

## VII. UNIT 7 - NUMBERS “Do The Math!”

### A. What’s In A Name?

1. Book title comes from Greek Old Testament, “ \_\_\_\_\_ ” (i.e. “Numbers”); reference to the two censuses in the book (Ch. 1, 26).
2. Hebrew title is “*be-midbar*,” which means, “in the \_\_\_\_\_”; a much more fitting title.
3. This title confusion is a great “parable” about our constant struggle to balance the Hebraic and \_\_\_\_\_ ways of thinking about God: abstract & practical vs. concrete & intellectual.

#### a. A “Rusty” Hinge in History

- (1) This is a book of \_\_\_\_\_:
  - (a) in \_\_\_\_\_: from Aaron to Eleazer
  - (b) in \_\_\_\_\_: from Moses to Joshua
  - (c) in \_\_\_\_\_: parent generation to second generation
  - (d) in \_\_\_\_\_: nomadic to residential (allotments East of Jordan)
  - (e) in \_\_\_\_\_: from Egypt to Canaan (fulfillment of the promise)

- (2) This is a book of \_\_\_\_\_:

Scripture	I N C I D E N T   R E C O R D E D
11:1	People complain about misfortunes in general
11:4-6	People complain about their “diet”; wanted to return to Egypt
11:10-15	Moses complains about God’s unreasonable task of leadership
12:1-16	Miriam & Aaron rebel against Moses’ leadership
<b>13:25-33</b>	<b>Spies return and give a bad (majority) report</b>
14:1-4	Entire nation complains about the “impossibility” of taking Canaan
14:20-23	God indicates that there have been “ten rebellions” since leaving Egypt!
14:39-45	Rebel by “obeying” through disobedience
15:32-36	An individual Sabbath-breaker executed
16:1-40	Korah’s rebellion (ground swallowed them up)
16:41ff	“all the congregation” is angry with Moses for the death of Korah and his companions.
20:1-9	Complaining over lack of water at Meribah near Kadesh; want to return
<b>20:10-13</b>	<b>Moses &amp; Aaron usurp God’s glory and draw attention to themselves</b>
21:4-9	Complaining over “diet” again; serpents punish them: brazen serpent
25:1ff	Baal worship, intermarriage and sexual immorality in Moab

4. This is a book of \_\_\_\_\_: (cf. 1 Cor. 10:9-12).
  - a. about the human capacity for \_\_\_\_\_.
  - b. about the human tendency to presume on God’s \_\_\_\_\_.

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- c. About the impartiality of God's \_\_\_\_\_ (Korah and Moses).
  - d. This "dispensable" nature of God's \_\_\_\_\_ (Aaron and Balaam).
  - e. The unrelenting "pull" of \_\_\_\_\_ (Baal of Peor in Moab).
5. It is a book of "higher math!"
- a. non-sequential \_\_\_\_\_ (cf. 1:1; 7:1; 9:1, 15; 10:11; 20:1).

*"The book of Numbers defies dissection into logical literary units, making it perhaps the most difficult Old Testament book in which to identify order and structure".*

**Andrew Hill, Survey of the Old Testament, p. 120**

- b. One researcher examined \_\_\_\_ commentaries and \_\_\_\_ different outlines for the book!
- c. Contains huge gaps in the "\_\_\_\_\_-line"
  - (1) \_\_\_\_\_ years unaccounted for!
  - (2) \_\_\_\_\_ places mentioned in chapter 33, most are missing from the story.
- d. Numbers has problems with "\_\_\_\_\_"
  - (1) Army's \_\_\_\_\_ doesn't "fit" history & culture, or Deuteronomy 7:7.

*"It was not because you were more in number than any other people that the LORD set his love on you and chose you, for you were the fewest of all peoples..."*

- (2) God typically works with \_\_\_\_\_ and weakness, rather than many and strength (cf. Judges 7:2; 1 Cor. 1:27-31).
- (3) "Holy" appears most frequently in chapters dealing with those who \_\_\_\_\_ God.

## B. Getting The Big Picture

1. This is a book that \_\_\_\_\_ God's revelation of Himself to Moses:

*"The LORD descended in the cloud and stood with him there, and proclaimed the name of the LORD. The LORD passed before him and proclaimed, 'The LORD, the LORD, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness, keeping steadfast love for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, but who will by no means clear the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children and the children's children, to the third and the fourth generation.'"*

**Exodus 34:5-7**

*"And now, please let the power of the Lord be great as you have promised, saying, 'The LORD is slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love, forgiving iniquity and transgression, but he will by no means clear the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children, to the third and the fourth generation.' Please pardon the iniquity of this people, according to the greatness of your steadfast love, just as you have forgiven this people, from Egypt until now."*

**Numbers 14:17-19**

2. This is a book that holds before us the dual aspects of God's nature that must be kept in view: \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.

*"Note then the **kindness** and the **severity** of God: severity toward those who have fallen, but God's kindness to you, provided you continue in his kindness. Otherwise you too will be cut off."*

**Romans 11:22**

3. This is a book about "\_\_\_\_\_"
- a. Leviticus was the "course," Numbers is the "\_\_\_\_\_."

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- b. Israel “tests” God — this is always \_\_\_\_\_ (Num. 20:13; Ps. 95:9).
- c. God “tests” Israel — this is always \_\_\_\_\_ (Ps. 17:3; Isaiah 48:10).
4. This is book about \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. Camp arrangement for peace and war was designed to remind them of their need to stay \_\_\_\_\_ to God.
  - b. Ordination did not \_\_\_\_\_ holiness (Korah and 250 others were all Levites).
  - c. Election did not \_\_\_\_\_ discipline (Ch. 20; Miriam, Moses and Aaron)
  - d. Holiness is \_\_\_\_\_ as well as corporate (designations within Levites; Num. 3:21-37).
5. It is a book about \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. The second \_\_\_\_\_ stands as a testimony to the covenant love of God.
  - b. No mention of a single \_\_\_\_\_ after the first generation is extinguished.
  - c. God’s faithfulness to His covenant people repeatedly towers above their \_\_\_\_\_ and faithlessness.
6. It is a \_\_\_\_\_ book.
  - a. The sacrifice of the Red Heifer is a clear prediction of Jesus’ \_\_\_\_\_ (cf. Num. 19 and Heb. 13:12-13).
  - b. The brazen serpent is a prophetic picture of both the \_\_\_\_\_ and salvation by faith (cf. Num. 21:4-9; John 3:14).

## C. Numbers and Our New Testament

1. \_\_\_\_\_ is mentioned in 3 NT books; all indicting his character more clearly than in Numbers (cf. 2 Peter 2:15; Jude 11; Rev. 2:13-14).
2. Paul spends half of 1 Corinthians 10 connecting Israel’s sin to the Corinthians’ \_\_\_\_\_, including:
  - a. \_\_\_\_\_ (i.e. cultural accommodation; 1 Cor. 10:7 and Num. 25:1-9).
  - b. sexual \_\_\_\_\_ (1 Cor. 10:8 and Num. 25:1-9).
  - c. \_\_\_\_\_ about life (1 Cor. 10:10 and Num. 14:2).
  - d. \_\_\_\_\_ of accountability (1 Cor. 10:9 and Num. 21:5).
3. Paul makes it clear that we are just as susceptible and even more \_\_\_\_\_.
4. The writer of Hebrews refers to Numbers at least three times, quoting Psalm 95:
  - a. be \_\_\_\_\_ - your heart can become hardened too.
  - b. be \_\_\_\_\_ - you cannot protect your heart alone.
  - c. be \_\_\_\_\_ - you have an obligation for the protection of others’ hearts too.
  - d. There is an eerie “silence” in Hebrews 11 regarding the book of Numbers.

## D. Numbers and the Christian

1. The Myth of \_\_\_\_\_ - the temptation to “revise” our memories in the face of struggle.

# GETTING THE BIG PICTURE

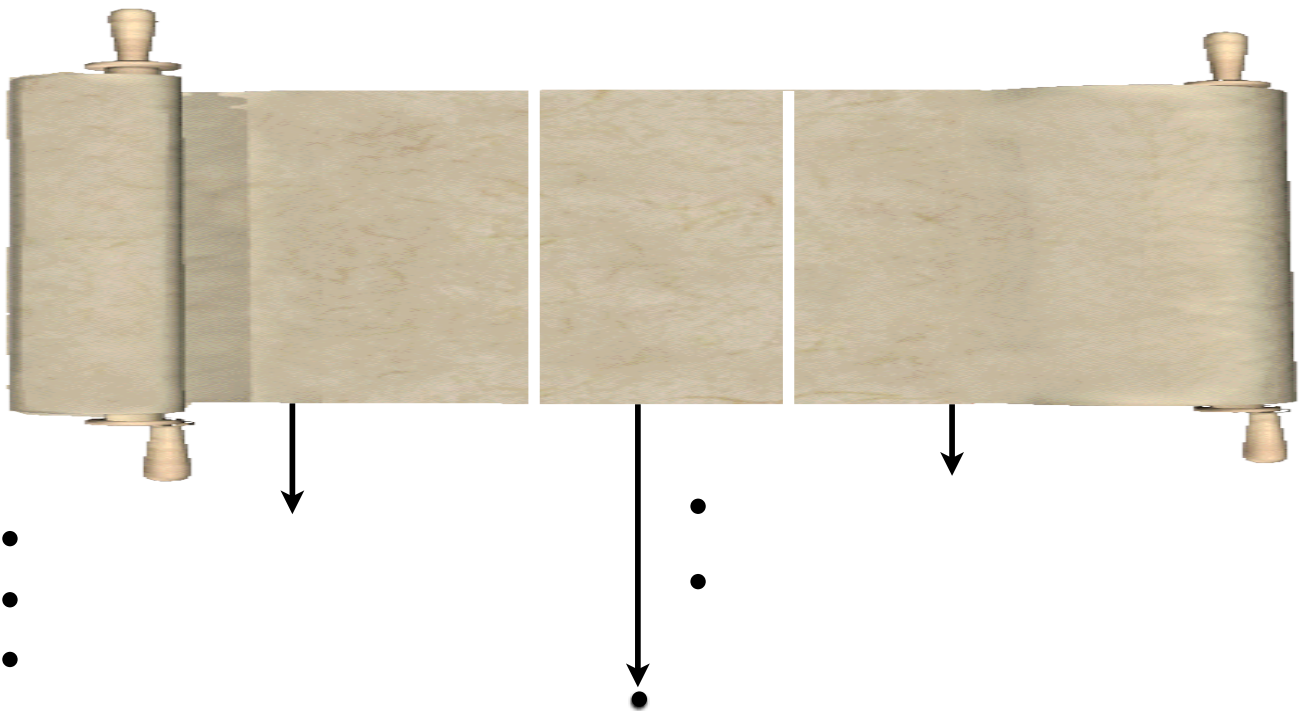
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2. The Grave Nature of \_\_\_\_\_ - grumbling is always against God and “tests” His goodness
3. Availability versus Ability - God used a talking \_\_\_\_\_, he can use me
4. Sovereignty versus Humanity - God will get the “job” done whether or not I “\_\_\_\_\_” for work!”

*“Now these things happened to them as an example, but they were written down for our instruction, on whom the end of the ages has come. Therefore let anyone who thinks that he stands take heed lest he fall.”*

**1 Corinthians 10:11 -12**

## NUMBERS



**Key**  **Information**

**Key Word:**

**Key Chapters:**

**Basic Geography:**

**Book summary:**