



The Summit
Green Campus of Canton Baptist Temple

Resources for Your Life

Numbers
21 Sessions

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Resource Guide

This resource was compiled from the personal Bible study and blog entries created by Tom Hogsed, pastor of the Summit in Green. You can find the original blog entries at www.tomhogsed.com.

The **introduction** to this book has been written so the reader has a better understanding of the Biblical author, his purpose in writing, and important points to understand before reading.

Following the introduction, each new page represents a **verse by verse overview** of the Scripture passage. The best way to study is to first read the Scripture verses from your Bible relying on the Holy Spirit to provide understanding and then to support your understanding with the commentary written below.

At the end of each Scripture commentary, there is a short **prayer** written so the reader can personally apply what has been discovered; however, it is suggested that you also pray from your heart in response to God's Word.

Feel free to make your own personal notes in your Bible, on this page, or even in a journal.

If this resource has helped you or you have further questions, please send an e-mail to tomhogsed@gmail.com.

Introduction to Numbers

After God had delivered Israel (His chosen people) from Egyptian bondage (Exodus 12:29-51), they departed into the wilderness and camped at the foot of Mount Sinai (Exodus 19:1-40:38). Israel camped at Mount Sinai for approximately 11 months and during that time God provided them with His law, which would become a guide to their relationship with Him and others. Moses (Exodus 3-4), God's appointed leader of the Israelites, received the law directly from God and wrote it down so that the people would understand what He expected from them. The Law was made up of three parts: the Ten Commandments/Decalogue (Exodus 20:1-21), civil/religious ordinances (Exodus 20:22-24:11), and ceremonial regulations (Exodus 24:12-31:18). The tabernacle became the center of Israel's worship and the place where God's presence dwelt with the people (Exodus 32-40). The book of Leviticus provided further instruction concerning proper worship inside and outside the tabernacle. Leviticus primarily covers four topics: offerings/sacrifices (Leviticus 1:1-7:38), priestly duties (Leviticus 8:1-10:20), uncleanness in worship (Leviticus 11:1-16:34), and individual holiness (Leviticus 17:1-27:34). These four areas provided a standard of conduct for the nation of Israel and the priests who assisted them in worshiping God. It was imperative for Israel to obey the laws which were established in Leviticus so that they could experience an uninhibited relationship with God.

The book of Leviticus did not advance the historical timeline of Israel because the content was given during Moses' encounter with God on Mount Sinai; however, the book of Numbers resumes Israel's historical timeline while they were encamped at Mount Sinai. Numbers is not a complete record of Israel's journey into the land (Canaan) that God had promised, but rather a glimpse into the second and fortieth years following their Exodus from Egypt. Israel's escape from Egyptian bondage occurred in 1445 BC. All events recorded in Numbers 1:1-14:45 occur in 1444 BC and the events recorded in Numbers 20:1-36:13 occur in 1406/1405 BC. The timeline for the various laws and events documented in Numbers 15:1-19:22 most likely took place anywhere from 1443 BC-1407 BC.

Moses (Numbers 33:2; Numbers 36:13; Joshua 8:31; 2 Kings 14:6; Nehemiah 8:1; Mark 12:26; John 7:19) is referred to as the author of this fourth book of the law. He is said to have written the book of Numbers in the year that he died. Most of the events occurring in Numbers take place during the wilderness wanderings, which spanned two generations of Israel. The first generation (numbered in the census found in Numbers 1) experienced the Exodus from Egypt and their story continued until Numbers 14 when all adults 20 and older (except Joshua and Caleb) were sentenced to die in the wilderness because of their refusal to enter Canaan (see Exodus 14). As the first generation was dying out (Numbers 15-25), the second generation was rising to leadership; in fact, the second generation of Israel (numbered in the census found in Numbers 26) would be the ones who conquered Canaan and inherited the land. The story of the second generation in Israel begins in Numbers 26 and continues through the book of Deuteronomy and Joshua. Although the book of Numbers contains many statistics and numerical data during this part of Israel's history, Numbers is written as an example of Israel's obedience and disobedience to the direct commandments of God. When Israel obeyed God they were rewarded, but when they abandoned God's ways they were judged. Even though Israel struggled with fully obeying God, He can be seen throughout the book of Numbers as the One who is keeping His promise to bring Israel into the land of Canaan (Genesis 12:1-3). Israel is a great reminder that God is often faithful even when we are not.

Dear God, open my eyes to Your ways so that I may obey You.

Numbers 1:1-2:34

God had given the Law to Moses (Exodus 19-24; Leviticus) and the people of Israel while they were encamped at the foot of Mount Sinai. The giving of the Law would govern the people in their relationships with God and others as well as provide structure to the nation of Israel when they inhabited the land of Canaan. Without the giving of the Law, chaos would prevail in the land they would soon inherit. After the Law was given, the tabernacle was completed and would become the center of worship for Israel because it was the dwelling place of God (Exodus 25-40). Now the only thing that was missing is Israel inhabiting Canaan, the land God had promised to the descendants of Abraham (Exodus 12:1-3). Dwelling in the land of Canaan would not be such an easy endeavor since Israel would have to fight against the people already occupying the land. In order to overtake the land, Israel would need to take a census of all males twenty years old or older who were capable of going to battle against the Canaanites. God commanded Moses to gather a man from each tribe of Israel (listed in Numbers 1:5-19) in order to help him tally the number of available soldiers (1:1-4). The census yielded the following numbers from each tribe:

Reuben - 46,500 (1:21)
Simeon - 59,300 (1:22-23)
Gad - 45,650 (1:24-25)
Judah - 74,600 (1:26-27)
Issachar - 54,400 (1:28-29)
Zebulun - 57,400 (1:30-31)
Ephraim, son of Joseph - 40,500 (1:32-33)
Manasseh, son of Joseph - 32,200 (1:34-35)
Benjamin - 35,400 (1:36-37)
Dan - 62,700 (1:38-39)
Asher - 41,500 (1:40-41)
Naphtali - 53,400 (1:42-43)

The total number of soldiers capable of going to battle against the Canaanites was 603,550 (1:44-46). Military service was not required for the tribe of Levi because they were to maintain the duties of the tabernacle; therefore, the number of Levities was not included here (1:47-54). Along with numbering the soldiers, the Lord also commanded that each tribe (identified by a unique banner) be situated around the tabernacle of meeting when Israel was encamped at a location (Numbers 2). Placing the tribes in an organized fashion while they marched and camped would provide efficiency and structure in such a large group of people, which may have been approximately two million at this point in Israel's history (2:1-2). Here is an explanation of how the tribes were to be placed around the tabernacle:

East Side of the Tabernacle (Numbers 2:3-9)

Judah (Nahshon son of Amminadab) - 74,600 (2:3-4)
Issachar (Nethanel son of Zuar) - 54,400 (2:5-6)
Zebulun (Eliab son of Helon) - 57,400 (2:7-8)
Total: 186,400 (2:9)

South Side of the Tabernacle (Numbers 2:10-17)

Reuben (Elizur son of Shedeur) - 46,500 (2:10-11)
Simeon (Shelumiel son of Zurishaddai) - 59,300 (2:12-13)
Gad (Eliasaph son of Deuel) - 45,650 (2:14-15)
Total: 151,450 (2:16-17)

West Side of the Tabernacle (Numbers 2:18-24)

Ephraim (Elishama son of Ammihud) - 40,500 (2:18-19)
Manasseh (Gamaliel son of Pedahzur) - 32,200 (2:20-21)
Benjamin (Abidan son of Gideon) - 35,400 (2:22-23)
Total: 108,100 (2:24)

North Side of the Tabernacle (Numbers 2:25-31)

Dan (Ahiezer son of Ammishaddai) - 62,700 (2:25-26)
Asher (Pagiel son of Ocran) - 41,500 (2:27-28)
Naphtali (Ahira son of Enan) - 53,400 (2:29-30)
Total: 157,600 (2:31)

Again, the total of all the soldiers listed in this arrangement is 603,550 (2:32); however, the Levities were not numbered because they were exempt from military service (2:33). "So the people of Israel did everything 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" (2:34). Although these preparations may seem insignificant, they provided organization to Israel so that they would be ready to go to war. Tasks which seem needless to us may be the very things that God is using to prepare us for a future encounter with Him.

Dear God, may I follow You in the simple things so that I might be ready for those things ahead of me.

Numbers 3:1-51

The nation of Israel was encamped at the foot of Mount Sinai one year following their exodus from Egyptian bondage. During that year they had received the Law of God (Exodus 19-24; Leviticus) as well as constructed the tabernacle (Exodus 25-40). Now they were poised to enter Canaan, the land God had promised to give to the descendants of Abraham (Genesis 12:1-3), but God needed to bring some organization and structure to the people. At this time in Israel's history their population was approximately two million people. In order to conquer the inhabitants of the land of Canaan, Israel would first need to determine how many men were capable of going to battle. In Numbers 1 a census was taken and it was discovered that there were 603,550 men 20 years or older who were ready for battle (2:32); however, there was one tribe of Israel that was not accounted for in this particular census. Aaron, his descendants, and the tribe of Levi had been set aside to perform the duties of the tabernacle; therefore, they were not eligible for military service. Aaron had four sons who became the priests of Israel, but two of them disobeyed (Nadab and Abihu; Leviticus 10:1-7) which left Eleazar and Ithamar to carry on the role of the priests (3:1-4).

After the events of Numbers 1-2, God spoke to Moses and asked him to bring the tribe of Levi before Him (3:5-6). He then proclaimed them as the ones who would assist Aaron in doing the work of the tabernacle (3:7-13). The tribe of Levi had been taken from all the tribes of Israel and given the priestly duties of the tabernacle. It is important to understand that of all the tribe of Levi, only the sons of Aaron were to serve as priests. This meant that they were the only ones who could offer sacrifices (Leviticus 1-7). The rest of the tribe of Levi would assist the priests in the duties of the tabernacle (3:7-9). God then commanded Moses to take a census of all males in the tribe of Levi one month old and above (3:14-16). Levi had three sons - Gershon, Kohath, and Merari - and a count was taken of all the male descendants (3:17-20). Here is the information regarding each son's descendants:

Gershon (3:21-26)

Male Population: 7,500 (3:22)

Camp Placement: Behind the tabernacle on the west side (3:23)

Leader of the House: Eliasaph (3:24)

Duties: Responsible for the coverings of the tabernacle (3:25-26)

Kohath (3:27-32)

Male Population: 8,600 (3:28)

Camp Placement: south side of the tabernacle (3:29)

Leader of the House: Elizaphan (3:30), Eleazar was to be over all the Levites (3:32)

Duties: Responsible for the holy objects in the tabernacle (3:31)

Merari (3:33-37)

Male Population: 6,200 (3:34)

Camp Placement: north side of the tabernacle (3:35)

Duties: Responsible for the wooden framework of the tabernacle (3:36-37)

Moses, Aaron, and his sons would camp on the east side of the tabernacle and be responsible for "keeping charge of the sanctuary, to meet the needs of the children of Israel" (3:38). After the census was completed, the number of male Levites one month and above was 22,000 (3:39). "Then the Lord said to Moses, 'Now count all the firstborn sons in Israel who are one month old or older, and make a list of their names. The Levites must be reserved for me as substitutes for the firstborn sons of Israel; I am the Lord. And the Levites' livestock must be reserved for me as substitutes for the firstborn livestock of the whole nation of Israel'" (3:40-41, NLT). God had spared the firstborn of every family in Israel's exodus from Egypt (Exodus 12:1-28), so now He demanded the Levites be consecrated to Him as a form of compensation; however, instead of putting them to death, their lives would be spent in service to God. The census of the firstborn males one month and above in all of Israel revealed that there were 22,273 (3:42-43). The Lord then spoke to Moses saying, "Take the Levites as substitutes for 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 belong to me; I am the Lord" (3:45). Since there were 273 more firstborn in all of Israel than were in the tribe of Levi, five shekels were required for each individual, which was a total of 1,365 shekels (3:46-50). Moses took the money and gave it to Aaron and his sons as redemption of the 273 extra males in Israel (3:51). Even though these details seem insignificant to us, God was helping Moses take an account of the nation of Israel. The military capability (Numbers 1), the encampment structure (Numbers 2), and now the priestly assignments had been designated (Numbers 3). God was preparing the Israelites to enter the land that had been promised to them.

Dear God, help me to be alert to the details of today so that I might be prepared for what tomorrow may bring.

Numbers 4:1-49

A census was taken of all males twenty years old and older in order to determine the military strength of Israel as they would soon battle the people occupying the land of Canaan that God had promised to them (Numbers 1). The census revealed that there were 603,550 eligible men to fight against the Canaanites (1:44-46). Along with numbering the soldiers, the Lord also commanded that each tribe (identified by a unique banner) be situated around the tabernacle of meeting when Israel was encamped at a certain location (Numbers 2). Placing the tribes in an organized fashion while they marched and camped would provide efficiency and structure in such a large group of people, which may have been approximately two million at this point in Israel's history (2:1-2). The only tribe not numbered with the soldiers or given a specific location around the tabernacle was the tribe of Levi because God had set them aside to perform the duties in the tabernacle (Numbers 3). A census of all males in the tribe of Levi one month old and above was taken to determine how many would be available to serve in the tabernacle (3:14-16). Levi had three sons – Gershon, Kohath, and Merari.

Each of Levi's sons and their families would serve a specific purpose in moving the tabernacle as Israel journeyed from one camp to the next; therefore, God commanded Moses to take a census of all the men 30-50 years of age in tribe of Levi. The **sons of Kohath** (see also Numbers 3:27-32) were responsible for transporting the holy objects in the tabernacle only after they had been covered by Aaron and his sons (4:1-20). If any son of Kohath touched or looked upon a holy object before it had been covered by the sons of Aaron, they would die (4:15, 20). The census revealed that there were 2,750 sons of Kohath eligible for this responsibility (4:34-37). The **sons of Gershon** (see also Numbers 3:21-26) were responsible for transporting the coverings of the tabernacle (4:21-28). The census revealed that there were 2,630 sons of Gershon eligible for this responsibility (4:38-41). The **sons of Merari** (see also Numbers 3:33-37) were responsible for transporting the wooden framework of the tabernacle (4:29-33). The census revealed that there were 3,200 sons of Merari eligible for this responsibility (4:42-45). The total number of Levites available for transporting the parts of the tabernacle was 8,580 men 30-50 years old (4:46-49). All of the people had their own unique responsibility in transporting the pieces of the tabernacle when Israel traveled from one place to the next. Organizing these details would provide structure for the nation of Israel and allow them to quickly move nearly two million from one campsite to another without chaos. Numbering all these groups and people may seem tedious, but God was teaching Israel about the importance of relying on His plan for their own protection and provision.

Dear God, help me to be responsible in the duties you have given me so that I can work together with others.

Numbers 5:1-6:27

Several censuses of Israel were taken nearly one year after they were miraculously delivered from Egyptian bondage by the mighty hand of God (Exodus 12:29-51). Each census was necessary to take an account of the approximately 2 million people who comprised the nation of Israel. The censuses helped them determine military strength (Numbers 1), encampment structure (Numbers 2), priestly organization (Numbers 3), and tabernacle transport details (Numbers 4). Although these details may seem unimportant, the numbering of the people provided information to Moses that would assist him in leading the people into the land which God had promised to Abraham and his descendants (Genesis 12:1-3). After numbering the people, God commands Moses to make sure they are physically as well as spiritually clean. God specifically mentions three areas: removing ceremonially unclean persons from the camp (5:1-4), removing any hidden sins from the heart of individuals (5:5-10), and removing those in adulterous relationships (5:11-31). Those who were diseased or had touched a corpse were considered unclean and were to be placed outside the camp (5:1-4). The presence of God dwelling with the people demanded that they be physically clean because He could not look on that which was unclean. There was a process of becoming clean again and those instructions are found in Leviticus 12-15. If a personal sin was committed, confession and restitution was to be accompanied by a trespass offering before the individual's worship was acceptable to God (5:5-10; see also Leviticus 5:14-6:7). If a woman was accused of adultery (5:11-14), her husband was to bring her to the priest and present an offering (5:15). The priest would then set the woman before the Lord, who would determine if the accusation of adultery was true or false (5:16). The verdict would be revealed through a ritual where she would drink bitter water (5:17-18). If she was not guilty, the bitter water would not harm her (5:19); however, if she was guilty, the bitter water would cause her thighs to rot and her belly to swell (5:20-22). This probably means that she would be barren for the rest of her life. Numbers 5:23-31 simply repeats what has already been declared in this test of adultery.

A cleansing of the camp was required to maintain purity among the people, but God also revealed how a person could consecrate himself to the Lord for a certain period of time (Numbers 6). This act of consecration was known as a Nazirite vow (6:1-2). This type of vow was typically made by adults who wanted to express their devotion to God and be used in service for Him. Taking a Nazirite vow required a person to abstain from the following things: fermented drinks or things produced by the grapevine (6:3-4), cutting his hair (6:5), and having contact with a dead body (6:6-8). If he accidentally came in contact with a dead body, he would need to shave his head (6:9), make offerings (6:10-11). His vow would then start all over (6:12). When the vow was completed, he was to make offerings (6:13-17) and shave his head and his hair was to be given as an offering (6:18-21). God also established a way for the priests to bless the people (6:22-27). These are the words the priests could declare as a blessing over the people, "The Lord bless you and keep you; The Lord make His face shine upon you, and be gracious to you; The Lord lift up His countenance upon you, and give you peace" (6:24-26). In these two chapters of Numbers, it is very clear that God demands holiness from the people (Numbers 5), but also gives them an opportunity to consecrate themselves to Him (Numbers 6).

Dear God, may I live a life that is consecrated to You.

Numbers 7:1-8:26

The tabernacle became the center of worship in Israel since it is the place where the presence of God resided. After God had given the Law (Exodus 19:1-24:18; Leviticus), the instructions for building the tabernacle were given in Exodus 25:1-31:18. The tabernacle was constructed almost one year following Israel's exodus from Egypt (Exodus 35:1-40:38) and now it was time to dedicate it. The tabernacle was unique because it did not have a permanent location, but would be taken down and reconstructed each time Israel moved from one encampment to another. Since the tabernacle and its' furnishings were considered holy, the Israelites were commanded to handle the construction, transport, and reconstruction very carefully; in fact, God had already assigned the sons of Levi and his descendants certain items to be responsible for in the transport of the tabernacle (Numbers 4). The people of Israel had given offerings to construct the tabernacle (Exodus 35:4-29), but now they would begin bringing offerings to anoint and consecrate it (7:1). The leaders of the twelve tribes brought six covered carts and twelve oxen (7:2-3).

The offerings were accepted by Moses and to be used by the Levites in transporting the tabernacle and the furnishings (7:4-6). Two carts and four oxen were given to the Gershonites (7:7). Four carts and eight oxen were given to the Merarites (7:8). More carts and oxen were provided to the Merarites because the items they were carrying were heavier. No carts or oxen were given to the Kohathites because they were to carry the holy items on their shoulders (7:9; see also Numbers 4:15). Each of the twelve tribal leaders then brought a dedication offering for the altar (7:10-11). For the next twelve days, each tribal leader would come and make his offering for the altar. Every leader gave identical offerings over the span of twelve days and the details for each offering are listed in Numbers 7:18-83. Each leader gave the following items as a dedication offering: "...one silver platter, the weight of which was one hundred and thirty *shekels*, and one silver bowl of seventy shekels, according to the shekel of the sanctuary, both of them full of fine flour mixed with oil as a grain offering; one gold pan of ten *shekels*, full of incense; one young bull, one ram, and one male lamb in its first year, as a burnt offering; one kid of the goats as a sin offering; and as the sacrifice of peace offerings: two oxen, five rams, five male goats, and five male lambs in their first year." A total of all the offerings is given in detail in Numbers 7:84-88. After this was completed, "Moses went into the tabernacle of meeting to speak with Him, he heard the voice of One speaking to him from above the mercy seat that was on the ark of the Testimony, from between the two cherubim; thus He spoke to him" (Numbers 8:89, NKJV).

The fact that God spoke with Moses in the tabernacle's most holy place shows that He is pleased with the offerings of Israel.

The Lord then instructed Moses regarding the arrangement of the golden lampstand and the lighting of its' seven lamps (8:1-4). Details concerning the construction and completion of the golden lampstand can be found in Exodus 25:32-40 and Exodus 37:17-24. The Lord also commanded that Moses cleanse and dedicate the Levites because of their involvement in assisting the people in worshiping God (Numbers 8:5-26). The Levites would need to go through a special cleansing ceremony (8:6-7) and have offerings made on their behalf (8:8-19). The dedication of the Levites would set them apart for priestly duties in the tabernacle. When this dedication of the Levites was complete, they went into the tabernacle to begin their work (8:20-22). They were able to begin serving in the tabernacle at the age of 25, but could not serve after the age of 50. After the age of 50 they could return to assist the younger Levites, but were not permitted to do the work by themselves (8:25-26). This would ensure that those serving in the tabernacle would be serving during the best time of their life. These two chapters are a wonderful example of everyone working together for the purpose of giving their worship to God, the One who had delivered them from bondage and guiding them to a new land.

Dear God, may Your people work together in order to bring You glory.

Numbers 9:1-10:10

One year had passed since the nation of Israel, God's chosen people, had been delivered from Egyptian bondage (Exodus 12:29-51). This delivering of Israel was accomplished by the mighty hand of God, who sent plagues on Egypt and caused Pharaoh to finally release the Israelites after nearly 400 years of captivity (Exodus 1). The tenth and final plague caught the attention of Pharaoh when the firstborn in every household died; however, the firstborn in every house where the blood of a spotless lamb was spread on the doorpost was spared (Exodus 12:1-28). The nation of Israel celebrated the sparing of the firstborn in a yearly event called the Passover. It was termed *Passover* because the angel of death *passed over* any home where the blood of a spotless lamb had been spread on the doorpost. This was a clear picture that a lamb had been slain instead of the firstborn. Celebrating God's sparing of the firstborn was an annual reminder of His faithfulness to Israel, but as they were making their way to the land God had promised to them, they often forgot about His faithfulness.

The events to follow happened after the dedication of the tabernacle in Exodus 40:17 but before the census in Numbers 1. In the beginning of Israel's second year in the wilderness (1444 BC), God commanded Moses and the nation of Israel to celebrate the Passover (9:1-4). After celebrating the Passover (9:5), a few men who had touched a human corpse (making them ceremonially unclean) inquired of Moses and Aaron as to why they could not participate in the Passover (9:6-7). Instead of answering the matter, Moses sought wisdom from God and was told that anyone who was unclean during the Passover could celebrate it one month later (9:8-12). God also reminded them that anyone who was clean but did not celebrate the Passover was to be put to death (9:13). This would serve as a stern warning to those who failed to give God honor for His deliverance of Israel. Any person who was not an Israelite could celebrate the Passover, but they would need to be circumcised as was required of every Israelite (see Exodus 12:48).

The day that the tabernacle was completed (Exodus 40:17), "...the cloud covered the tabernacle, the tent of the Testimony; from evening until morning it was above the tabernacle like the appearance of fire. So it was always: the cloud covered it *by day*, and the appearance of fire by night" (9:15-16, NKJV). The cloud was the visible presence of God and continually sat over the tabernacle. When the cloud moved, the nation of Israel was to follow and when the cloud stopped moving, the Israelites were to stop (9:17-23).

This was God's way of leading the children of Israel into the land of Canaan. In addition to the cloud leading the people, God commanded Moses to construct two silver trumpets "...for calling the congregation and for directing the movements of the camps" (10:1-2). When both trumpets were blown, all the people were to assemble themselves at the tabernacle (10:3); however, if one trumpet was blown, only the leaders were to gather (10:4). The trumpets were also used to command the tribes to begin marching (10:5-7). The blowing of the trumpets was the responsibility of the priests (10:8). The trumpets were not only used for assembling the people and signaling them to march, but also as a signal to go to war (10:9) or to begin the celebration of a special occasion (10:10). Israel was about to begin a lengthy journey to Canaan, but they would need to watch and listen for God's leading every step of the way.

Dear God, where You lead, I will follow.

Numbers 10:11-11:35

In the year 1445 BC Israel was miraculously delivered from Egyptian bondage by the mighty hand of God (Exodus 12:29-51). The nation of Israel had remained in captivity for over 400 years, but now God had released them in order to go and inhabit Canaan, the land God promised to give to Abraham and his descendants (Genesis 12:1-3). Although Abraham would not live to see the nation of Israel inhabit the land, God was preparing them as a people whose God was the Lord. God gave Moses the Law (Exodus 19:1-24:18; Leviticus) in order to establish them as a nation governed by His laws and He also created the tabernacle, which would become the center of worship for Israel (Exodus 25:1-40:38). God's presence in the tabernacle was signified by a cloud that would also guide their journey into Canaan (Exodus 40:34-38; Numbers 9:15-23). Israel had been encamped at Mount Sinai for one year and it was during this time that they received the Law and instructions for the tabernacle, but in the year 1444 BC the cloud was taken up from the tabernacle and Israel left Sinai and journeyed to the Wilderness of Paran (compare Exodus 19:1 with Numbers 10:11-13). They marched according to the instructions given in Numbers 2:1-34 in order to move the approximately two million Israelites in an organized fashion (10:14-28). Before Moses set out on the journey to Paran, he requested that his father-in-law (Reuel, also known as Jethro; see Exodus 2:18; Exodus 3:18; Exodus 18) accompany him probably because he was familiar with the land (10:29-32). At first Reuel resisted Moses' invitation, but Judges 1:16 seems to indicate that he eventually decided to accompany Moses on the journey.

The cloud of the Lord led Israel on a three days' journey from Mount Sinai (10:33-36), but the people began complaining which displeased the Lord (11:1a). It is unfathomable that the people complained since God had taken care of their every need in the first year of their release from Egypt. The people's complaints reached the ears of the Lord and His anger caused Him to consume some on the outskirts of the camp (11:1b). Israel reacted to God's judgment by crying out to Moses, who prayed to the Lord and the fire of judgment was quenched (11:2-3). Some of the non-Israelites (mixed multitudes) who left Egypt alongside Israel began to intensely crave meat (11:4). Although God daily provided bread (manna) to eat during their encampment at Mount Sinai (Exodus 16), this group of people desired the fine meats they ate when they were in Egypt (11:5-9). When Moses heard the dramatic weeping and complaining of the people, he begged God to put him to death because he could not handle the weight of their complaints (11:10-15). Instead of granting Moses' request to be put to death, God commanded him to seek out 70 men in Israel who could help bear the burden of the people (11:16). God said to Moses, "I will take of the Spirit that *is* upon you and will put *the same* upon them; and they shall bear the burden of the people with you, that you may not bear *it* yourself alone" (11:17, NKJV). In addition to giving Moses men to assist him, God also granted the people their request to eat meat by giving them excessive amounts for the next 30 days (11:18-20). Moses did not think that it was possible for God to provide abundant amounts of meat for two million people for the next 30 days (11:21-22), but God reminded him that He could do what seemed impossible (11:23). Considering that Moses had seen God part the Red Sea (Exodus 14), one would think that he would believe that God was capable of performing the miraculous. As God had promised, seventy men were given to Moses to help relieve his burden in caring for the people (11:24-30); furthermore, God brought innumerable quail from the sea (11:31). The people gathered quail for two days (11:32), "But while the meat was still between their teeth, before it was chewed, the wrath of the Lord was aroused against the people, and the Lord struck the people with a very great plague. So he called the name of that place Kibroth Hattaavah, because there they buried the people who had yielded to craving" (11:34). God's anger was kindled against the people because they had failed to be satisfied in that which He was already providing. After witnessing the Lord's wrath, the people moved from Kibroth Hattaavah to Hazeroth, which is a little south of the Desert of Paran (11:35). The happenings at Kibroth Hattaavah should be a stern warning to anyone who would reject the provision of God in exchange for their own selfish desires.

Dear God, I want to thank You for the many ways You have provided for me. May I always be satisfied in the ways You have provided.

Numbers 12:1-16

After one year of encampment at Mount Sinai, God's presence (in the form of a cloud) moved from the tabernacle and led them on a three days' journey to the Wilderness of Paran (Numbers 10:11-12, 33-36).

While they were traveling, the people began complaining about the lack of meat and Moses became sorely discouraged with Israel (Numbers 11:1-15). In order to relieve the incredible burden Moses carried in dealing with the people, God established 70 men who would be able to assist him in listening to the complaints of Israel (Numbers 11:16-17, 24-30); furthermore, God decided to provide the Israelites with abundant quail for 30 days so their complaints would be silenced (11:18-23, 31-35). Even though God sent quail to further provide for Israel, He was angry that they were not satisfied with His daily provision of manna and some were judged by a plague (Numbers 11:33).

Following this incident in the wilderness of Paran, Israel moved to Hazeroth which was a little south of the Desert of Paran (Numbers 11:35). During Israel's encampment at Hazeroth, Miriam and Aaron (Moses' sister and brother) "...spoke against Moses because of the Ethiopian woman whom he had married; for he had married an Ethiopian woman. So they said, 'Has the Lord indeed spoken only through Moses? Has He not spoken through us also?'" (12:1-2). It is not exactly clear why they spoke against Moses' wife, but some have speculated that Miriam was possibly envious of the role Moses' wife played in leading Israel.

This reasoning is further supported by the fact that Miriam and Aaron were equating their value and leadership with Moses'. Numbers 12:3 makes it clear that Moses was a humble man and did nothing to provoke their attack on him and his wife. When God heard the complaints of Miriam and Aaron, He called them as well as Moses to the tabernacle for a meeting and said, "Hear now My words: if there is a prophet among you, *I*, the Lord, make Myself known to him in a vision; I speak to him in a dream. Not so with My servant Moses; he *is* faithful in all My house. I speak with him face to face, even plainly, and not in dark sayings; and he sees the form of the Lord. Why then were you not afraid to speak against My servant Moses?" (12:4-8). God's words to Miriam and Aaron established Moses as the leader of Israel and the one with whom He communicated directly. Moses was unlike anyone else in Israel. God's anger with Miriam and Aaron was demonstrated when He struck Miriam with leprosy, but Moses cried out for the Lord to heal her (12:9-13). Moses' prayer for mercy evidences his love and forgiving nature. God demanded that Miriam remain outside the camp for seven days, as was prescribed for a person with leprosy (12:14-15). After the seven days were finished, Israel moved from Hazeroth and camped in the Wilderness of Paran (12:16). The incident between Miriam and Moses should be a reminder that God demands respect and obedience to the authority He has placed in our lives. Speaking against God's chosen leaders is equal to speaking against God, especially when those leaders are attempting to carry out the plan God has given to them. There may be times when those following may think they know better, but if God's leader remains humble and submissive to God, those following must remain respectful and silent. Those who decide to rebel and cause dissension will be accountable to God for their actions.

Dear God, help me to remain submissive and supportive of the godly leaders You have placed in my life.

Numbers 14:1-15:45

In the year 1445 BC, the Israelites were delivered from Egyptian captivity by the mighty hand of God (Exodus 12:29-51). Over the next year Israel would receive the Law of God (Exodus 19:1-24:18; Leviticus), construct the tabernacle as the center of worship (Exodus 25:1-40:38), and establish structure within the nation before they entered into the land God had promised to them (Numbers 1-10). On the journey from Sinai to Kadesh, the people began complaining against Moses and God brought judgment upon those who were voicing their complaints. The first incident involved the people complaining about a lack of meat (Numbers 11) and the second instance of complaining involved Miriam and Aaron, who were questioning the leadership of Moses (Numbers 12). After God had dealt with these situations, it was time for Israel to enter the land that had been promised to Abraham hundreds of years before in Genesis 12:1-3. Before entering the land, the Lord commanded Moses to send 12 spies, one from each tribe, into Canaan so that they could explore the land (13:1-16). Moses specifically told the spies to gather information concerning the land and the people inhabiting it (13:17-20).

The 12 spies departed, explored the land for forty days (13:21-25), and then returned to Moses and Aaron to give a report of the information they had gathered about the land (13:26). The report concerning the nature of the land was positive, but the spies' report on the people inhabiting the land was negative. Although the land was flowing with milk and honey (13:27), the people of the land were too strong to be conquered (13:28). The spies mentioning of the descendants of Anak, giants inhabiting some of the land, sent fear into the hearts of the people (13:28b-30, 32-33; Deuteronomy 2:21, 9:2), but Caleb (one of the spies) spoke up and said, "Let us go up at once and take possession, for we are well able to overcome it" (13:30, NKJV). The other spies quickly countered Caleb's statement saying, "We are not able to go up against the people, for they *are* stronger than we (13:31, NKJV). Upon hearing the report of the spies, the nation of Israel wept bitterly out of fear for their lives and complained against Moses for leading them out of Egyptian bondage (14:1-3). The Israelites thought that bondage to Egypt was safer than attempting to conquer the people inhabiting the land of Canaan. Israel decided to select a new leader who would take them back to the confines of Egypt (14:4), but Moses and Aaron fell on their faces before God (14:5). Joshua and Caleb, two of the twelve spies, then spoke to all of Israel saying, "The land we passed through to spy out *is* an exceedingly good land. If the Lord delights in us, then He will bring us into this land and give it to us, 'a land which flows with milk and honey.' Only do not rebel against the Lord, nor fear the people of the land, for they *are* our bread; their protection has departed from them, and the Lord *is* with us. Do not fear them" (14:6-9). The attempt of Joshua and Caleb to rally the people ended with the people commanding that they be stoned (14:10a). At this very moment, the glory of the Lord appeared in the tabernacle before all of Israel and said to Moses, "How long will these people reject Me? And how long will they not believe Me, with all the signs which I have performed among them? I will strike them with the pestilence and disinherit them, and I will make of you a nation greater and mightier than they" (14:11-12). Upon hearing the words of the Lord, Moses begged God to spare the people for the sake of His reputation and great love for Israel (14:13-19). In response to Moses' request, the Lord pardoned Israel but declared that the adult generation who had witnessed His miraculous works would never inhabit the land of Canaan (14:20-23). The only exceptions would be Caleb (14:24) and Joshua (14:30) because they believed that the Lord could bring the people into the land.

Although the older generation would die before ever inheriting the land, those 19 and younger would inhabit Canaan but they would have to wander in the wilderness 40 years until the current generation died off (14:25-35). The ten spies who brought back a negative report of the land were killed by a plague, but Joshua and Caleb were spared for their belief in God's ability to bring Israel into the land (14:36-38). When the congregation of Israel heard that they could not enter the land, they mourned and declared that they would overtake Canaan as God had commanded (14:39-40), but Moses warned against an attempt to conquer the land (14:41-43). The Israelites ignored the advice of Moses and went to attack the Amalekites and Canaanites on the mountaintop, but their enemies attacked and defeated them (14:44-45). Israel could not accomplish anything without the Lord by their side. Their disobedience destroyed an entire generation.

Dear God, give me a life of faith instead of fear.

Numbers 15:1-41

Although the nation of Israel had escaped Egyptian bondage over one year before this time, their journey had been anything but joyous. Israel had been plagued by complaining (Numbers 11) and dissension among some of Moses' family (Numbers 12). To make matters worse, ten spies sent to gather information concerning the land promised to Israel brought back a report which caused them to be fearful (Numbers 13). Rather than trusting in God to help them conquer the current inhabitants of Canaan, Israel cowered in fear and refused to enter the land of promise (Numbers 14:1-10). God was angry with Israel's lack of faith in Him and judged them by sentencing adults 20 and older (except Joshua and Caleb) to die in the wilderness before ever inhabiting Canaan (Numbers 14:26-38). The older generation would spend forty years wandering in the wilderness, but never experience the blessings of dwelling in the land God had promised to Abraham's descendants (Genesis 12:1-3). Since the younger generation would inherit Canaan, God established a couple laws or reminders for when they were established in the land: laws of grain and drink offerings (15:1-21), laws regarding unintentional sins (15:22-29), laws concerning deliberate sins (15:30-31), penalties for violating the Sabbath (15:32-36), and ways to remember God's commandments (15:37-41).

The instructions for grain offerings were recorded in Leviticus 2 and it evidenced a person's consecration and thankfulness to God; furthermore, it was the only offering which did not involve animal sacrifice. In Numbers 15 God revealed that when Israel entered the land, it was permissible for **grain offerings and drink offerings** to be given alongside burnt offerings and peace offerings (15:1-21). God also provided instructions for the community or an individual who had committed an **unintentional sin** (15:22-29). An unintentional sin could be committed when ignorance or neglect had taken place; in other words, the sin was not committed with rebellious intent. If the community committed an unintentional sin, the priest would offer sacrifices on behalf of the congregation and the sin would be forgiven them (15:24-26). If an individual committed an unintentional sin, a sin offering would be made and the priest would make atonement for the sin (15:27-29). While unintentional sins could be forgiven, God reminded them that outright rebellion against His commandments would not be tolerated in Israel. Anyone guilty of **deliberate sins** was to be put to death (15:30-31). Death was also prescribed for anyone who **violated the Sabbath** (15:32-36). This law is illustrated here by a man who was found gathering sticks on the Sabbath day (15:32). Since no work was to be performed on this day, those who caught the man gathering sticks took him to Moses and Aaron and the Lord commanded he be put to death for violating the Sabbath (15:33-36). The punishment may seem harsh, but God wanted Israel to understand the blessings of obedience and the consequences of disobedience. Numbers 15 closes with a **way to remember the commandments of the Lord** (15:37-41). The Lord spoke to Moses saying, "Throughout the generations to come you must make tassels for the hems of your clothing and attach them with a blue cord. When you see the tassels, you will remember and obey all the commands of the Lord instead of following your own desires and defiling yourselves, as you are prone to do. The tassels will help you remember that you must obey all my commands and be holy to your God. 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!" (15:38-41). God desired the nation of Israel to have a visible reminder so that they would keep in mind the commandments of the Lord and the dangers of disobeying Him. The word of God serves as our constant reminder of what is expected from those who have faith in Jesus Christ. It is important for the Christian to hide the words of God in his heart in order to keep him from sin (Psalm 119:11).

Dear God, keep me constantly aware of Your commandments that I may learn to obey You in all things.

Numbers 16:1-50

Moses had already endured several instances of opposition from the nation of Israel as well as specific individuals who were supposed to be following his leadership. God had specifically chosen Moses (Exodus 3) as the one to lead the nation of Israel out of Egyptian bondage to the land He had promised to give Israel as an inheritance. At times the pressure was almost too much for Moses to handle, but God provided strength for him to endure in every instance. Another situation arose when Korah (a descendant of Levi) as well as Dathan and Abiram (descendants of Reuben) "...took *men*; and they rose up before Moses with some of the children of Israel, two hundred and fifty leaders of the congregation, representatives of the congregation, men of renown" (16:1-2). This opposition to Moses and Aaron stemmed from Korah feeling that all the people were capable of being leaders and therefore did not need Moses and Aaron telling them what to do (16:3). When Moses heard of this rebellion against his leadership, he fell on his face and said, "Tomorrow morning the Lord will show who *is* His and *who is* holy, and will cause *him* to come near to Him. That one whom He chooses He will cause to come near to Him" (16:4-5). Instead of taking matters upon himself, Moses allowed God to determine the true leader of Israel. God's chosen leader would be discerned by seeing which one of them, Moses or Korah, would be permitted to approach the presence of the Lord (16:6-7). Moses then turned his attention to Korah and exposed that he and those rebelling were not satisfied with their God-given duties in the tabernacle, but desired the office of priest (16:8-11), which means that the real issue motivating the rebellion was envy and jealousy.

After speaking with Korah, Moses called for Dathan and Abiram but they refused to come to him saying, "Is it a small thing that you have brought us up out of a land flowing with milk and honey, to kill us in the wilderness, that you should keep acting like a prince over us? Moreover you have not brought us into a land flowing with milk and honey, nor given us inheritance of fields and vineyards. Will you put out the eyes of these men? We will not come up!" (16:12-14). They were essentially blaming Moses for removing them from Egypt and failing to lead them into the land of Canaan. When Moses heard these words he was very angry and pleaded for the Lord to reject their approach to His presence (16:15). Moses again spoke to Korah and commanded that each of his people bring incense before the Lord and stand before the tabernacle (16:16-19). The glory of the Lord appeared to the entire congregation and commanded that Moses and Aaron remove themselves from the tabernacle so that they would not be consumed in His coming judgment against Israel (16:20-21). Upon hearing God's anger against Israel, Moses and Aaron prayed that God would not consume all of the people for the sin of one man (16:22), so God demanded that the people separate themselves from the ones who had rebelled (16:23-24). The people immediately responded and departed from the tents of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram (16:27). Without warning the earth opened up and swallowed the three men who led the rebellion (16:28-33). Following the sudden judgment, God sent fire from heaven which consumed the 250 men who had been loyal to the rebels (16:34-35). After the rebels had been consumed by fire, Moses told Eleazar to collect the 250 censers holding the incense and make them into a covering for the altar, which would be a reminder for that no one except for the priests were to approach the presence of God (16:36-40). The very next day the Israelites complained against Moses and Aaron for killing the people of the Lord (16:41) but when the glory of the Lord appeared, Moses and Aaron begged the Lord not to consume the people (16:42-45). Moses told Aaron to quickly offer atonement on the altar for the complaints of the people, but the plague sent by the Lord had already begun to spread throughout the congregation (16:46). After acting as fast as possible, Aaron made atonement for the people and the plague was stopped but not before 14,700 people had died (16:47-50). Israel's continued rebellion against God was inviting His judgment upon the nation. They would need to learn to obey Moses as the one appointed by God to lead the nation. Any rebellion against Moses' leadership was ultimately an attack on the ways of God. The Lord has given us leaders and authorities to guide us in His ways and anyone who rebels is in danger of experiencing the judgment of God.

Dear God, may I respect, obey, and honor those leaders You have given to provide guidance in my life.

Numbers 17:1-19:22

Korah, Dathan, and Abiram had challenged the leadership of Moses and the priesthood of Aaron in a rebellion that ended with God pouring out His judgment on the rebels (Numbers 16). God made it very clear that He had set aside Moses as the leader of the nation of Israel and Aaron as the spiritual head of the tabernacle. Complaints and rebellion from any individual or group would not be tolerated. In order to reconfirm Aaron's priestly authority before all of Israel, the Lord commanded Moses to gather a staff from every tribe in Israel (12 staffs) and the name of the tribe's leader was to be written on it (17:1-2).

Aaron's name was to be written on the tribe of Levi's staff (17:3) and all of the staffs were to be placed in the tabernacle before the Testimony (Ten Commandments), which were written on two stone tablets and kept in the ark of the covenant (17:4). The Lord then said, "And it shall be that the rod of the man whom I choose will blossom; thus I will rid Myself of the complaints of the children of Israel, which they make against you" (17:5). Moses did all that the Lord had commanded (17:6-7) and the next day the rod of Aaron had bloomed which confirmed that he was the High-Priest (17:8-9). Aaron's budding rod was to be placed in the ark of the covenant as a sign to anyone who would challenge his authority as the High-Priest (17:10-11). When the children of Israel realized that they had sinned by rebelling against Aaron's authority, they feared that the Lord would put them to death if they went anywhere near the tabernacle. Although Israel overreacted to this revelation, they were now aware that challenging Aaron's office of High-Priest would result in God's wrath being poured out.

With Israel finally recognizing the authority of Aaron and the priesthood, God reminded everyone concerning the duties and responsibilities of the priests (Numbers 18). God 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 responsible for violations connected with the priesthood" (18:1). This was a warning about the seriousness of their priestly duties. Although the Levites were to assist Aaron and his sons, they were never to touch any of the sacred items in the tabernacle (18:2-7). Any violation of this commandment would result in the death of the violator as well as the priest (18:3). God also reminded the people about the support of the priests (18:8-20) and the Levites (18:21-24). Since the priests and Levites performed their duties in service for the Lord, they were entitled to support. The priests received a portion of the offerings which were not consumed on the altar (18:8-11) as well as the offerings of firstfruits and anything devoted to the Lord (18:12-20). The Levites were supported by the tithes of the people (18:21-24). Although the Levites received tithes from the people, they were to give a tithe (a tenth) back to the Lord (18:25-32).

The Lord also provided instructions concerning the laws of purification in Numbers 19. These laws of purification were to be performed when a person became unclean through some action and many of the instances of uncleanness are described in Leviticus 12-15. Prior to the purification ceremony, an unblemished red heifer was to be given to the priest who would then slaughter it outside the camp (19:1-4), burn it (19:5-6), and then cleanse himself in water (19:7). Each person involved in this purification ritual needed to be cleansed by water (19:8). When the ashes of the heifer remained, a man was to gather them until they were to be used in purifying individuals from uncleanness (19:9-10). Anyone who came in contact with a dead body would remain unclean for seven days and on the third and seventh day he was to purify himself with the ash water (19:11); however, an individual who failed to cleanse himself would be put to death (19:12-13; see also Leviticus 15:31). This purification ritual would also apply to those in a tent with a dead body and even spread to objects near a dead body (19:14-16). Numbers 19:17-22 reveals that the ashes must be mixed with water and then a branch was to be used to sprinkle the water over any unclean object or person (19:17-19). This was to be performed on the third and seventh day by a person that was ceremonially clean. Anyone who refused to be purified from their uncleanness would be put to death (19:20). Those who performed the cleansing ritual would remain unclean until evening (19:21-22). Although this ceremony may seem tedious, God wanted the people to understand that He was holy and anyone who was unclean could not defile His presence. This purification ritual would have been a visible reminder about the seriousness of one's approach to God.

Dear God, cleanse me from sin that I might stand in Your presence.

Numbers 20:1-29

A major transition concerning the timeline of Israel's journey from Egypt to Canaan begins in Numbers 20. All events recorded in Numbers 1:1-14:45 occurred in 1444 BC, which is approximately one year following Israel's escape from Egypt. The various laws and events documented in Numbers 15:1-19:22 took place anywhere from 1443 BC-1407 BC. The events beginning in Numbers 20 and continuing through the end of the book document what happened in Israel's 40th year following her exodus from Egyptian bondage (approximately 1406/1405 BC). There is no record of the happenings between Israel's second year and fortieth year in the wilderness, but it is evident that the current generation was sentenced to die before the next generation could enter the Promised Land (Numbers 14). Israel's constant complaining and disobedience prevented them from experiencing freedom and blessing from the God who desired to give them good things.

Israel was currently encamped at Kadesh where Miriam, Moses' sister, died and was buried; in fact, most of the older generation had died off while wandering in the wilderness (20:1). While camped at Kadesh, there was no water for the people so they complained against Moses and Aaron saying, "If only we had died in the Lord's presence with our brothers! Why have you brought the congregation of the Lord's people into this wilderness to die, along with all our livestock? Why did you make us leave Egypt and bring us here to this terrible place? This land has no grain, no figs, no grapes, no pomegranates, and no water to drink! (20:2-5). Upon hearing the complaints of the people, Moses and Aaron fell on their faces at the tabernacle door and the glory of the Lord appeared to them (20:6). The Lord gave Moses specific instructions saying, "Take the rod; you and your brother Aaron gather the congregation together. **Speak** to the rock before their eyes, and it will yield its water; thus you shall bring water for them out of the rock, and give drink to the congregation and their animals" (20:7-8). God's directions to Moses seem easy enough, but when Moses went before the people he spoke to them and struck the rock twice with his rod (20:9-11). Striking the rock instead of speaking to it brought attention to Moses and Aaron rather than God, who had miraculously provided water for the people. Although water still came out of the rock, God reprimanded Moses and Aaron for their disobedient actions and revealed that they would not lead the people into the land of Canaan (20:12-13). After forty years of leading the people of Israel, Moses and Aaron would never experience the blessings of the Promised Land. Even though Moses was not permitted to enter Canaan, he continued to lead Israel on their journey. He sent messengers to the king of Edom to request passage through his land (20:14-17), but the king rejected their request and threatened violence if they attempted to cross (20:18-21). Israel then turned away from Kadesh and journeyed to Mount Hor, which was on the border of Edom (20:22). At Mount Hor the Lord spoke to Moses and Aaron saying, "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 water at Meribah. Now take Aaron and his son Eleazar up Mount Hor. There you will remove Aaron's priestly garments and put them on Eleazar, his son. Aaron will die there and join his ancestors" (20:23-26). Moses did as the Lord commanded and Aaron died on Mount Hor (20:27-28). When Israel saw that Aaron was dead, they mourned for him 30 days (20:29). This is a sad ending to Aaron's life. Even though he had done many wonderful things in leading Israel through the wilderness, one of his last actions of his life prevented him from finishing well.

Dear God, may I finish well.

Numbers 21:1-35

Beginning in Numbers 20, Moses documents the happenings during the 40th year of Israel's wandering in the wilderness. Because of their disobedience and complaining against God, the older generation had been sentenced to die before entering ever entering the land of Canaan (Numbers 14). Moses and Aaron, the leaders of Israel, were also sentenced to die in the wilderness because of their disobedience to God at Kadesh (Numbers 20). At the conclusion of Numbers 20, Aaron dies and the people mourn for him 30 days (Numbers 20:23-29). Although they often complained against Aaron, the people loved him and knew that his death was a great loss for Israel. Israel was currently encamped at Mount Hor because the king of Edom refused to allow them passage through his land (Numbers 20:14-21). When the king of Arad (a Canaanite) learned that Israel was traveling the road to Atharim (place unknown), he fought against Israel and took some of them as prisoners (21:1). Out of desperation, Israel made a vow to the Lord saying, "If You will indeed deliver this people into my hand, then I will utterly destroy their cities" (21:2). God answered their request and Israel destroyed them and their cities (21:3).

Israel traveled from Mount Hor by the way of the Red Sea so they could completely avoid Edom, where the king had threatened them earlier (Numbers 20:14-21). While they were on this lengthy journey, the people became discouraged which caused them to speak against God and Moses saying, "Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? For *there is* no food and no water, and our soul loathes this worthless bread" (21:4-5). As a punishment for their complaints, God sent fiery serpents to bite the people and many of them died (21:6). Upon seeing this judgment of God, the people came to Moses saying, "We have sinned, for we have spoken against the Lord and against you; pray to the Lord that He take away the serpents from us" (21:7). Moses prayed on behalf of the people and the Lord commanded him to set a fiery serpent on a pole so that anyone who would look on it would live (21:8). "So Moses made a bronze serpent, and put it on a pole; and so it was, if a serpent had bitten anyone, when he looked at the bronze serpent, he lived" (21:9). The apostle John referenced this incident in John 3:14-15. In the same way people had to look to the bronze serpent to live, sinners would need to look to Jesus Christ's death on the cross to live.

Israel made their way around Edom and Moab and then camped on the north side of the Arnon River, which was in the land of the Amorites (21:10-20). From there Israel sent messengers to the king Sihon asking him to allow safe passage through their territory; however, he refused and fought against Israel (21:21-23). "Then Israel defeated him with the edge of the sword, and took possession of his land from the Arnon to the Jabbok, as far as the people of Ammon; for the border of the people of Ammon was fortified. So Israel took all these cities, and Israel dwelt in all the cities of the Amorites, in Heshbon and in all its villages" (21:24-25). While Israel was dwelling in the land of the Amorites, Moses sent out spies to Jazer and they ended up taking their villages and driving the Amorites out of the city (21:31-32). Israel then went up to Bashan, but the King Og gathered his people to battle against them in Edrei (21:33). The Lord then said to Moses, "Do not fear him, for I have delivered him into your hand, with all his people and his land; and you shall do to him as you did to Sihon king of the Amorites, who dwelt at Heshbon" (21:34). Upon hearing these words from God, the Israelites defeated their enemies and took possession of King Og's land (21:35). With these victories accomplished, Israel now occupied all the Transjordan between the Arnon River and Mount Hermon and east up until the land of the Ammonites. Israel was now ready to move into the plains of Moab so that they could begin their attack on Canaan. God was beginning to show Israel that obedience to His ways would bring victory.

Dear God, help me to carefully follow Your ways so that I might not miss what You have planned for me.

Numbers 22:1-40

Israel had been wandering in the wilderness for 40 years following their miraculous escape from 430 years of Egyptian captivity (Exodus 12:29-51). Although God was leading them to the land He had promised Abraham (Genesis 12:1-3), Israel's complaining and disobedience had caused God to delay their entrance into Canaan; in fact, the older generation was sentenced to die in the wilderness before ever inhabiting the land (Numbers 14). By the fortieth year of Israel's wanderings, most of the older generation had died off and now the people began their conquest on the current inhabitants of Canaan. After several battles with their enemies, Israel had taken control of the Transjordan and was currently encamping in the plains of Moab just across from Jericho (Numbers 22:1). Israel's conquest on Canaan was imminent.

When Balak, king of Moab, observed Israel's conquering of the Amorites (Numbers 21:21-31) he became fearful that his people and land would also be destroyed (22:2-4). In order to prevent Moab's destruction, Balak sent for Balaam, a pagan prophet, and offered him money to pronounce a curse on Israel (22:5-7).

Balaam told the messengers to lodge for the night and that he would return to them the next day with the answer from the Lord (22:8). Even though Balaam was a pagan prophet (Deuteronomy 23:3-6; 2 Peter 2:15-16), God spoke to him, but informed him that He should not pronounce a curse on Israel (22:9-12). Balaam returned to the messengers sent from Balak and told them to go back to their land because God would not allow him to go with them (22:13). When the messengers reported that Balaam refused to return with them, Balak sent honorable men and more money in hopes that Balaam would come with them in order to pronounce a curse on Israel (22:14-17). Balaam told the men to stay the night and then the Lord appeared to him that very evening and said, "If the men come to call you, rise *and* go with them; but only the word which I speak to you—that you shall do" (22:18-20). Balaam arose the next day, saddled his donkey, and accompanied the men to Moab where he would meet Balak (22:21); however, on his journey to Moab, the Lord became angry at Balaam for going with the men (22:22a). Why did God get angry at Balaam when He was the one who told him to go? The Lord knew that Balaam was only going to Balak for financial gain (2 Peter 2:15-16). As a punishment for his selfish motives, God sent an Angel of the Lord to stand in his way (22:22). When Balaam's donkey saw the Angel with his sword drawn standing in the road, the donkey ran into the field but Balaam struck the donkey in order to get her back on the road (22:23). The Angel appeared again and the donkey pushed herself into a wall and smashed the foot of Balaam, so he hit her once more (22:24-25). The Angel made a third appearance but this time the donkey could not turn to the right or the left so she simply laid down under Balaam (22:26-27a). The donkey's repeated "stubbornness" angered Balaam so he hit the animal a third time (22:27b), but the Lord opened the mouth of the donkey and she spoke to Balaam saying, "What have I done to you, that you have struck me these three times?" (22:28). Balaam responded to the donkey and said, "Because you have abused me. I wish there were a sword in my hand, for now I would kill you!" (22:29). The donkey spoke to Balaam once again saying, "*Am* I not your donkey on which you have ridden, ever since *I became* yours, to this day? Was I ever disposed [contrary] to do this to you?" (22:30). At that very moment, the Lord opened the eyes of Balaam and he saw the Angel of the Lord standing in the middle of the road with his sword drawn (22:31). Balaam fell on his face and the Angel exposed that the reason he had been stopped was because of his selfish motives (22:32-33). After being confronted with his wickedness, Balaam confessed his wrongdoing and the Angel of the Lord allowed him to continue with the men but commanded him to only speak the words he was told to speak (22:34-35). Balaam accompanied the princes of Balak to Moab and Balak came out to meet him, but Balaam told him that he could only speak the words of the Lord (22:36-40). Balaam needed to release his selfish motives and learn what it meant to be submissive to God's will.

Dear God, guard my motives.

Numbers 22:41-24:25

Israel is in her 40th year of wandering in the wilderness and has finally moved into the plains of Moab (Numbers 21) with the intention of conquering the people who are inhabiting Canaan, the land that was promised to Abraham and his descendants (Genesis 12:1-3). When Balak, Moab's king, heard about Israel conquering the Amorites (Numbers 21:21-31) he became fearful that his people and land would also be destroyed (22:2-4) so he sent for Balaam, a pagan prophet, and offered him money to pronounce a curse on Israel (22:5-7). Balaam's journey to meet Balak was halted by a bizarre encounter between his donkey and the Angel of the Lord. The Angel permitted Balaam to continue on his journey to meet Balak, but he commanded him to only speak the words that He gave him (22:35).

After Balaam arrived in Moab to meet Balak, both of them went to the "high places of Baal," which is the place where pagan sacrifices and sorcery were often practiced (22:41). Balak's ultimate goal in bringing Balaam to the high place was so that he could pronounce a curse on Israel in order to prevent them from conquering his people and land. Upon their arrival at the high place, Balaam commanded Balak to offer sacrifices while he went to a desolate place to hear from the Lord (23:1-3). Balaam would receive four separate prophecies directly from the Lord to give to Balak: Numbers 23:4-12, Numbers 23:13-26, Numbers 23:27-24:14, and Numbers 24:15-25. **Balaam's first prophecy** (Numbers 23:4-12) revealed that the Lord would not curse Israel, whom He had prospered. Balak was angered by the words of Balaam and said, "What have you done to me? I took you to curse my enemies, and look, you have blessed *them* bountifully!" (23:11). Balaam responded to Balak by simply declaring that he was only speaking the words God had given to him (23:12). Balak made another attempt to get Balaam to curse Israel (23:13-18), which resulted in **Balaam's second prophecy** (Numbers 23:13-26). This prophecy of Balaam stated that even though Israel had repeatedly sinned against Him (23:21), God was determined to bless them and give the nation of Israel victory over all of their enemies (23:18-24). After hearing this second prophecy, Balak asked Balaam to neither bless nor curse Israel (23:25), but Balaam admitted that he could only do what God told him to do (23:26). Balak pleaded with Balaam a third time to curse Israel (23:27-30); however, Balaam finally realized that it was in God's plan to bless Israel (24:1). "And Balaam raised his eyes, and saw Israel encamped according to their tribes; and the Spirit of God came upon him" (24:2), which brought about **Balaam's third prophecy** (Numbers 23:27-24:14). It was at this point that Balaam finally understood the truth of God and gave testimony to His eyes being opened by the Spirit of God regarding Israel (24:3-7). Furthermore, Balaam also declared God's plan in delivering Israel from bondage and eventually giving her a Messiah, who would bring blessing upon the world (24:8-9). The third blessing on Israel greatly aroused Balak's anger against Balaam, but the prophet answered that he was only speaking the words of God (24:10-13). Balaam then told Balak that he was going to reveal what would happen to his people in the future, which is **Balaam's fourth prophecy** (Numbers 24:15-25). In this final prophecy to Balak, Balaam predicts the coming of Israel's king, whom he refers to as "a Star out of Jacob" and a "Scepter" who will rise out of Israel (24:17a). This future king of Israel will destroy Moab and be victorious over Edom (24:17b-19). Balaam also prophesies that Amalek will perish (24:20), the Kenites will be taken captive by the Assyrians (24:21-22), and ships from Cyprus would afflict Asshur and Eber (24:23-24). After speaking these four prophecies, Balaam returned home and Balak also went on his way (24:25). This is an amazing story of how God used a pagan prophet to declare good on Israel, even when others wished evil upon them. Balaam simply spoke the words of God and revealed God's future plans for Israel and her coming King.

Dear God, use me to speak on Your behalf. May I only declare the words that You have given me.

Numbers 25:1-26:65

It is the 40th year of Israel's wandering in the wilderness and they had finally moved into the plains of Moab (Numbers 21) where they intended to conquer the people who were currently inhabiting Canaan, the land that was promised to Abraham and his descendants (Genesis 12:1-3). Israel was encamped in Acacia Grove, which was the area across the Jordan River from Jericho; however, while they were settled in this region, "...the people began to commit harlotry with the women of Moab" (25:1). Moses writes that the Moabites "...invited the people [Israelites] to the sacrifices of their gods, and the people ate and bowed down to their gods" (25:2). By engaging in sexual immorality and worship of another god, they were in violation of the first commandment (Exodus 20:3) which caused God's anger to be aroused against Israel (25:3). The Lord then commanded Moses to put to death all those who defiled themselves (25:4), so he obeyed the voice of the Lord (25:5). While all this was happening, "...one of the children of Israel came and presented to his brethren a Midianite woman in the sight of Moses and in the sight of all the congregation of the children of Israel, who were weeping at the door of the tabernacle of meeting" (25:6; see Numbers 25:14-15 for the offenders' identity). When Phineas, grandson of Aaron the priest, saw this man's open rebellion take place he took a javelin and thrust it through the Israelite man and the Moabite woman (25:7-8a). Phineas' passion for holiness and purity caused the plague to stop spreading throughout Israel, but not before 24,000 people had died (25:8b-9). This incident is a stern reminder that God does not allow sin to go unpunished. The zealous actions of Phineas were noticed by the Lord who declared that all future High Priests would come from his descendants (25:10-13). Following this incident God commanded that Moses attack the Midianites for their deceitful seduction of certain Israelites (25:16-17). The details of this attack are described in Numbers 31.

After the plague had spread across Israel and killed 24,000 people, the Lord told Moses and Eleazar to take a census of all men 20 and above who were able to go to war (26:1-4). The first census of all the soldiers had been taken over 38 years ago (Numbers 1). Here are the numbers from the first and second census compared:

Reuben – 46,500 (1:21)/43,730 (26:5-11)
Simeon – 59,300 (1:22-23)/22,200 (26:12-14)
Gad – 45,650 (1:24-25)/40,500 (26:15-18)
Judah – 74,600 (1:26-27)/76,500 (26:19-22)
Issachar – 54,400 (1:28-29)/64,300 (26:23-25)
Zebulun – 57,400 (1:30-31)/60,500 (26:26-27)
Ephraim – 40,500 (1:32-33)/32,500 (26:35-37)
Manasseh – 32,200 (1:34-35)/52,700 (26:28-34)
Benjamin – 35,400 (1:36-37)/45,600 (26:38-41)
Dan – 62,700 (1:38-39)/64,400 (26:42-43)
Asher – 41,500 (1:40-41)/53,400 (26:44-47)
Naphtali – 53,400 (1:42-43)/45,400 (26:48-50)

This made the total number of soldiers available for battle 601,730 (26:51). The Lord also commanded that after Israel conquered Canaan, the land be divided among the tribes according to their size (26:52-56). The Levites were counted separately from the soldiers because of their duties in the tabernacle. The first census of the Levites had been taken over 38 years before and revealed that there were 22,000 available for priestly service (Numbers 3), but this second census of the Levites determined that there were now 23,000 qualified males for duties in the tabernacle (26:57-62). This chapter ends on a very sad note. Of all the people who had been numbered in the first census 38 years earlier (Numbers 1:19), only Joshua and Caleb remained alive (26:63-65). All the others had been sentenced to die in the wilderness because they lacked faith in God to give them victory over the people inhabiting Canaan (Numbers 14).

Dear God, help me to walk in continued obedience to Your ways.

Numbers 27:1-30:16

Forty years had passed since Israel left Egyptian bondage in 1445 BC. The nation spent so many years wandering in the wilderness because of their disobedience and failure to believe in God's provision. After the older generation of Israel had died off, the next generation was awaiting their entrance into the land that had been promised to them (Numbers 26:63-65). Israel was currently encamped in the plains of Moab, which was located across the Jordan River from Jericho (Numbers 26:3). Since they were on the verge of inhabiting Canaan, God reminded Israel regarding certain laws and offerings so that they would practice them when they arrived in the land (Numbers 27-30). The first law discussed was the inheritance law (27:1-11). The five daughters of Zelophehad came before Moses and Eleazar saying, "Our father died in the wilderness.... He was not among Korah's followers, who rebelled against the Lord; he died because of his own sin. But he had no sons. Why should the name of our father disappear from his clan just because he had no sons? Give us property along with the rest of our relatives" (27:1-4, NLT). In this culture the distribution of land was given to the male heads of the family, this situation would have left the daughters without land in Canaan which would have caused their family to eventually become extinct. Moses consulted the Lord and He told him that the daughters should be given the inheritance (27:5-8). If a man died without sons or daughters, his inheritance was to be passed on to his brothers (27:9). The inheritance of the man who died without sons, daughters, or living brothers should be given to the relative closest to him (27:10-11).

After handling this situation, the Lord commanded Moses to go up into Mount Abarim so that he could see the land which would be given to Israel (27:12); however, Moses would never inhabit the land since he had disobeyed God at Kadesh (27:14; also Numbers 20:1-13). Moses would die before Israel inhabited Canaan (27:13). Because Moses could not lead Israel into the Promised Land, God set Joshua over the people (27:15-23). The Lord told Moses to "Take Joshua the son of Nun with you, a man in whom is the Spirit, and lay your hand on him; set him before Eleazar the priest and before all the congregation, and inaugurate him in their sight. And you shall give some of your authority to him, that all the congregation of the children of Israel may be obedient. He shall stand before Eleazar the priest, who shall inquire before the Lord for him by the judgment of the Urim. At his word they shall go out, and at his word they shall come in, he and all the children of Israel with him—all the congregation" (27:18-21).

Joshua would become the successor of Moses so now God wanted to remind the younger generation about the offerings they were to observe when they settled in Canaan. The daily offerings (Numbers 28:1-8) were established in Exodus 29:38-42. Two male lambs in their first year without blemish were to be offered by fire - one in the morning and one in the evening. Although the Sabbath had already been established (Exodus 20:8-11), the Sabbath offerings (Numbers 28:9-10) had not. This offering was to consist of a burnt offering as well as two lambs a year old along with a drink and grain offering. Monthly offerings (Numbers 28:11-15) were also newly established here. On the first day of each month, a burnt offering was to be given along with two young bulls, one ram, and seven unblemished lambs in their first year. A grain and drink offering was to accompany each animal. The Lord also reminded Israel concerning offerings at Passover (Numbers 28:16-25; also Leviticus 23:5-8), offerings at the Feast of Weeks (Numbers 28:26-31; also Leviticus 23:18), offerings at the Feast of Trumpets (Numbers 29:1-6; also Leviticus 23:23-25), offerings on the Day of Atonement (Numbers 29:7-11; also Leviticus 23:27-32), and offerings at the Feast of Tabernacles (Numbers 29:12-40; also Leviticus 23:33-43). Moses also took some time to remind Israel about laws concerning vows (Numbers 30:1-16). Even though Moses had already established laws regarding vows in Leviticus 27:1-33, he restated the principle that a man who makes a vow to the Lord was required to keep it (Numbers 30:2). Numbers 30:3-16 also added that a man was responsible for any vows made by a woman within his household. God wanted Israel to be aware of all these laws and offerings before they entered the land, so these words would have been an important reminder to the next generation to obey all that God had required.

Dear God, help me to teach the next generation about Your laws.

Numbers 31:1-33:56

In Numbers 25 Moses recorded an incident where Israel was seduced by the women of Moab to participate in sacrifices to their gods, which would have included sexually immoral actions. Because Israel had joined themselves in worship of other gods, they were judged by a plague that spread throughout the camp killing 24,000 people. God commanded Moses to attack the Midianites, the group of people who led Israel to worship other gods (Numbers 25:17-18). The details of this attack are documented in Numbers 31:1-24. God spoke to Moses saying, "Take vengeance on the Midianites for the children of Israel. Afterward you shall be gathered to your people" (31:1-2), which meant that Moses would die following the attack of the Midianites. Moses gathered up 12,000 soldiers to war against the Midianites and also sent Phineas, the priest (31:3-6). The Israelite army killed all the males (31:7-8), took the women and children captive (31:9a), gathered the spoil (31:9b, 11), and burned the cities (31:10). The soldiers brought the women, children, and the spoil to Moses and Eleazar, the priest (31:12-13); however, Moses was angry with them for bringing back the women alive (31:14-16). Since these women were responsible for leading Israel into idolatry and sexual immorality, Moses demanded that every captive be killed except the virgin women (31:17-18). Although this demand from Moses may seem harsh, it would guarantee the extinction of the Midianites so that they could never lead Israel astray again. Moses then also commanded that any soldier who had killed a man or touched a dead body should remain outside the camp seven days and purify themselves on the third and seventh day (31:19). Any made of leather, goat hair, or wood should also remain outside the camp and be purified (31:20). Eleazar added that the gold, silver, bronze, iron, tin, and lead spoils should be put through fire and then the water of purification to be cleansed (31:21-23a); however, any spoils that could not endure fire should be cleansed with water only (31:23b). On the seventh day those who were unclean were to wash their clothes and then they were permitted to come into the camp (31:24). The Lord then gave Moses specific instructions on dividing the spoils evenly among Israel (31:25-47). An account of the soldiers who went to war was taken and there was not one missing (31:48-49). This brought joy to the men and they expressed their thankfulness by giving an offering of their spoils to God (31:48-54).

After conquering the Midianites, the tribes of Reuben and Gad looked upon the land and saw that it was a good place for their livestock so they requested to establish themselves east of the Jordan River outside of Canaan (32:1-5). Moses was initially discouraged by their request because he believed that their settling outside of Canaan would compromise the morale of the other tribes and cause them to also want to establish themselves outside of Canaan (32:6-7). Moses also reminded them of the sins of their fathers who had refused to conquer Canaan 38 years before, which aroused the anger of the Lord against Israel and caused Him to prohibit them from inhabiting Canaan (32:8-15). Upon hearing the concerns of Moses, the two tribes assured Moses that although they were settling outside Canaan their soldiers would accompany the rest of the tribes until they had conquered the inhabitants of Canaan (32:16-19). When Moses heard their plans, he agreed to it and established their promise in the hearing of Eleazar, Joshua, and the fathers of the tribes of Israel (32:16-32). Moses then allocated the land outside Canaan to the tribes of Gad, Reuben, and half the tribe of Manasseh, who were probably latecomers to the agreement (32:33-42).

Israel was poised to overtake Canaan, but first God commanded Moses to document a list of Israel's encampments during their 40 year journey in the wilderness (33:1-49). Reviewing Israel's journey would highlight God's faithfulness to them in the wilderness and provide confidence that He was also able to lead them into Canaan. The Lord then spoke to Moses and gave him the following instructions for the conquest of Canaan, "When you have crossed the Jordan into the land of Canaan, then you shall drive out all the inhabitants of the land from before you, destroy all their engraved stones, destroy all their molded images, and demolish all their high places; you shall dispossess *the inhabitants of* the land and dwell in it, for I have given you the land to possess" (33:50-53). When Israel had done these things they were to divide the land according to size of family and the size of the land (33:54). God also gave the Israelites a stern warning. If they failed to drive out all of the Canaanites, they would be constant trouble for them, which would eventually end in Israel losing their inheritance (33:55-56). Israel needed to make sure that they followed God's commands so they would not experience His judgment.

Dear God, give me ears to hear and a will to obey.

Numbers 34:1-36:13

After 40 years of wandering in the wilderness, God gave Israel some final instructions before entering Canaan (Numbers 33:50-56), the land He had promised to Abraham hundreds of years before. God was very specific in commanding the Israelites to drive out all the inhabitants of Canaan (33:51-52a, 53), remove any objects or places used for the worship of false gods (33:52b), and divide the land evenly among the tribes (33:54). Failure to obey any of God's commands would result in His judgment on Israel (33:55-56). Before moving forward into Canaan, God also appointed the boundaries of the land so that the children of Israel would know the borders of the land that was rightfully given to them (34:1-15). Eleazar, Joshua, and the leaders of the ten tribes were specified as the ones who would assign the portions of the land once Israel had conquered Canaan (34:16-29). The tribe of Levi was responsible for assisting the people in worship in the tabernacle and was given 48 cities throughout Canaan (35:1-8). Although the Levites did not inherit a plot of land for their tribe (Numbers 18:20), they were given places to live throughout Canaan so they could serve the spiritual needs of Israel.

Of the 48 cities given to the Levites, six of them would become cities of refuge (35:9-34). Cities of refuge were locations where a man who accidentally killed someone could flee and be protected from revenge until he could stand before a congregation in judgment (35:9-15). If the man killed someone with an object considered lethal, he would be guilty of murder and the avenger was permitted to put him to death (35:16-19). Any type of premeditated action that resulted in the murder of another would be considered punishable by death (35:20-21); however, if a murder took place without premeditation, the congregation would decide the motive and lay down a sentence (35:22-24). If the congregation found that he was not guilty of premeditated murder, the man could stay in the city of refuge without fear of vengeance (35:25-28). He would be permitted to leave the city of refuge and return to his city of origin when the High-Priest died (35:28b). In the event of a homicide, the guilty man would be put to death on the basis of the testimony of more than one witness (35:30). No ransom could be paid to free a murderer from the death penalty or a city of refuge (35:31-32). The murder of a human being was a serious matter and needed to be handled in accordance to God's laws. If Israel did not properly handle incidents of murders, the land would become defiled and God could no longer dwell in their midst (35:33-34).

In Numbers 27:1-11 a situation had arisen concerning the inheritance of five daughters whose father had no sons to pass down his inheritance to following his death. It was determined that the daughters would rightfully inherit the land of their deceased father. However, if those daughters married men from other tribes, the land that the daughters inherited from their deceased father would now become the property of another tribe (36:1-4). This meant that a particular tribe's total land would be reduced and the other tribe's land would be multiplied. Moses listened to the complaints and commanded that any woman who had inherited land from her father was only permitted to marry within her own ancestral tribe (36:5-6). No land could pass from one tribe to another (36:7-9). The five daughters of Zelophehad obeyed the command of Moses and married men from their ancestral tribe, which meant that the land would also stay with the tribe (36:10-12).

The book of Numbers concludes with these words, "These are the commandments and the judgments which the Lord commanded the children of Israel by the hand of Moses in the plains of Moab by the Jordan, across from Jericho" (36:13). This statement confirms that the words written in Numbers were directly from God and intended to be obeyed by all of Israel. If Israel obeyed the commandments in this book, they would experience God's blessings. But if Israel disobeyed that which was written in Numbers they would invite God's judgment upon them.

Dear God, may I obey Your words.