritual leadership is often heavy

**Numbers 11:11-15** – *Moses said to the Lord, “Why have you dealt ill with your servant? And why have I not found favor in your sight, that you lay the burden of all this people on me? Did I conceive all this people? Did I give them birth, that you should say to me, ‘Carry them in your bosom, as a nurse carries a nursing child,’ to the land that you swore to give their fathers? Where am I to get meat to give to all this people? For they weep before me and say, ‘Give us meat, that we may eat.’ I am not able to carry all this people alone; the burden is too heavy for me. If you will treat me like this, kill me at once, if I find favor in your sight, that I may not see my wretchedness.”*

- **Isolation** isn't God's design for spiritual leadership

**Numbers 11:16-17** – *Then the Lord said to Moses, “Gather for me seventy men of the elders of Israel, whom you know to be the elders of the people and officers over them, and bring them to the tent of meeting, and let them take their stand there with you. And I will come down and talk with you there. And I will take some of the Spirit that is on you and put it on them, and they shall bear the burden of the people with you, so that you may not bear it yourself alone.*

- Ministry leaders need to prepare for destructive **criticism**

**Numbers 14:1-2** – *Then all the congregation raised a loud cry, and the people wept that night. And all the people of Israel grumbled against Moses and Aaron. The whole congregation said to them, “Would that we had died in the land of Egypt! Or would that we had died in this wilderness!”*

- The Lord **rewards** obedience, faith, and trust

**Numbers 14:30** – *Not one shall come into the land where I swore that I would make you dwell, except Caleb the son of Jephunneh and Joshua the son of Nun.*

- God refuses to turn His head and **ignore** disobedience

**Numbers 20:11-12** – *And Moses lifted up his hand and struck the rock with his staff twice, and water came out abundantly, and the congregation drank, and their livestock. And the Lord said to Moses and Aaron, “Because you did not believe in me, to uphold me as holy in the eyes of the people of Israel, therefore you shall not bring this assembly into the land that I have given them.”*

- God desires to use **every believer** in the work of ministry

**Numbers 22:28** – *Then the Lord opened the mouth of the donkey, and she said to Balaam, “What have I done to you, that you have struck me these three times?”*

- Leaders need to lead with a **transition plan** in mind

**Numbers 27:15-18** – *Moses spoke to the Lord, saying, “Let the Lord, the God of the spirits of all flesh, appoint a man over the congregation who shall go out before them and come in before them, who shall lead them out and bring them in, that the congregation of the Lord may not be as sheep that have no shepherd.” So the Lord said to Moses, “Take Joshua the son of Nun, a man in whom is the Spirit, and lay your hand on him.*

- Believers need to make decisions with the **consequences** in mind

**Numbers 32:23** – *But if you will not do so, behold, you have sinned against the Lord, and be sure your sin will find you out.*

- God’s people need **safe places** to dwell when needed

**Numbers 35:9-11** – *And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, “Speak to the people of Israel and say to them, When you cross the Jordan into the land of Canaan, then you shall select cities to be cities of refuge for you, that the manslayer who kills any person without intent may flee there.*