

NUMBERS

Forty years of camping

AUTHOR	Moses, according to Jewish and Christian tradition. Numbers 33:2 says Moses wrote down the stages of the journey at Yahweh's command, and Jesus spoke of the books of Moses as his writings John 5:46 to 47. Many modern scholars think the book was put together from older sources and finished around 500 BC.
EVENTS TOOK PLACE	From Mount Sinai to the plains of Moab across from Jericho, over almost forty years. It begins on the first day of the second month of the second year after Egypt 1:1, and the camp leaves Sinai on the twentieth day of that month 10:11.
DATE WRITTEN	Traditionally about 1440 to 1400 BC, near the end of the wilderness years. Those who date the Exodus later, in the 1200s BC, move that date down too.
WRITTEN TO	Israel, especially the new generation about to enter Canaan, so they would not repeat their parents' mistakes.
KEY VERSE	Numbers 14:18. Yahweh is slow to anger and abounding in loving devotion, forgiving iniquity and transgression.



NUMBERS IN THE DEAD SEA SCROLLS

These are pieces of 4QNum b, a scroll of Numbers from Cave 4 at Qumran, copied in the last century before Jesus, about 50 to 1 BC. It holds parts of Numbers 11 to 36, and a few passages are written in red ink. Some of its readings match the Samaritan Bible and the Greek Bible instead of the standard Hebrew text. About eleven copies of Numbers were found among the Dead Sea Scrolls. The oldest is 4QLev Num a, from about 150 to 75 BC. But the oldest Bible words of all come from Numbers 6:24 to 26, on two silver scrolls from about 600 BC. See the Ketef Hinnom Field Notes page. Photo Shai Halevi, Leon Levy Dead Sea Scrolls Digital Library, Israel Antiquities Authority.

Historical Setting

Israel has spent about a year at Mount Sinai. They have the law, the tabernacle and the priests. Now it is time to march to the Promised Land, which should take a few weeks. It takes forty years. The English name Numbers comes from the Greek Bible, which called it Arithmoi, because of the two big headcounts in chapters 1 and 26. The Hebrew name is Bemidbar, which means in the wilderness, from the first verse. That name tells you where the whole book happens.

What Was Going Wrong

COMPLAINING. Three days after leaving Sinai, the people start complaining, and they keep it up for the rest of the book 11:1, 14:2, 16:41, 21:5.

UNBELIEF. Ten of the twelve spies said the giants in Canaan were too big, and the people believed them instead of God 13:31 to 14:4.

REBELLION. Korah and 250 leaders challenged Moses and Aaron, and even Miriam and Aaron criticized Moses 12:1 to 2, 16:1 to 3.

IDOLS AT PEOR. On the edge of the Promised Land, Israel worshiped Baal of Peor and slept with Moabite women, and 24,000 died in the plague, 25:1 to 9.

MOSES SLIPPED TOO. Even Moses lost his temper and struck the rock instead of speaking to it, and God said he would not lead Israel into the land 20:10 to 12.

The Idiot Proof Summary

Numbers is the story of the longest detour in history. Israel leaves Mount Sinai with everything they need: God's law, God's presence in a cloud, and a land waiting for them. Then they complain, doubt, rebel and refuse to go in. So God lets that whole generation die in the wilderness, all except Joshua and Caleb, and raises up their kids instead. But God never leaves. The cloud keeps leading, the manna keeps falling and the water keeps flowing. Even a hired seer cannot curse the people God has blessed. Numbers shows that people can be faithless, but God stays faithful.

Numbers at a Glance

CH 1 to 10

GETTING READY AT SINAI

The census, the camp, the Levites, and the cloud that leads the way.

CH 11 to 12

TROUBLE ON THE ROAD

Complaining, quail and a family fight.

CH 13 to 14

THE SPIES

Ten say no, two say yes, and a generation is turned back.

CH 15 to 19

THE WILDERNESS YEARS

Laws, Korah's rebellion and Aaron's budding staff.

CH 20 to 21

THE LAST LEG

Water from the rock, the bronze snake and the first victories.

CH 22 to 25

BALAAM AND PEOR

A hired curse turns into blessings, then Israel falls into sin.

CH 26 to 36

THE NEW GENERATION

A second census, Joshua chosen, and getting ready to cross the Jordan.

Where Jesus Shows Up

NUMBERS 9:12 Do not break any of the Passover lamb's bones. Fulfilled when the soldiers did not break Jesus' legs, John 19:36.

NUMBERS 11:7 TO 9 Manna fell from heaven. Jesus is the true bread from heaven, John 6:31 to 35.

NUMBERS 19:2 TO 9 The red heifer died outside the camp, and its ashes made people clean. Christ's blood cleanses far more, and He suffered outside the gate, Hebrews 9:13 to 14.

NUMBERS 20:11 Water from the rock. Paul says that Rock was Christ, 1 Corinthians 10:4.

NUMBERS 21:8 TO 9 Anyone who looked at the bronze snake on the pole lived. So the Son of Man must be lifted up, John 3:14 to 15.

NUMBERS 24:17 A star will come out of Jacob. Justin Martyr and Origen linked it to the wise men's star, Matthew 2:2, and Jesus is the bright Morning Star, Revelation 22:16.

NUMBERS 27:17 Not like sheep without a shepherd. Jesus saw the crowds that way and had compassion, Matthew 9:36, and called Himself the Good Shepherd, John 10:11.

GOD'S NAMES IN NUMBERS

Moses calls on the God of the spirits of all flesh, who gives every person life 16:22, 27:16. Balaam calls Him Shaddai, the Almighty, and Elyon, the Most High 24:4, 24:16.

What to Watch for in Numbers

MESSIANIC PROPHECIES	9:12, 24:17
MESSIANIC FORESHADOW	19:2-3, 20:8, 21:9, 23:21, 27:16, 35:11-12
PROPHECIES FULFILLED IN SCRIPTURE	1:33-35, 11:18-20, 11:31-33, 14:24, 14:28-35, 14:42-43, 14:45 and 10 more
THE HEART	15:39, 32:7-9
ARCHAEOLOGY	6:24-26, 22:5
MIRACLES	11:1-3, 11:25, 12:5-15, 16:34-35, 16:46-50, 20:9-11, 21:6-8 and 2 more
DEMONIC	13:22, 13:28, 13:32-33, 14:18, 21:29, 21:33-35, 22:7 and 7 more
NOTABLE	4:1-20, 16:1-27, 16:36-40
GOD SPEAKING	Words in red are God speaking. Only the words He actually said are red.

Cool Stuff Most People Miss

JOSHUA HAS JESUS' NAME

In 13:16 Moses renames Hoshea as Joshua, Yehoshua, which means Yahweh saves. Jesus' Hebrew name Yeshua is a short form of it, and Greek spells both Iesous.

THE OLDEST BIBLE WORDS EVER FOUND

The priestly blessing in 6:24 to 26 is on two tiny silver scrolls from about 600 BC, the oldest known Bible words. Churches and synagogues still say it today.

A LOST BOOK

Numbers 21:14 quotes the Book of the Wars of Yahweh. Nobody has ever found a copy.

FIVE SISTERS WON THEIR CASE

Mahlah, Noah, Hoglah, Milcah and Tirzah asked for their father's land, and God sided with them. Their case became law 27:1 to 11.

THE SNAKE ON A POLE

Moses' bronze snake was kept until King Hezekiah smashed it, 2 Kings 18:4. The snake on a staff on ambulances comes from Asclepius, a Greek healing god, not from Moses.

Did Anybody Listen?

The first generation did not. Except for Joshua and Caleb, they died in the wilderness, 26:64 to 65. But their children were counted, and the book ends with Israel across from Jericho, ready to go in.

GOD SPEAKING BLOODLINE OF CHRIST

1

CHAPTER 1 IN 30 SECONDS

God tells Moses to count every man twenty years old or older who can fight. Tribe by tribe the totals come in, and the grand total is 603,550. The Levites are not counted, because their job is the tent, not the army. Yes, the book starts with a census. Hang in there.

THE FIRST CENSUS OF ISRAEL // NUMBERS 26:1-4

¹On the first day of the second month of the second year after the Israelites had come out of the land of Egypt, Yahweh spoke to Moses in the Tent of Meeting in the Wilderness of Sinai. He said: ²**"Take a census of the whole congregation of Israel by their clans and families, listing every man by name, one by one.**

³**You and Aaron are to number those who are twenty years of age or older by their divisions—everyone who can serve in Israel's army. ⁴And one man from each tribe, the head of each family, must be there with you.**

THE LEADERS OF THE TRIBES

⁵**These are the names of the men who are to assist you:**

From the tribe of Reuben, Elizur son of Shedeur;

⁶**from Simeon, Shelumiel son of Zurishaddai;**

⁷**from Judah, Nahshon son of Amminadab**

⁸**from Issachar, Nethanel son of Zuar;**

⁹**from Zebulun, Eliab son of Helon;**

¹⁰**from the sons of Joseph:**

from Ephraim, Elishama son of Ammi-hud,

and from Manasseh, Gamaliel son of Pedahzur;

¹¹**from Benjamin, Abidan son of Gideoni;**

¹²**from Dan, Ahiezer son of Ammishaddai;**

¹³**from Asher, Pagiel son of Ocran;**

¹⁴**from Gad, Eliasaph son of Deuel;**

¹⁵**and from Naphtali, Ahira son of Enan."**

¹⁶These men were appointed from the congregation; they were the leaders of the tribes of their fathers, the heads of the clans of Israel.

THE NUMBER OF EVERY TRIBE

¹⁷So Moses and Aaron took these men who had been designated by name, ¹⁸and on the first day of the second month they assembled the whole congregation and recorded their ancestry by clans and families, counting one by one the names of those twenty years of age or older, ¹⁹just as Yahweh had commanded Moses.

So Moses numbered them in the Wilderness of Sinai:

²⁰From the sons of Reuben, the firstborn of Israel, according to the records of their clans and families, counting one by one the names of every male twenty years of age or older who could serve in the army, ²¹those registered to the tribe of Reuben numbered 46,500.

²²From the sons of Simeon, according to the records of their clans and families, counting one by one the names of every male twenty years of age or older who could serve in the army, ²³those registered to the tribe of Simeon numbered 59,300.

²⁴From the sons of Gad, according to the records of their clans and families, counting the names of all those twenty years of age or older who could serve in the army, ²⁵those registered to the tribe of Gad numbered 45,650.

²⁶From the sons of Judah, according to the records of their clans and families, counting the names of all those twenty years of age or older who could serve in the army, ²⁷those registered to the tribe of Judah numbered 74,600.

²⁸From the sons of Issachar, according to the records of their clans and families, counting the names of all those twenty years of age or older who could serve in the army, ²⁹those registered to the tribe of Issachar numbered 54,400.

³⁰From the sons of Zebulun, according to the records of their clans and families, counting the names of all those twenty years of age or older who could serve in the army, ³¹those registered to the tribe of Zebulun numbered 57,400.

³²From the sons of Joseph:

PROPHECIES FULFILLED IN SCRIPTURE GOD SPEAKING

From the sons of Ephraim, according to the records of their clans and families, counting the names of all those twenty years of age or older who could serve in the army, ³³those registered to the tribe of Ephraim numbered 40,500.

³⁴And from the sons of Manasseh, according to the records of their clans and families, counting the names of all those twenty years of age or older who could serve in the army, ³⁵those registered to the tribe of Manasseh numbered 32,200.

³⁶From the sons of Benjamin, according to the records of their clans and families, counting the names of all those twenty years of age or older who could serve in the army, ³⁷those registered to the tribe of Benjamin numbered 35,400.

³⁸From the sons of Dan, according to the records of their clans and families, counting the names of all those twenty years of age or older who could serve in the army, ³⁹those registered to the tribe of Dan numbered 62,700.

⁴⁰From the sons of Asher, according to the records of their clans and families, counting the names of all those twenty years of age or older who could serve in the army, ⁴¹those registered to the tribe of Asher numbered 41,500.

⁴²From the sons of Naphtali, according to the records of their clans and families, counting the names of all those twenty years of age or older who could serve in the army, ⁴³those registered to the tribe of Naphtali numbered 53,400.

⁴⁴These were the men numbered by Moses and Aaron, with the assistance of the twelve leaders of Israel, each one representing his family. ⁴⁵So all the Israelites twenty years of age or older who could serve in Israel's army were counted according to their families. ⁴⁶And all those counted totaled 603,550.

■ **NUM 1:33 [FULFILLS]** Jacob said Ephraim the younger would be greater than Manasseh ← GEN 48:19 D.

■ **NUM 1:46 [NOTE]** HOW MANY? Many read 603,550 fighting men as two million people or more. Not everyone reads the number that way. See the Big Question pages How Many Left Egypt?

THE EXEMPTION OF THE LEVITES

⁴⁷The Levites, however, were not numbered along with them by the tribe of their fathers. ⁴⁸For Yahweh had said to Moses:

⁴⁹"Do not number the tribe of Levi in the census with the other Israelites. ⁵⁰Instead, you are to appoint the Levites over the tabernacle of the Testimony, all its furnishings, and everything in it. They shall carry the tabernacle and all its articles, care for it, and camp around it.

⁵¹Whenever the tabernacle is to move, the Levites are to take it down, and whenever it is to be pitched, the Levites are to set it up. Any outsider who goes near it must be put to death.

⁵²The Israelites are to camp by their divisions, each man in his own camp and under his own standard. ⁵³But the Levites are to camp around the tabernacle of the Testimony and watch over it, so that no wrath will fall on the congregation of Israel. So the Levites are responsible for the tabernacle of the Testimony."

⁵⁴Thus the Israelites did everything just as Yahweh had commanded Moses.

DEBATED THE BIG QUESTION

HOW MANY LEFT EGYPT?

Two Million, or Fewer?

NUMBERS 1:46 • 26:51 • EXODUS 12:37 • 38:26

WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS

Exodus 12:37 says about 600,000 men on foot left Egypt, besides women and children. Numbers 1:46 counts 603,550 fighting men, and Exodus 38:26 gives the same number for the men who paid the silver tax. Forty years later the count is 601,730, Numbers 26:51. Add women, children, the elderly and the Levites, and you get two million people or more.

THE LITERAL VIEW

Many Christians and Jews read the numbers just as they are. God promised to make Abraham's family as many as the stars, and Exodus 1:7 says Israel multiplied greatly in Egypt. Feeding two million people in a desert would be impossible, but the Bible says God did it with manna and water from the rock.

GOD SPEAKING BLOODLINE OF CHRIST

Some rabbis even taught that Israelite mothers had six babies at a time.

THE CLAN VIEW

The Hebrew word for thousand, *elef*, can also mean a clan or a military unit. In 1906 Flinders Petrie suggested reading the numbers as units plus men. George Mendenhall in 1958 and Colin Humphreys in 1998 built on that idea. On Humphreys' reading, 603,550 becomes 598 units and 5,550 men, and the whole nation is closer to 20,000 people. Defenders of this view note that Deuteronomy 7:7 calls Israel the fewest of all peoples.

PROBLEMS WITH THE CLAN VIEW

The totals in Numbers add up as thousands, not as units, and Exodus 38:26 counts the silver paid by 603,550 men. Critics say the clan math runs into trouble in several tribes. And no Hebrew copy of Numbers reads the numbers any other way.

The Hard Questions

NUMBERS 3:43 · DEUTERONOMY 7:7 · PSALM 105:37

THE HARD VERSES

Numbers 3:43 counts 22,273 firstborn sons. With 603,550 men, that would mean each mother had dozens of sons. Experts also guess that all of Egypt had only about three or four million people at the time. Defenders of the literal view answer that God multiplied Israel in a supernatural way, and that the firstborn count may have been only those born after the Exodus.

THE LATER CENSUS VIEW

Some scholars, like William Albright, thought the lists came from a later census, maybe in King David's day, and were placed back in the wilderness story. Others say the numbers grew over time as the story was told. Nobody has found a copy of Numbers with smaller numbers.

THE SYMBOL VIEW

Some say the big numbers were never meant as a headcount. They show how great and strong God made His people. A few people have tried to find secret

codes in the numbers, but none of these ideas has won over most scholars.

WHAT JOSEPHUS SAID

The Jewish historian Josephus, writing about AD 93, also said 600,000 men of fighting age left Egypt. He read the numbers as real numbers, just as most readers did for centuries.

WHAT ALL SIDES AGREE ON

The Hebrew copies say 603,550. The word *elef* can mean thousand, and sometimes clan. The big number fits God's promise to Abraham, and the small number fits Deuteronomy 7:7. Either way, the point of Numbers is the same: God led His people out, fed them and kept His promise. Christians who disagree here still trust the same Bible.

2

CHAPTER 2 IN 30 SECONDS

God gives the camp a seating chart. Three tribes camp on each side of the Tent of Meeting, each under its own flag, with Judah on the east facing the sunrise. When the camp moves, they move in that order. A whole nation on the move, and nobody fights over parking.

THE ORDER OF THE CAMPS

¹Then Yahweh said to Moses and Aaron: ²

"The Israelites are to camp around the Tent of Meeting at a distance from it, each man under his standard, with the banners of his family.

³*On the east side, toward the sunrise, the divisions of Judah are to camp under their standard:*

The leader of the Judahites is Nahshon son of Amminadab, ⁴and his division numbers 74,600.

⁵*The tribe of Issachar will camp next to it. The leader of the Issacharites is Nethanel son of Zuar, ⁶and his division numbers 54,400.*

⁷*Next will be the tribe of Zebulun. The leader of the Zebulunites is Eliab son of Helon, ⁸and his division numbers 57,400.*

⁹*The total number of men in the divisions of the camp of Judah is 186,400; they shall set out first.*

GOD SPEAKING

¹⁰ On the south side, the divisions of Reuben are to camp under their standard: The leader of the Reubenites is Elizur son of Shedeur, ¹¹ and his division numbers 46,500.

¹² The tribe of Simeon will camp next to it. The leader of the Simeonites is Shelumiel son of Zurishaddai, ¹³ and his division numbers 59,300.

¹⁴ Next will be the tribe of Gad. The leader of the Gadites is Eliasaph son of Deuel, ¹⁵ and his division numbers 45,650.

¹⁶ The total number of men in the divisions of the camp of Reuben is 151,450; they shall set out second.

¹⁷ In the middle of the camps, the Tent of Meeting is to travel with the camp of the Levites. They are to set out in the order they encamped, each in his own place under his standard.

¹⁸ On the west side, the divisions of Ephraim are to camp under their standard: The leader of the Ephraimites is Elishama son of Ammihud, ¹⁹ and his division numbers 40,500.

²⁰ The tribe of Manasseh will be next to it. The leader of the Manassites is Gamaliel son of Pedahzur, ²¹ and his division numbers 32,200.

²² Next will be the tribe of Benjamin. The leader of the Benjamites is Abidan son of Gideoni, ²³ and his division numbers 35,400.

²⁴ The total number of men in the divisions of the camp of Ephraim is 108,100; they shall set out third.

²⁵ On the north side, the divisions of Dan are to camp under their standard: The leader of the Danites is Ahiezer son of Ammishaddai, ²⁶ and his division numbers 62,700.

²⁷ The tribe of Asher will camp next to it. The leader of the Asherites is Pagiel son of Ocran, ²⁸ and his division numbers 41,500.

²⁹ Next will be the tribe of Naphtali. The leader of the Naphtalites is Ahira son of Enan, ³⁰ and his division numbers 53,400.

³¹ The total number of men in the camp of Dan is 157,600; they shall set out last, under their standards."

³² These are the Israelites, numbered according to their families. The total of those counted in the camps, by their divisions, was 603,550. ³³ But the Levites were not counted among the other Israelites, as Yahweh had commanded Moses.

³⁴ So the Israelites did everything Yahweh commanded Moses; they camped under their standards in this way and set out in the same way, each man with his clan and his family.

3

CHAPTER 3 IN 30 SECONDS

The priests are Aaron's sons, and the rest of the tribe of Levi serves them. God takes the Levites in place of every firstborn son of Israel. There are 22,273 firstborn and only 22,000 Levites, so the extra 273 are bought back with silver. God really does count everybody.

THE SONS OF AARON // LEVITICUS 10:1-7

¹ This is the account of Aaron and Moses at the time Yahweh spoke with Moses on Mount Sinai.

² These are the names of the sons of Aaron: Nadab the firstborn, then Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar. ³ These were Aaron's sons, the anointed priests, who were ordained to serve as priests.

⁴ Nadab and Abihu, however, died in the presence of Yahweh when they offered unauthorized fire before Yahweh in the Wilderness of Sinai. And since they had no sons, only Eleazar and Ithamar served as priests during the lifetime of their father Aaron.

THE DUTIES OF THE LEVITES

⁵ Then Yahweh said to Moses, ⁶ "Bring the tribe of Levi and present them to Aaron the priest to assist him. ⁷ They are to perform duties for him and for the whole congregation before the Tent of Meeting, attending to the service of the tabernacle. ⁸ They shall take care of all the furnishings of the Tent of Meeting and fulfill obligations for the Israelites by attending to the service of the tabernacle.

GOD SPEAKING

⁹Assign the Levites to Aaron and his sons; they have been given exclusively to him from among the Israelites. ¹⁰So you shall appoint Aaron and his sons to carry out the duties of the priesthood; but any outsider who approaches the tabernacle must be put to death."

¹¹Again Yahweh spoke to Moses, saying, ¹²"Behold, I have taken the Levites from among the children of Israel in place of every firstborn Israelite from the womb. The Levites belong to Me, ¹³for all the firstborn are Mine. On the day I struck down every firstborn in the land of Egypt, I consecrated to Myself all the firstborn in Israel, both man and beast. They are Mine; I am Yahweh."

THE NUMBERING OF THE LEVITES

¹⁴Then Yahweh spoke to Moses in the Wilderness of Sinai, saying, ¹⁵"Number the Levites by their families and clans. You are to count every male a month old or more."

¹⁶So Moses numbered them according to the word of Yahweh, as he had been commanded.

¹⁷These were the sons of Levi by name: Gershon, Kohath, and Merari. ¹⁸These were the names of the sons of Gershon by their clans: Libni and Shimei. ¹⁹The sons of Kohath by their clans were Amram, Izhar, Hebron, and Uzziel. ²⁰And the sons of Merari by their clans were Mahli and Mushi. These were the clans of the Levites, according to their families.

THE GERSHONITES // NUMBERS 4:21–28; 1 CHRONICLES 23:7–11

²¹From Gershon came the Libnite clan and the Shimeite clan; these were the Gershonite clans. ²²The number of all the males a month old or more was 7,500.

²³The Gershonite clans were to camp on the west, behind the tabernacle, ²⁴and the leader of the families of the Gershonites was Eliasaph son of Lael.

²⁵The duties of the Gershonites at the Tent of Meeting were the tabernacle and tent, its covering, the curtain for the entrance to the Tent of Meeting, ²⁶the cur-

tains of the courtyard, the curtain for the entrance to the courtyard that surrounds the tabernacle and altar, and the cords—all the service for these items.

THE KOHATHITES // NUMBERS 4:1–20; 1 CHRONICLES 23:12–20

²⁷From Kohath came the clans of the Amramites, the Izharites, the Hebronites, and the Uzzielites; these were the clans of the Kohathites. ²⁸The number of all the males a month old or more was 8,600. They were responsible for the duties of the sanctuary.

²⁹The clans of the Kohathites were to camp on the south side of the tabernacle, ³⁰and the leader of the families of the Kohathites was Elizaphan son of Uzziel.

³¹Their duties were the ark, the table, the lampstand, the altars, the articles of the sanctuary used with them, and the curtain—all the service for these items.

³²The chief of the leaders of the Levites was Eleazar son of Aaron the priest; he oversaw those responsible for the duties of the sanctuary.

THE MERARITES // NUMBERS 4:29–33; 1 CHRONICLES 23:21–23

³³From Merari came the clans of the Mahlites and Mushites; these were the Merarite clans. ³⁴The number of all the males a month old or more was 6,200.

³⁵The leader of the families of the Merarites was Zuriel son of Abihail; they were to camp on the north side of the tabernacle.

³⁶The duties assigned to the sons of Merari were the tabernacle's frames, crossbars, posts, bases, and all its equipment—all the service for these items, ³⁷as well as the posts of the surrounding courtyard with their bases, tent pegs, and ropes.

MOSES AND AARON

³⁸Moses, Aaron, and Aaron's sons were to camp to the east of the tabernacle, toward the sunrise, before the Tent of Meeting. They were to perform the duties of the sanctuary as a service on behalf of the Israelites; but any outsider who ap-

NOTABLE GOD SPEAKING

proached the sanctuary was to be put to death.

³⁹ The total number of Levites that Moses and Aaron counted by their clans at Yahweh's command, including all the males a month old or more, was 22,000.

THE REDEMPTION OF THE FIRSTBORN

⁴⁰ Then Yahweh said to Moses, "Number every firstborn male of the Israelites a month old or more, and list their names. ⁴¹ You are to take the Levites for Me—I am Yahweh—in place of all the firstborn of Israel, and the livestock of the Levites in place of all the firstborn of the livestock of the Israelites."

⁴² So Moses numbered all the firstborn of the Israelites, as Yahweh had commanded him. ⁴³ The total number of the firstborn males a month old or more, listed by name, was 22,273.

⁴⁴ Again Yahweh spoke to Moses, saying,

⁴⁵ "Take the Levites in place of all the firstborn of Israel, and the livestock of the Levites in place of their livestock. The Levites belong to Me; I am Yahweh. ⁴⁶ To redeem the 273 firstborn Israelites who outnumber the Levites, ⁴⁷ you are to collect 2 ounces of silver for each one, weighed by the sanctuary standard. ⁴⁸ Give the money to Aaron and his sons as the redemption price for the excess among the Israelites."

⁴⁹ So Moses collected the redemption money from those in excess of the number redeemed by the Levites. ⁵⁰ He collected the money from the firstborn of the Israelites: about 34 pounds of silver, weighed by the sanctuary standard. ⁵¹ And Moses gave the redemption money to Aaron and his sons in obedience to the word of Yahweh, just as Yahweh had commanded him.

4

CHAPTER 4 IN 30 SECONDS

Job descriptions for the three Levite clans. The Kohathites carry the holiest things, but only after the priests cover them, because touching or even looking at them means death. The Gershonites carry the curtains and the Merarites carry the frames and posts. Every job mattered.

THE DUTIES OF THE KOHATHITES // NUMBERS

3:27–32; 1 CHRONICLES 23:12–20

¹ Then Yahweh said to Moses and Aaron, ²

"Take a census of the Kohathites among the Levites by their clans and families, ³ men from thirty to fifty years old—everyone who is qualified to serve in the work at the Tent of Meeting.

⁴ This service of the Kohathites at the Tent of Meeting regards the most holy things. ⁵ Whenever the camp sets out, Aaron and his sons are to go in, take down the veil of the curtain, and cover the ark of the Testimony with it. ⁶ They are to place over this a covering of fine leather, spread a solid blue cloth over it, and insert its poles.

⁷ Over the table of the Presence they are to spread a blue cloth and place the plates and cups on it, along with the bowls and pitchers for the drink offering. The regular bread offering is to remain on it. ⁸ And they shall spread a scarlet cloth over them, cover them with fine leather, and insert the poles.

⁹ They are to take a blue cloth and cover the lampstand used for light, together with its lamps, wick trimmers, and trays, as well as the jars of oil with which to supply it. ¹⁰ Then they shall wrap it and all its utensils inside a covering of fine leather and put it on the carrying frame.

¹¹ Over the gold altar they are to spread a blue cloth, cover it with fine leather, and insert the poles. ¹² They are to take all the utensils for serving in the sanctuary, place them in a blue cloth, cover them with fine leather, and put them on the carrying frame.

¹³ Then they shall remove the ashes from the bronze altar, spread a purple cloth

NUM 4:1 [NOTABLE] Strict rules for transporting the sacred objects; violation meant death

NOTABLE GOD SPEAKING

over it,¹⁴ and place on it all the vessels used to serve there: the firepans, meat forks, shovels, and sprinkling bowls—all the equipment of the altar. They are to spread over it a covering of fine leather and insert the poles.

¹⁵ When Aaron and his sons have finished covering the holy objects and all their equipment, as soon as the camp is ready to move, the Kohathites shall come and do the carrying. But they must not touch the holy objects, or they will die. These are the transportation duties of the Kohathites regarding the Tent of Meeting.

¹⁶ Eleazar son of Aaron the priest shall oversee the oil for the light, the fragrant incense, the daily grain offering, and the anointing oil. He has oversight of the entire tabernacle and everything in it, including the holy objects and their utensils."

¹⁷ Then Yahweh said to Moses and Aaron,¹⁸ "Do not allow the Kohathite tribal clans to be cut off from among the Levites.¹⁹ In order that they may live and not die when they come near the most holy things, do this for them: Aaron and his sons are to go in and assign each man his task and what he is to carry.²⁰ But the Kohathites are not to go in and look at the holy objects, even for a moment, or they will die."

THE DUTIES OF THE GERSHONITES // NUMBERS 3:21–26; 1 CHRONICLES 23:7–11

²¹ And Yahweh said to Moses,²² "Take a census of the Gershonites as well, by their families and clans,²³ from thirty to fifty years old, counting everyone who comes to serve in the work at the Tent of Meeting.

²⁴ This is the service of the Gershonite clans regarding work and transport:²⁵ They are to carry the curtains of the tabernacle, the Tent of Meeting with the covering of fine leather over it, the curtains for the entrance to the Tent of Meeting,²⁶ the curtains of the courtyard, and the curtains for the entrance at the gate of the courtyard that surrounds the tabernacle and altar, along with their ropes and all the equipment for their service. The Ger-

shonites will do all that needs to be done with these items.

²⁷ All the service of the Gershonites—all their transport duties and other work—is to be done at the direction of Aaron and his sons; you are to assign to them all that they are responsible to carry.²⁸ This is the service of the Gershonite clans at the Tent of Meeting, and their duties shall be under the direction of Ithamar son of Aaron the priest.

THE DUTIES OF THE MERARITES // NUMBERS 3:33–37; 1 CHRONICLES 23:21–23

²⁹ As for the sons of Merari, you are to number them by their clans and families,³⁰ from thirty to fifty years old, counting everyone who comes to serve in the work of the Tent of Meeting.

³¹ This is the duty for all their service at the Tent of Meeting: to carry the frames of the tabernacle with its crossbars, posts, and bases,³² and the posts of the surrounding courtyard with their bases, tent pegs, and ropes, including all their equipment and everything related to their use. You shall assign by name the items that they are responsible to carry.

³³ This is the service of the Merarite clans according to all their work at the Tent of Meeting, under the direction of Ithamar son of Aaron the priest."

THE NUMBERING OF THE LEVITE CLANS

³⁴ So Moses, Aaron, and the leaders of the congregation numbered the Kohathites by their clans and families,³⁵ everyone from thirty to fifty years old who came to serve in the work at the Tent of Meeting.³⁶ And those numbered by their clans totaled 2,750.³⁷ These were counted from the Kohathite clans, everyone who could serve at the Tent of Meeting. Moses and Aaron numbered them according to the command of Yahweh through Moses.

³⁸ Then the Gershonites were numbered by their clans and families,³⁹ everyone from thirty to fifty years old who came to serve in the work at the Tent of Meeting.⁴⁰ And those numbered by their clans and families totaled 2,630.⁴¹ These were counted from the Gershonite clans who

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served at the Tent of Meeting, whom Moses and Aaron counted at Yahweh's command.

⁴² And the Merarites were numbered by their clans and families, ⁴³ everyone from thirty to fifty years old who came to serve in the work at the Tent of Meeting. ⁴⁴ The men registered by their clans numbered 3,200. ⁴⁵ These were counted from the Merarite clans, whom Moses and Aaron numbered at Yahweh's command through Moses.

⁴⁶ So Moses, Aaron, and the leaders of Israel numbered by their clans and families all the Levites ⁴⁷ from thirty to fifty years old who came to do the work of serving and carrying the Tent of Meeting. ⁴⁸ And the number of men was 8,580. ⁴⁹ At Yahweh's command through Moses they were numbered, and each one was assigned his work and burden, as Yahweh had commanded Moses.

5

CHAPTER 5 IN 30 SECONDS

Anyone with a skin disease or who touched a dead body stays outside the camp. If you wrong someone, you confess, pay it back and add one fifth. Then comes a strange test for a wife whose husband suspects her, with holy water and dust from the floor. God, not the husband, decides.

CLEANSING THE CAMPS // LEVITICUS 13:1–46

¹ Then Yahweh said to Moses, ² "Command the Israelites to send away from the camp anyone with a skin disease, anyone who has a bodily discharge, and anyone who is defiled by a dead body. ³ You must send away male and female alike; send them outside the camp so they will not defile their camp, where I dwell among them."

⁴ So the Israelites did this, sending such people outside the camp. They did just as Yahweh had instructed Moses.

CONFESSION AND RESTITUTION // LUKE 19:1–10

⁵ And Yahweh said to Moses, ⁶ "Tell the Israelites that when a man or woman acts unfaithfully against Yahweh by committing any sin against another, that person is guilty ⁷ and must confess the sin he has

committed. He must make full restitution, add a fifth to its value, and give all this to the one he has wronged.

⁸ But if the man has no relative to whom restitution can be made for the wrong, the restitution belongs to Yahweh and must be given to the priest along with the ram of atonement, by which the atonement is made for him.

⁹ Every sacred contribution the Israelites bring to the priest shall belong to him. ¹⁰ Each man's sacred gifts are his own, but whatever he gives to the priest will belong to the priest."

THE ADULTERY TEST

¹¹ Then Yahweh said to Moses, ¹² "Speak to the Israelites and tell them that if any man's wife goes astray and is unfaithful to him ¹³ by sleeping with another man, and it is concealed from her husband and her impurity is undetected (since there is no witness against her and she was not caught in the act), ¹⁴ and if a feeling of jealousy comes over her husband and he suspects his wife who has defiled herself—or if a feeling of jealousy comes over him and he suspects her even though she has not defiled herself— ¹⁵ then he is to bring his wife to the priest.

He must also bring for her an offering of two quarts of barley flour. He is not to pour oil over it or put frankincense on it, because it is a grain offering for jealousy, an offering of memorial as a reminder of iniquity.

¹⁶ The priest is to bring the wife forward and have her stand before Yahweh. ¹⁷ Then he is to take some holy water in a clay jar and put some of the dust from the tabernacle floor into the water.

¹⁸ After the priest has the woman stand before Yahweh, he is to let down her hair and place in her hands the grain offering of memorial, which is the grain offering for jealousy. The priest is to hold the bitter water that brings a curse. ¹⁹ And he is to put the woman under oath and say to her, 'If no other man has slept with you and you have not gone astray and become de-

GOD SPEAKING

filed while under your husband's authority, may you be immune to this bitter water that brings a curse. ²⁰ But if you have gone astray while under your husband's authority and have defiled yourself and lain carnally with a man other than your husband'— ²¹ and the priest shall have the woman swear under the oath of the curse—' then may Yahweh make you an attested curse among your people by making your thigh shrivel and your belly swell. ²² May this water that brings a curse enter your stomach and cause your belly to swell and your thigh to shrivel.'

Then the woman is to say, 'Amen, Amen.'

²³ And the priest shall write these curses on a scroll and wash them off into the bitter water. ²⁴ He is to have the woman drink the bitter water that brings a curse, and it will enter her and may cause her bitter suffering. ²⁵ The priest shall take from her hand the grain offering for jealousy, wave it before Yahweh, and bring it to the altar.

²⁶ Then the priest is to take a handful of the grain offering as a memorial portion and burn it on the altar; after that he is to have the woman drink the water.

²⁷ When he has made her drink the water, if she has defiled herself and been unfaithful to her husband, then the water that brings a curse will enter her and cause bitter suffering; her belly will swell, her thigh will shrivel, and she will become accursed among her people. ²⁸ But if the woman has not defiled herself and is clean, she will be unaffected and able to conceive children.

²⁹ This is the law of jealousy when a wife goes astray and defiles herself while under her husband's authority, ³⁰ or when a feeling of jealousy comes over a husband and he suspects his wife. He is to have the woman stand before Yahweh, and the priest is to apply to her this entire law. ³¹ The husband will be free from guilt, but the woman shall bear her iniquity."

6

CHAPTER 6 IN 30 SECONDS

Any man or woman can make a special vow and become a Nazirite. No wine, no grapes, not even raisins. No haircut. No going near a dead body. When the vow ends, they shave their head and put the hair on the fire under the peace offering. The chapter ends with the famous blessing: 'Yahweh bless you and keep you.'

THE NAZIRITE VOW // JUDGES 13:1-25

¹ And Yahweh said to Moses, ² "Speak to the Israelites and tell them that if a man or woman makes a special vow, the vow of a Nazirite, to separate himself to Yahweh, ³ he is to abstain from wine and strong drink. He must not drink vinegar made from wine or strong drink, and he must not drink any grape juice or eat fresh grapes or raisins. ⁴ All the days of his separation, he is not to eat anything that comes from the grapevine, not even the seeds or skins.

⁵ For the entire period of his vow of separation, no razor shall touch his head. He must be holy until the time of his separation to Yahweh is complete; he must let the hair of his head grow long.

⁶ Throughout the days of his separation to Yahweh, he must not go near a dead body. ⁷ Even if his father or mother or brother or sister should die, he is not to defile himself, because the symbol of consecration to his God is upon his head.

⁸ Throughout the time of his separation, he is holy to Yahweh.

⁹ If someone suddenly dies in his presence and defiles his consecrated head of hair, he must shave his head on the day of his cleansing—the seventh day. ¹⁰ On the eighth day he must bring two turtledoves or two young pigeons to the priest at the entrance to the Tent of Meeting. ¹¹ And the priest is to offer one as a sin offering and the other as a burnt offering to make atonement for him, because he has sinned by being in the presence of the dead body. On that day he must consecrate his head again. ¹² He must rededicate his time of separation to Yahweh and bring a year-old male lamb as a guilt of-

■ **NUM 5:27 [NOTE]** The test did not work by magic water. The text says God decides the outcome, so a jealous husband could not just accuse his wife and win. Bible scholars disagree on exactly what the curse in this verse describes.

ARCHAEOLOGY GOD SPEAKING

fering. But the preceding days shall not be counted, because his separation was defiled.

¹³ Now this is the law of the Nazirite when his time of separation is complete: He must be brought to the entrance to the Tent of Meeting, ¹⁴ and he is to present an offering to Yahweh of an unblemished year-old male lamb as a burnt offering, an unblemished year-old female lamb as a sin offering, and an unblemished ram as a peace offering— ¹⁵ together with their grain offerings and drink offerings—and a basket of unleavened cakes made from fine flour mixed with oil and unleavened wafers coated with oil.

¹⁶ The priest is to present all these before Yahweh and make the sin offering and the burnt offering. ¹⁷ He shall also offer the ram as a peace offering to Yahweh, along with the basket of unleavened bread. And the priest is to offer the accompanying grain offering and drink offering.

¹⁸ Then at the entrance to the Tent of Meeting, the Nazirite is to shave his consecrated head, take the hair, and put it on the fire under the peace offering. ¹⁹ And the priest is to take the boiled shoulder from the ram, one unleavened cake from the basket, and one unleavened wafer, and put them into the hands of the Nazirite who has just shaved the hair of his consecration. ²⁰ The priest shall then wave them as a wave offering before Yahweh. This is a holy portion for the priest, in addition to the breast of the wave offering and the thigh that was presented. After that, the Nazirite may drink wine.

²¹ This is the law of the Nazirite who vows his offering to Yahweh for his separation, in addition to whatever else he can afford; he must fulfill whatever vow he makes, according to the law of his separation."

AARON'S BLESSING

²² Then Yahweh said to Moses, ²³ "Tell Aaron and his sons: This is how you are to bless the Israelites. Say to them:

²⁴ "May Yahweh bless you and keep you;

²⁵ may Yahweh cause His face to shine upon you

and be gracious to you;

²⁶ may Yahweh lift up His countenance toward you

and give you peace."

²⁷ So they shall put My name on the Israelites, and I will bless them."

7

CHAPTER 7 IN 30 SECONDS

The twelve tribal leaders bring gifts for the new altar, one leader a day for twelve days. Every gift is exactly the same, and the Bible lists every one of them, twelve times. With 89 verses, it is the longest chapter in the books of Moses. Nobody got to be the favorite.

OFFERINGS OF DEDICATION

¹ On the day Moses finished setting up the tabernacle, he anointed and consecrated it and all its furnishings, along with the altar and all its utensils. ² And the leaders of Israel, the heads of their families, presented an offering. These men were the tribal leaders who had supervised the registration. ³ They brought as their offering before Yahweh six covered carts and twelve oxen—an ox from each leader and a cart from every two leaders—and presented them before the tabernacle.

⁴ And Yahweh said to Moses, ⁵ "Accept these gifts from them, that they may be used in the work of the Tent of Meeting. And give them to the Levites, to each man according to his service."

⁶ So Moses took the carts and oxen and gave them to the Levites. ⁷ He gave the Gershonites two carts and four oxen, as their service required, ⁸ and he gave the Merarites four carts and eight oxen, as their service required, all under the direction of Ithamar son of Aaron the priest. ⁹ But he did not give any to the Kohathites, since they were to carry on their shoulders the holy objects for which they were responsible.

¹⁰ When the altar was anointed, the leaders approached with their offerings for its

DEBATED FIELD NOTES · ARCHAEOLOGY · CONFIDENCE: HIGH FOR THE FIND, DEBATED FOR THE EXACT DATE

THE KETEF HINNOM SILVER SCROLLS

NUMBERS 6:24 TO 26 · DEUTERONOMY 7:9



The smaller silver scroll, KH2, unrolled. Public domain image, Wikimedia Commons.

WHERE IT IS TODAY

The Israel Museum in Jerusalem.

THE BIG DEBATE

The letters are tiny and damaged, so a few scholars argued for a later date, in the Persian or Greek period. In 2004 Barkay's team studied them with new imaging and stood by a date before 586 BC. Most scholars agree, but the debate is not over.

WHAT IT IS

Two tiny sheets of silver, rolled up and worn as charms, with the priestly blessing from Numbers 6:24 to 26 scratched into them in the old Hebrew letters. They are the oldest known words from the Bible ever found. No piece of any Bible scroll, in any language, is older.

HOW OLD IT IS

Most experts date them to about 600 BC, in the last years before Babylon destroyed Jerusalem in 586 BC. That makes them about 350 to 400 years older than the oldest Dead Sea Scrolls.

HOW BIG

The larger one, KH1, is about 1 inch wide and 4 inches long when unrolled. The smaller one, KH2, is about half an inch wide and 1½ inches long. The silver is about 99 percent pure.

WHERE AND WHEN FOUND

In 1979 Gabriel Barkay was digging old burial caves at Ketef Hinnom, which means the shoulder of Hinnom, a hill just outside Jerusalem's Old City. It looks down on the Valley of Hinnom, where kings of Judah once burned children to Molech, Jeremiah 7:31. A 13 year old volunteer helped break into a pit under a burial bench that a fallen ceiling had sealed. Among more than 1,000 objects inside were the two tiny rolled up scrolls.

UNROLLING THEM

The silver was so thin and brittle that experts at the Israel Museum spent about three years working out how to open them without breaking them. Only then could anyone read what was inside.

WHAT THEY SAY

KH2 asks Yahweh to bless, keep, make His face shine and give peace, a shorter form of Numbers 6:24 to 26. KH1 has the blessing too, and also echoes Deuteronomy 7:9, the great God who keeps covenant and loving devotion with those who love Him and keep His commandments. Both scrolls have God's name, YHWH.

WHY IT MATTERS

Many scholars have argued that the books of Moses were mostly written down after the exile. These scrolls show that at least this blessing, word for word close to the Bible we read today, was already treasured in Jerusalem before the exile. Someone loved it enough to wear it and be buried with it, and the same blessing is still spoken in synagogues and churches today.

WHAT IT DOES NOT PROVE

These are charms with a blessing on them, not a copy of the book of Numbers, so they do not show that the whole book existed in that form.

GOD SPEAKING BLOODLINE OF CHRIST

dedication and presented them before the altar. ¹¹And Yahweh said to Moses, "Each day one leader is to present his offering for the dedication of the altar."

¹²On the first day Nahshon son of Ammi-nadab from the tribe of Judah drew near with his offering. ¹³His offering was one silver platter weighing $3\frac{1}{4}$ pounds, and one silver bowl weighing $1\frac{3}{4}$ pounds, both weighed by the sanctuary standard and filled with fine flour mixed with oil for a grain offering; ¹⁴one gold dish weighing 4 ounces, filled with incense; ¹⁵one young bull, one ram, and one male lamb a year old for a burnt offering; ¹⁶one male goat for a sin offering; ¹⁷and a peace offering of two oxen, five rams, five male goats, and five male lambs a year old. This was the offering of Nahshon son of Ammi-nadab.

¹⁸On the second day Nethanel son of Zuar, the leader of Issachar, drew near. ¹⁹The offering he presented was one silver platter weighing $3\frac{1}{4}$ pounds, and one silver bowl weighing $1\frac{3}{4}$ pounds, both weighed by the sanctuary standard and filled with fine flour mixed with oil for a grain offering; ²⁰one gold dish weighing 4 ounces, filled with incense; ²¹one young bull, one ram, and one male lamb a year old for a burnt offering; ²²one male goat for a sin offering; ²³and a peace offering of two oxen, five rams, five male goats, and five male lambs a year old. This was the offering of Nethanel son of Zuar.

²⁴On the third day Eliab son of Helon, the leader of the Zebulunites, drew near. ²⁵His offering was one silver platter weighing $3\frac{1}{4}$ pounds, and one silver bowl weighing $1\frac{3}{4}$ pounds, both weighed by the sanctuary standard and filled with fine flour mixed with oil for a grain offering; ²⁶one gold dish weighing 4 ounces, filled with incense; ²⁷one young bull, one ram, and one male lamb a year old for a burnt offering; ²⁸one male goat for a sin offering; ²⁹and a peace offering of two oxen, five rams, five male goats, and five male lambs a year old. This was the offering of Eliab son of Helon.

³⁰On the fourth day Elizur son of Shedeur, the leader of the Reubenites, drew near. ³¹His offering was one silver platter weighing $3\frac{1}{4}$ pounds, and one silver bowl weighing $1\frac{3}{4}$ pounds, both weighed by the sanctuary standard and filled with fine flour mixed with oil for a grain offering; ³²one gold dish weighing 4 ounces, filled with incense; ³³one young bull, one ram, and one male lamb a year old for a burnt offering; ³⁴one male goat for a sin offering; ³⁵and a peace offering of two oxen, five rams, five male goats, and five male lambs a year old. This was the offering of Elizur son of Shedeur.

³⁶On the fifth day Shelumiel son of Zurishaddai, the leader of the Simeonites, drew near. ³⁷His offering was one silver platter weighing $3\frac{1}{4}$ pounds, and one silver bowl weighing $1\frac{3}{4}$ pounds, both weighed by the sanctuary standard and filled with fine flour mixed with oil for a grain offering; ³⁸one gold dish weighing 4 ounces, filled with incense; ³⁹one young bull, one ram, and one male lamb a year old for a burnt offering; ⁴⁰one male goat for a sin offering; ⁴¹and a peace offering of two oxen, five rams, five male goats, and five male lambs a year old. This was the offering of Shelumiel son of Zurishaddai.

⁴²On the sixth day Eliasaph son of Deuel, the leader of the Gadites, drew near. ⁴³His offering was one silver platter weighing $3\frac{1}{4}$ pounds, and one silver bowl weighing $1\frac{3}{4}$ pounds, both weighed by the sanctuary standard and filled with fine flour mixed with oil for a grain offering; ⁴⁴one gold dish weighing 4 ounces, filled with incense; ⁴⁵one young bull, one ram, and one male lamb a year old for a burnt offering; ⁴⁶one male goat for a sin offering; ⁴⁷and a peace offering of two oxen, five rams, five male goats, and five male lambs a year old. This was the offering of Eliasaph son of Deuel.

⁴⁸On the seventh day Elishama son of Ammihud, the leader of the Ephraimites, drew near. ⁴⁹His offering was one silver platter weighing $3\frac{1}{4}$ pounds, and one sil-

ver bowl weighing $1\frac{3}{4}$ pounds, both weighed by the sanctuary standard and filled with fine flour mixed with oil for a grain offering; ⁵⁰ one gold dish weighing 4 ounces, filled with incense; ⁵¹ one young bull, one ram, and one male lamb a year old for a burnt offering; ⁵² one male goat for a sin offering; ⁵³ and a peace offering of two oxen, five rams, five male goats, and five male lambs a year old. This was the offering of Elishama son of Ammihud.

⁵⁴ On the eighth day Gamaliel son of Pedahzur, the leader of the Manassites, drew near. ⁵⁵ His offering was one silver platter weighing $3\frac{1}{4}$ pounds, and one silver bowl weighing $1\frac{3}{4}$ pounds, both weighed by the sanctuary standard and filled with fine flour mixed with oil for a grain offering; ⁵⁶ one gold dish weighing 4 ounces, filled with incense; ⁵⁷ one young bull, one ram, and one male lamb a year old for a burnt offering; ⁵⁸ one male goat for a sin offering; ⁵⁹ and a peace offering of two oxen, five rams, five male goats, and five male lambs a year old. This was the offering of Gamaliel son of Pedahzur.

⁶⁰ On the ninth day Abidan son of Gideon, the leader of the Benjamites, drew near. ⁶¹ His offering was one silver platter weighing $3\frac{1}{4}$ pounds, and one silver bowl weighing $1\frac{3}{4}$ pounds, both weighed by the sanctuary standard and filled with fine flour mixed with oil for a grain offering; ⁶² one gold dish weighing 4 ounces, filled with incense; ⁶³ one young bull, one ram, and one male lamb a year old for a burnt offering; ⁶⁴ one male goat for a sin offering; ⁶⁵ and a peace offering of two oxen, five rams, five male goats, and five male lambs a year old. This was the offering of Abidan son of Gideon.

⁶⁶ On the tenth day Ahiezer son of Ammishaddai, the leader of the Danites, drew near. ⁶⁷ His offering was one silver platter weighing $3\frac{1}{4}$ pounds, and one silver bowl weighing $1\frac{3}{4}$ pounds, both weighed by the sanctuary standard and filled with fine flour mixed with oil for a grain offering; ⁶⁸ one gold dish weighing 4 ounces, filled with incense; ⁶⁹ one young bull, one ram,

and one male lamb a year old for a burnt offering; ⁷⁰ one male goat for a sin offering; ⁷¹ and a peace offering of two oxen, five rams, five male goats, and five male lambs a year old. This was the offering of Ahiezer son of Ammishaddai.

⁷² On the eleventh day Pagiel son of Ocran, the leader of the Asherites, drew near. ⁷³ His offering was one silver platter weighing $3\frac{1}{4}$ pounds, and one silver bowl weighing $1\frac{3}{4}$ pounds, both weighed by the sanctuary standard and filled with fine flour mixed with oil for a grain offering; ⁷⁴ one gold dish weighing 4 ounces, filled with incense; ⁷⁵ one young bull, one ram, and one male lamb a year old for a burnt offering; ⁷⁶ one male goat for a sin offering; ⁷⁷ and a peace offering of two oxen, five rams, five male goats, and five male lambs a year old. This was the offering of Pagiel son of Ocran.

⁷⁸ On the twelfth day Ahira son of Enan, the leader of the Naphtalites, drew near.

⁷⁹ His offering was one silver platter weighing $3\frac{1}{4}$ pounds, and one silver bowl weighing $1\frac{3}{4}$ pounds, both weighed by the sanctuary standard and filled with fine flour mixed with oil for a grain offering; ⁸⁰ one gold dish weighing 4 ounces, filled with incense; ⁸¹ one young bull, one ram, and one male lamb a year old for a burnt offering; ⁸² one male goat for a sin offering; ⁸³ and a peace offering of two oxen, five rams, five male goats, and five male lambs a year old. This was the offering of Ahira son of Enan.

⁸⁴ So these were the offerings from the leaders of Israel for the dedication of the altar when it was anointed: twelve silver platters, twelve silver bowls, and twelve gold dishes.

⁸⁵ Each silver platter weighed $3\frac{1}{4}$ pounds, and each silver bowl $1\frac{3}{4}$ pounds. The total weight of the silver articles was 60 pounds, weighed by the sanctuary standard.

⁸⁶ The twelve gold dishes filled with incense weighed 4 ounces each, by the sanctuary standard. The total weight of the gold dishes was 3 pounds.

GOD SPEAKING

⁸⁷ All the livestock for the burnt offering totaled twelve bulls, twelve rams, and twelve male lambs a year old—together with their grain offerings—and twelve male goats for the sin offering.

⁸⁸ All the livestock sacrificed for the peace offering totaled twenty-four bulls, sixty rams, sixty male goats, and sixty male lambs a year old. This was the dedication offering for the altar after it was anointed.

⁸⁹ When Moses entered the Tent of Meeting to speak with Yahweh, he heard the voice speaking to him from between the two cherubim above the mercy seat on the ark of the Testimony. Thus Yahweh spoke to him.

8

CHAPTER 8 IN 30 SECONDS

Aaron sets up the seven lamps of the gold lampstand. Then the Levites are washed, shaved and given to God as a wave offering in place of the firstborn. They start work at twenty five and retire at fifty, but they can still help out. God thought about retirement long before anyone else did.

THE LAMPSTAND // EXODUS 25:31-40; EXODUS 37:17-24

¹ Then Yahweh said to Moses, ² “Speak to Aaron and tell him: ‘When you set up the seven lamps, they are to light the area in front of the lampstand.’”

³ And Aaron did so; he set up the lamps facing toward the front of the lampstand, just as Yahweh had commanded Moses.

⁴ This is how the lampstand was constructed: it was made of hammered gold from its base to its blossoms, fashioned according to the pattern Yahweh had shown Moses.

CLEANSING THE LEVITES

⁵ Again Yahweh spoke to Moses, saying, ⁶ “Take the Levites from among the Israelites and make them ceremonially clean. ⁷ This is what you must do to cleanse them: Sprinkle them with the water of purification. Have them shave their

whole bodies and wash their clothes, and so purify themselves.

⁸ Then have them take a young bull with its grain offering of fine flour mixed with oil, and you are to take a second young bull for a sin offering. ⁹ Bring the Levites before the Tent of Meeting and assemble the whole congregation of Israel. ¹⁰ You are to present the Levites before Yahweh and have the Israelites lay their hands upon them. ¹¹ Aaron is to present the Levites before Yahweh as a wave offering from the sons of Israel, so that they may perform the service of Yahweh. ¹² And the Levites are to lay their hands on the heads of the bulls, and offer to Yahweh one as a sin offering and the other as a burnt offering, to make atonement for the Levites.

¹³ You are to have the Levites stand before Aaron and his sons and then present them before Yahweh as a wave offering. ¹⁴ In this way you shall separate the Levites from the rest of the Israelites, and the Levites will belong to Me. ¹⁵ After you have cleansed them and presented them as a wave offering, they may come to serve at the Tent of Meeting.

¹⁶ For the Levites have been wholly given to Me from among the sons of Israel. I have taken them for Myself in place of all who come first from the womb, the firstborn of all the sons of Israel. ¹⁷ For every firstborn male in Israel is Mine, both man and beast. I set them apart for Myself on the day I struck down all the firstborn in the land of Egypt. ¹⁸ But I have taken the Levites in place of all the firstborn among the sons of Israel. ¹⁹ And I have given the Levites as a gift to Aaron and his sons from among the Israelites, to perform the service for the Israelites at the Tent of Meeting and to make atonement on their behalf, so that no plague will come against the Israelites when they approach the sanctuary.”

²⁰ So Moses, Aaron, and the whole congregation of Israel did with the Levites everything that Yahweh had commanded Moses they should do. ²¹ The Levites purified themselves and washed their clothes,

■ **NUM 7:89 [NOTE]** Chapter 7 is 89 verses, the longest chapter in the five books of Moses. Each tribe's gift gets its own full paragraph, even though all twelve are the same.

MESSIANIC PROPHECIES OLD TESTAMENT QUOTED IN THE NEW GOD SPEAKING

and Aaron presented them as a wave of-fering before Yahweh. Aaron also made atonement for them to cleanse them. ²² After that, the Levites came to perform their service at the Tent of Meeting in the presence of Aaron and his sons. Thus they did with the Levites just as Yahweh had commanded Moses.

RETIREMENT FOR LEVITES

²³ And Yahweh said to Moses, ²⁴ "This ap-plies to the Levites: Men twenty-five years of age or older shall enter to perform the service in the work at the Tent of Meeting. ²⁵ But at the age of fifty, they must retire from performing the work and no longer serve.

²⁶ After that, they may assist their brothers in fulfilling their duties at the Tent of Meeting, but they themselves are not to do the work. This is how you are to assign responsibilities to the Levites."

9

CHAPTER 9 IN 30 SECONDS

Israel keeps the Passover in the wilderness. Some men are unclean from a dead body and ask what to do, so God makes a second Passover a month later. Then the cloud: when it lifts, the camp moves. When it stays, they stay, whether for two days, a month or longer.

THE SECOND PASSOVER // EXODUS 12:1-13

¹ In the first month of the second year after Israel had come out of the land of Egypt, Yahweh spoke to Moses in the Wilderness of Sinai: ² "The Israelites are to observe the Passover at its appointed time. ³ You are to observe it at the appointed time, at twilight on the fourteenth day of this month, in accordance with its statutes and ordinances."

⁴ So Moses told the Israelites to observe the Passover, ⁵ and they did so in the Wilderness of Sinai, at twilight on the fourteenth day of the first month. The Is-raelites did everything just as Yahweh had commanded Moses.

⁶ But there were some men who were unclean due to a dead body, so they could not observe the Passover on that day. And they came before Moses and Aaron that

same day ⁷ and said to Moses, "We are unclean because of a dead body, but why should we be excluded from presenting Yahweh's offering with the other Israelites at the appointed time?"

⁸ "Wait here until I find out what Yahweh commands concerning you," Moses replied.

⁹ Then Yahweh said to Moses, ¹⁰ "Tell the Israelites: 'When any one of you or your descendants is unclean because of a dead body, or is away on a journey, he may still observe the Passover to Yahweh. ¹¹ Such people are to observe it at twilight on the fourteenth day of the second month. They are to eat the lamb, together with unleavened bread and bitter herbs; ¹² they may not leave any of it until morning or break any of its bones. They must observe the Passover according to all its statutes.

¹³ But if a man who is ceremonially clean and is not on a journey still fails to ob-serve the Passover, he must be cut off from his people, because he did not pre-sent Yahweh's offering at its appointed time. That man will bear the conse-quences of his sin.

¹⁴ If a foreigner dwelling among you wants to observe the Passover to Yahweh, he is to do so according to the Passover statute and its ordinances. You are to apply the same statute to both the foreigner and the native of the land."

THE CLOUD ABOVE THE TABERNACLE // EXODUS 40:34-38

¹⁵ On the day that the tabernacle, the Tent of the Testimony, was set up, the cloud covered it and appeared like fire above the tabernacle from evening until morn-ing. ¹⁶ It remained that way continually; the cloud would cover the tabernacle by day, and at night it would appear like fire. ¹⁷ Whenever the cloud was lifted from above the Tent, the Israelites would set out, and wherever the cloud settled, there the Is-raelites would camp. ¹⁸ At Yahweh's com-mand the Israelites set out, and at

■ NUM 9:12 [PROPHECY] Not a bone of Him would be bro-ken → JN 19:31-36 p.-

■ NUM 9:12 [QUOTED] Quoted in the New Testament → JN 19:36 p.-

GOD SPEAKING BLOODLINE OF CHRIST

Yahweh's command they camped. As long as the cloud remained over the tabernacle, they remained encamped.

¹⁹ Even when the cloud lingered over the tabernacle for many days, the Israelites kept Yahweh's charge and did not set out.

²⁰ Sometimes the cloud remained over the tabernacle for only a few days, and they would camp at Yahweh's command and set out at Yahweh's command. ²¹ Sometimes the cloud remained only from evening until morning, and when it lifted in the morning, they would set out. Whether it was by day or by night, when the cloud was taken up, they would set out.

²² Whether the cloud lingered for two days, a month, or longer, the Israelites camped and did not set out as long as the cloud remained over the tabernacle; but when it was lifted, they would set out. ²³ They camped at Yahweh's command, and they set out at Yahweh's command; they carried out Yahweh's charge according to His command through Moses.

10

CHAPTER 10 IN 30 SECONDS

God tells Moses to make two silver trumpets to call the camp and sound the alarm for war. Then, on the twentieth day of the second month, the cloud lifts and Israel finally leaves Mount Sinai. Every time the ark sets out, Moses prays, Rise up, O Yahweh. The road trip begins.

THE TWO SILVER TRUMPETS

¹ Then Yahweh said to Moses, ² "Make two trumpets of hammered silver to be used for calling the congregation and for having the camps set out. ³ When both are sounded, the whole congregation is to assemble before you at the entrance to the Tent of Meeting. ⁴ But if only one is sounded, then the leaders, the heads of the clans of Israel, are to gather before you.

⁵ When you sound short blasts, the camps that lie on the east side are to set out. ⁶ When you sound the short blasts a second time, the camps that lie on the south side are to set out. The blasts are to signal them to set out. ⁷ To convene the assem-

bly, you are to sound long blasts, not short ones. ⁸ The sons of Aaron, the priests, are to sound the trumpets. This shall be a permanent statute for you and the generations to come.

⁹ When you enter into battle in your land against an adversary who attacks you, sound short blasts on the trumpets, and you will be remembered before Yahweh your God and saved from your enemies. ¹⁰ And on your joyous occasions, your appointed feasts, and the beginning of each month, you are to blow the trumpets over your burnt offerings and peace offerings to serve as a reminder for you before your God. I am Yahweh your God."

FROM SINAI TO PARAN

¹¹ On the twentieth day of the second month of the second year, the cloud was lifted from above the tabernacle of the Testimony, ¹² and the Israelites set out from the Wilderness of Sinai, traveling from place to place until the cloud settled in the Wilderness of Paran. ¹³ They set out this first time according to Yahweh's command through Moses.

¹⁴ First, the divisions of the camp of Judah set out under their standard, with Nahshon son of Amminadab in command.

¹⁵ Nethanel son of Zuar was over the division of the tribe of Issachar, ¹⁶ and Eliab son of Helon was over the division of the tribe of Zebulun. ¹⁷ Then the tabernacle was taken down, and the Gershonites and the Merarites set out, transporting it.

¹⁸ Then the divisions of the camp of Reuben set out under their standard, with Elizur son of Shedeur in command. ¹⁹ Shelumiel son of Zurishaddai was over the division of the tribe of Simeon, ²⁰ and Eliashaph son of Deuel was over the division of the tribe of Gad. ²¹ Then the Kohathites set out, transporting the holy objects; the tabernacle was to be set up before their arrival.

²² Next, the divisions of the camp of Ephraim set out under their standard, with Elishama son of Ammihud in command. ²³ Gamaliel son of Pedahzur was over the division of the tribe of Manasseh, ²⁴ and

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Abidan son of Gideoni was over the division of the tribe of Benjamin.

²⁵ Finally, the divisions of the camp of Dan set out under their standard, serving as the rear guard for all units, with Ahiezer son of Ammishaddai in command. ²⁶

Pagiel son of Ocran was over the division of the tribe of Asher, ²⁷ and Ahira son of Enan was over the division of the tribe of Naphtali.

²⁸ This was the order of march for the Israelite divisions as they set out.

²⁹ Then Moses said to Hobab, the son of Moses' father-in-law Reuel the Midianite, "We are setting out for the place of which Yahweh said: 'I will give it to you.' Come with us, and we will treat you well, for Yahweh has promised good things to Israel."

³⁰ "I will not go," Hobab replied. "Instead, I am going back to my own land and my own people."

³¹ "Please do not leave us," Moses said, "since you know where we should camp in the wilderness, and you can serve as our eyes. ³² If you come with us, we will share with you whatever good things Yahweh gives us."

³³ So they set out on a three-day journey from the mountain of Yahweh, with the ark of the covenant of Yahweh traveling ahead of them for those three days to seek a resting place for them. ³⁴ And the cloud of Yahweh was over them by day when they set out from the camp.

³⁵ Whenever the ark set out, Moses would say,

"Rise up, O Yahweh!

May Your enemies be scattered;
may those who hate You flee before
You."

³⁶ And when it came to rest, he would say:

"Return, O Yahweh,
to the countless thousands of Israel."

11

CHAPTER 11 IN 30 SECONDS

Three days in, the complaining starts. Fire burns the edge of the camp. Then the people get sick of manna and cry for meat like they had in Egypt. Moses tells God he cannot carry them alone, so God puts His Spirit on seventy elders. Then God sends so many quail they get sick of it.

THE COMPLAINTS OF THE PEOPLE

¹ Soon the people began to complain about their hardship in the hearing of Yahweh, and when He heard them, His anger was kindled, and fire from Yahweh blazed among them and consumed the outskirts of the camp. ² And the people cried out to Moses, and he prayed to Yahweh, and the fire died down. ³ So that place was called Taberah, because the fire of Yahweh had burned among them.

⁴ Meanwhile, the rabble among them had a strong craving for other food, and again the Israelites wept and said, "Who will feed us meat? ⁵ We remember the fish we ate freely in Egypt, along with the cucumbers, melons, leeks, onions, and garlic. ⁶ But now our appetite is gone; there is nothing to see but this manna!"

⁷ Now the manna resembled coriander seed, and its appearance was like that of gum resin. ⁸ The people walked around and gathered it, ground it on a handmill or crushed it in a mortar, then boiled it in a cooking pot or shaped it into cakes. It tasted like pastry baked with fine oil. ⁹ When the dew fell on the camp at night, the manna would fall with it.

THE COMPLAINT OF MOSES

¹⁰ Then Moses heard the people of family after family weeping at the entrances to their tents, and the anger of Yahweh was kindled greatly, and Moses was also displeased.

¹¹ So Moses asked Yahweh, "Why have You brought this trouble on Your servant? Why have I not found favor in Your sight, that You have laid upon me the burden of all these people? ¹² Did I conceive all these people? Did I give them birth, so that You

NUM 11:1 [MIRACLE] Fire from Yahweh consumed parts of the camp at Taberah

PROPHECIES FULFILLED IN SCRIPTURE MIRACLES GOD SPEAKING

should tell me, 'Carry them in your bosom, as a nurse carries an infant,' to the land that You swore to give their fathers?

¹³ Where can I get meat for all these people? For they keep crying out to me, 'Give us meat to eat!'

¹⁴ I cannot carry all these people by myself; it is too burdensome for me. ¹⁵ If this is how You are going to treat me, please kill me right now—if I have found favor in Your eyes—and let me not see my own wretchedness."

SEVENTY ELDERS ANOINTED

¹⁶ Then Yahweh said to Moses, "Bring Me seventy of the elders of Israel known to you as leaders and officers of the people. Bring them to the Tent of Meeting and have them stand there with you.

¹⁷ And I will come down and speak with you there, and I will take some of the Spirit that is on you and put that Spirit on them. They will help you bear the burden of the people, so that you do not have to bear it by yourself.

¹⁸ And say to the people: Consecrate yourselves for tomorrow, and you will eat meat, because you have cried out in the hearing of Yahweh, saying: 'Who will feed us meat? For we were better off in Egypt!' Therefore Yahweh will give you meat, and you will eat. ¹⁹ You will eat it not for one or two days, nor for five or ten or twenty days, ²⁰ but for a whole month—until it comes out of your nostrils and makes you nauseous—because you have rejected Yahweh, who is among you, and have cried out before Him, saying, 'Why did we ever leave Egypt?'"

²¹ But Moses replied, "Here I am among 600,000 men on foot, yet You say, 'I will give them meat, and they will eat for a month.' ²² If all our flocks and herds were slaughtered for them, would they have enough? Or if all the fish in the sea were caught for them, would they have enough?"

²³ Yahweh answered Moses, "Is Yahweh's arm too short? Now you will see whether or not My word will come to pass."

²⁴ So Moses went out and relayed to the people the words of Yahweh, and he gathered seventy of the elders of the people and had them stand around the tent.

²⁵ Then Yahweh came down in the cloud and spoke to him, and He took some of the Spirit that was on Moses and placed that Spirit on the seventy elders. As the Spirit rested on them, they

prophesied—but they never did so again.

²⁶ Two men, however, had remained in the camp—one named Eldad and the other Medad—and the Spirit rested on them. They were among those listed, but they had not gone out to the tent, and they prophesied in the camp. ²⁷ A young man ran and reported to Moses, "Eldad and Medad are prophesying in the camp."

²⁸ Joshua son of Nun, the attendant to Moses since youth, spoke up and said, "Moses, my lord, stop them!"

²⁹ But Moses replied, "Are you jealous on my account? I wish that all Yahweh's people were prophets and that Yahweh would place His Spirit on them!"

³⁰ Then Moses returned to the camp, along with the elders of Israel.

THE QUAIL AND THE PLAGUE

³¹ Now a wind sent by Yahweh came up, drove in quail from the sea, and brought them near the camp, about three feet above the surface of the ground, for a day's journey in every direction around the camp. ³² All that day and night, and all the next day, the people stayed up gathering the quail. No one gathered less than sixty bushels, and they spread them out all around the camp.

³³ But while the meat was still between their teeth, before it was chewed, the

■ NUM 11:25 [MIRACLE] The Spirit rests on the seventy elders and they prophesy

■ NUM 11:29 [NOTE] Moses wished all of God's people had the Spirit. At Pentecost Peter quoted Joel 2:28 to 29 to show God was pouring out His Spirit on all His people, Acts 2:17 to 18. Many see Moses' wish fulfilled there.

■ NUM 11:31 [MIRACLE] Quail driven by wind, covering camp three feet deep

■ NUM 11:31 [FULFILLS] Israel would eat meat for a whole month ← NUM 11:18–20 p.~

■ NUM 11:18 [PROPHECY] Israel would eat meat for a whole month → NUM 11:31–33 p.~

MIRACLES OLD TESTAMENT QUOTED IN THE NEW GOD SPEAKING

anger of Yahweh burned against the people, and Yahweh struck them with a severe plague.³⁴ So they called that place Kibroth-hattaavah, because there they buried the people who had craved other food.

³⁵ From Kibroth-hattaavah the people moved on to Hazeroth, where they remained for some time.

12

CHAPTER 12 IN 30 SECONDS

Miriam and Aaron criticize Moses for marrying a Cushite woman and ask, Doesn't God speak through us too? God calls all three to the tent and says Moses is different: He speaks to Moses face to face. Miriam turns white with a skin disease, Moses prays for her, and she waits outside the camp seven days.

THE COMPLAINT OF MIRIAM AND AARON

¹ Then Miriam and Aaron criticized Moses because of the Cushite woman he had married, for he had taken a Cushite wife. ² "Does Yahweh speak only through Moses?" they said. "Does He not also speak through us?" And Yahweh heard this.

³ Now Moses was a very humble man, more so than any man on the face of the earth.

⁴ And suddenly Yahweh said to Moses, Aaron, and Miriam, "You three, come out to the Tent of Meeting." So the three went out, ⁵ and Yahweh came down in a pillar of cloud, stood at the entrance to the Tent, and summoned Aaron and Miriam. When both of them had stepped forward, ⁶ He said, "Hear now My words:

If there is a prophet among you, I, Yahweh, will reveal Myself to him in a vision;

I will speak to him in a dream.

⁷ But this is not so with My servant Moses; he is faithful in all My house.

⁸ I speak with him face to face,

■ **NUM 12:3 [NOTE]** Who wrote that Moses was the most humble man on earth? Many think a later prophet or editor added this line. Others say Moses wrote it honestly as a fact, not a brag.

■ **NUM 12:5 [MIRACLE]** Yahweh comes down in the cloud and speaks to Aaron and Miriam

■ **NUM 12:7 [ALLUDED TO]** The New Testament refers to this → HEB 3:2 p. -

clearly and not in riddles; he sees the form of Yahweh.

Why then were you unafraid to speak against My servant Moses?" ⁹ So the anger of Yahweh burned against them, and He departed.

¹⁰ As the cloud lifted from above the Tent, suddenly Miriam became leprous, white as snow. Aaron turned toward her, saw that she was leprous, ¹¹ and said to Moses, "My lord, please do not hold against us this sin we have so foolishly committed. ¹² Please do not let her be like a stillborn infant whose flesh is half consumed when he comes out of his mother's womb."

¹³ So Moses cried out to Yahweh, "O God, please heal her!"

¹⁴ But Yahweh answered Moses, "If her father had but spit in her face, would she not have been in disgrace for seven days? Let her be confined outside the camp for seven days; after that she may be brought back in."

¹⁵ So Miriam was confined outside the camp for seven days, and the people did not move on until she was brought in again. ¹⁶ After that, the people set out from Hazeroth and camped in the Wilderness of Paran.

13

CHAPTER 13 IN 30 SECONDS

Twelve spies explore Canaan for forty days. They come back carrying a cluster of grapes so big it takes two men and a pole. The land is amazing, they say, but the people are giants and we looked like grasshoppers. Caleb says, We can do this. Ten spies say, No way.

THE SPIES EXPLORE CANAAN // DEUTERONOMY 1:19–25

¹ And Yahweh said to Moses, ² "Send out for yourself men to spy out the land of Canaan, which I am giving to the Israelites. From each of their fathers' tribes send one man who is a leader among them."

■ **NUM 12:7 [QUOTED]** Quoted in the New Testament → HEB 3:5 p. -

■ **NUM 12:9 [MIRACLE]** Miriam struck with leprosy for speaking against Moses; healed

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³ So at the command of Yahweh, Moses sent them out from the Wilderness of Paran. All the men were leaders of the Israelites, ⁴ and these were their names:

From the tribe of Reuben, Shammua son of Zaccur;

⁵ from the tribe of Simeon, Shaphat son of Hori;

⁶ from the tribe of Judah, Caleb son of Jephunneh;

⁷ from the tribe of Issachar, Igal son of Joseph;

⁸ from the tribe of Ephraim, Hoshea son of Nun;

⁹ from the tribe of Benjamin, Palti son of Raphu;

¹⁰ from the tribe of Zebulun, Gaddiel son of Sodi;

¹¹ from the tribe of Manasseh (a tribe of Joseph), Gaddi son of Susi;

¹² from the tribe of Dan, Ammiel son of Gemalli;

¹³ from the tribe of Asher, Sethur son of Michael;

¹⁴ from the tribe of Naphtali, Nahbi son of Vophsi;

¹⁵ and from the tribe of Gad, Geuel son of Machi.

¹⁶ These were the names of the men Moses sent to spy out the land; and Moses gave to Hoshea son of Nun the name Joshua.

¹⁷ When Moses sent them to spy out the land of Canaan, he told them, "Go up through the Negev and into the hill country. ¹⁸ See what the land is like and whether its people are strong or weak, few or many. ¹⁹ Is the land where they live good or bad? Are the cities where they dwell open camps or fortifications? ²⁰ Is the soil fertile or unproductive? Are there trees in it or not? Be courageous and bring back some of the fruit of the land." (It was the season for the first ripe grapes.)

²¹ So they went up and spied out the land from the Wilderness of Zin as far as Rehob, toward Lebo-hamath. ²² They went up through the Negev and came to Hebron, where Ahiman, Sheshai, and Talmai, the descendants of Anak, dwelled. It had been built seven years before Zoan in Egypt.

²³ When they came to the Valley of Eshcol, they cut down a branch with a single cluster of grapes, which they carried on a pole between two men. They also took some pomegranates and figs. ²⁴ Because of the cluster of grapes the Israelites cut there, that place was called the Valley of Eshcol.

THE REPORTS OF THE SPIES

²⁵ After forty days the men returned from spying out the land, ²⁶ and they went back to Moses, Aaron, and the whole congregation of Israel in the Wilderness of Paran at Kadesh. They brought back a report for the whole congregation and showed them the fruit of the land.

²⁷ And they gave this account to Moses: "We went into the land to which you sent us, and indeed, it is flowing with milk and honey. Here is some of its fruit! ²⁸ Nevertheless, the people living in the land are strong, and the cities are large and fortified. We even saw the descendants of Anak there. ²⁹ The Amalekites live in the land of the Negev; the Hittites, Jebusites, and Amorites live in the hill country; and the Canaanites live by the sea and along the Jordan."

³⁰ Then Caleb quieted the people before Moses and said, "We must go up and take possession of the land, for we can certainly conquer it!"

³¹ But the men who had gone up with him replied, "We cannot go up against the people, for they are stronger than we are!"

³² So they gave the Israelites a bad report about the land that they had spied out:

■ **NUM 13:16 [NOTE] JOSHUA'S NEW NAME.** Hoshea means salvation. Moses adds part of God's name and makes it Yehoshua, Yahweh saves. A short form of that name is Yeshua, the Hebrew name of Jesus. In Greek, Joshua and Jesus are the same word.

■ **NUM 13:22 [DEMONIC]** Ahiman, Sheshai, and Talmai, the descendants of Anak, live at Hebron.

■ **NUM 13:26 [FIELD NOTES]** Most scholars place Kadesh at an oasis in northern Sinai. See the Kadesh Barnea Field Notes page.

■ **NUM 13:28 [DEMONIC]** The spies report they saw the descendants of Anak

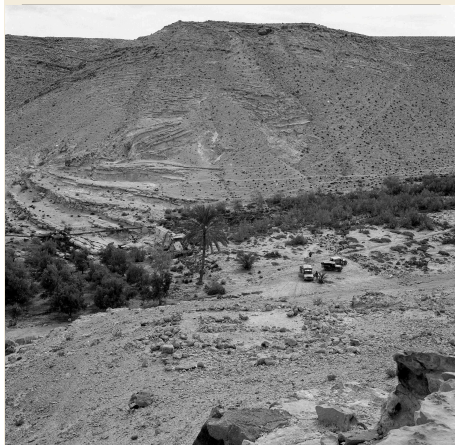
DEMONIC

"The land we explored devours its inhabitants, and all the people we saw there are great in stature.³³ We even saw the Nephilim there—the descendants of Anak that come from the Nephilim! We seemed like grasshoppers in our own sight, and we must have seemed the same to them!"

FIELD NOTES · ARCHAEOLOGY · CONFIDENCE:
MEDIUM, NOTHING FOUND FROM MOSES' TIME

KADESH BARNEA

NUMBERS 13:26 · 20:1 · 20:14 · 33:36 · DEUTERONOMY
2:14



The oasis at Ein el Qudeirat in northern Sinai, with the slope of the ancient mound in front. Photo Beno Rothenberg, 1967, Meitar Collection, National Library of Israel, CC BY 4.0.

WHAT IT IS

Kadesh was Israel's main camp in the wilderness. The spies reported there, Miriam died there, and Moses struck the rock nearby. Most scholars place it at Tell el Qudeirat, a mound next to Ein el Qudeirat, the richest spring and oasis in northern Sinai, in Egypt today.

HOW OLD IT IS

The ruins on the mound are three forts, one on top of another, from the 900s BC to 586 BC, the days of the kings of Judah. That is centuries after Moses.

WHERE AND WHEN FOUND

Explorers first pointed to a smaller spring nearby, Ein Qedeis, in the 1840s. In 1914 Leonard Woolley and T. E. Lawrence, later famous as Lawrence of Arabia, surveyed the area and chose Ein

el Qudeirat because it has much more water. Moshe Dothan dug there in 1956, and Rudolph Cohen dug ten seasons from 1976 to 1982.

WHAT WAS FOUND

An oval fort, then a fort with towers, then a big fort with double walls, burned about 586 BC. Pieces of pottery with Hebrew writing were found, including one with Egyptian number signs and Hebrew weights. Some pottery may go back to about the 1100s BC.

WHERE IT IS TODAY

The site is in the Sinai, part of Egypt. Digging stopped in 1982 after Israel returned the Sinai under the peace treaty.

THE BIG DEBATE

Cohen himself asked where the remains from the time of Moses were. Nothing that old has been found. Some say Kadesh was somewhere else, like Ein Qedeis or near Petra. Some date the Exodus later, closer to the oldest pottery. Others say a camp of tents leaves almost no trace.

WHAT IT CONFIRMS

The best water in northern Sinai is right where Numbers puts Israel's main camp, on the edge of Canaan.

WHAT IT DOES NOT PROVE

No sign or inscription names the place, and nothing has been found from Israel's forty years in the wilderness.

14

CHAPTER 14 IN 30 SECONDS

The people cry all night and talk about picking a new leader to take them back to Egypt. Joshua and Caleb beg them not to rebel. God is ready to wipe them out, but Moses prays for them. God forgives, but that generation will wander forty years and die in the wilderness. Then they attack anyway and lose.

ISRAEL'S REBELLION // DEUTERONOMY 1:26–33

¹Then the whole congregation lifted up their voices and cried out, and that night the people wept. ²All the Israelites grumbled against Moses and Aaron, and the whole congregation said to them, "If only we had died in the land of Egypt, or if only we had died in this wilderness!" ³Why is

NUM 13:32 [DEMONIC] The spies report Nephilim in Canaan — sons of Anak

PROPHECIES FULFILLED IN SCRIPTURE DEMONIC GOD SPEAKING

Yahweh bringing us into this land to fall by the sword? Our wives and children will become plunder. Would it not be better for us to go back to Egypt?"

⁴ So they said to one another, "Let us appoint a leader and return to Egypt."

⁵ Then Moses and Aaron fell facedown before the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel.

⁶ Joshua son of Nun and Caleb son of Jephunneh, who were among those who had spied out the land, tore their clothes ⁷ and said to the whole congregation of Israel, "The land we passed through and explored is an exceedingly good land. ⁸ If Yahweh delights in us, He will bring us into this land, a land flowing with milk and honey, and He will give it to us. ⁹ Only do not rebel against Yahweh, and do not be afraid of the people of the land, for they will be like bread for us. Their protection has been removed, and Yahweh is with us. Do not be afraid of them!"

¹⁰ But the whole congregation threatened to stone Joshua and Caleb.

Then the glory of Yahweh appeared to all the Israelites at the Tent of Meeting. ¹¹ And Yahweh said to Moses, "How long will this people treat Me with contempt? How long will they refuse to believe in Me, despite all the signs I have performed among them? ¹² I will strike them with a plague and destroy them—and I will make you into a nation greater and mightier than they are."

MOSES INTERCEDES FOR ISRAEL

¹³ But Moses said to Yahweh, "The Egyptians will hear of it, for by Your strength You brought this people from among them. ¹⁴ And they will tell it to the inhabitants of this land. They have already heard that You, O Yahweh, are in the midst of this people, that You, O Yahweh, have been seen face to face, that Your cloud stands over them, and that You go before them in a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night.

¹⁵ If You kill this people as one man, the nations who have heard of Your fame will

say, ¹⁶ 'Because Yahweh was unable to bring this people into the land He swore to give them, He has slaughtered them in the wilderness.'

¹⁷ So now I pray, may the power of my Lord be magnified, just as You have declared: ¹⁸ 'Yahweh is slow to anger and abounding in loving devotion, forgiving iniquity and transgression. Yet He will by no means leave the guilty unpunished; He will visit the iniquity of the fathers upon their children to the third and fourth generation.'

¹⁹ Pardon, I pray, the iniquity of this people, in keeping with the greatness of Your loving devotion, just as You have forgiven them ever since they left Egypt."

GOD'S FORGIVENESS AND JUDGMENT //

DEUTERONOMY 1:34-40

²⁰ "I have pardoned them as you requested," Yahweh replied. ²¹ "Yet as surely as I live and as surely as the whole earth is filled with the glory of Yahweh, ²² not one of the men who have seen My glory and the signs I performed in Egypt and in the wilderness—yet have tested Me and disobeyed Me these ten times— ²³ not one will ever see the land that I swore to give their fathers. None of those who have treated Me with contempt will see it.

²⁴ But because My servant Caleb has a different spirit and has followed Me wholeheartedly, I will bring him into the land he has entered, and his descendants will inherit it.

²⁵ Now since the Amalekites and Canaanites are living in the valleys, turn back tomorrow and head for the wilderness along the route to the Red Sea."

²⁶ Then Yahweh said to Moses and Aaron,

²⁷ "How long will this wicked congregation grumble against Me? I have heard the complaints that the Israelites are making against Me. ²⁸ So tell them: As surely as I live, declares Yahweh, I will do to you exactly as I heard you say. ²⁹ Your bodies will fall in this wilderness—all who were num-

NUM 14:18 [DEMONIC] Iniquity visited to third and fourth generation reaffirmed

NUM 14:24 [PROPHECY] Caleb would enter the land and his descendants would inherit it → JOSH 14:13-14 p.-

PROPHECIES FULFILLED IN SCRIPTURE **GOD SPEAKING**

bered in the census, everyone twenty years of age or older—because you have grumbled against Me.

³⁰ Surely none of you will enter the land in which I swore to settle you, except Caleb son of Jephunneh and Joshua son of Nun. ³¹ But I will bring your children, whom you said would become plunder, into the land you have rejected—and they will enjoy it. ³² As for you, however, your bodies will fall in this wilderness.

³³ Your children will be shepherds in the wilderness for forty years, and they will suffer for your unfaithfulness until the last of your bodies lies in the wilderness. ³⁴ In keeping with the forty days you spied out the land, you shall bear your guilt forty years—a year for each day—and you will experience My alienation.

³⁵ I, Yahweh, have spoken, and I will surely do these things to this entire wicked congregation, which has conspired against Me. They will meet their end in the wilderness, and there they will die."

THE PLAGUE ON THE TEN SPIES

³⁶ So the men Moses had sent to spy out the land, who had returned and made the whole congregation grumble against him by bringing out a bad report about the land—³⁷ those men who had brought out the bad report about the land—were struck down by a plague before Yahweh.

³⁸ Of those men who had gone to spy out the land, only Joshua son of Nun and Caleb son of Jephunneh remained alive.

³⁹ And when Moses relayed these words to all the Israelites, the people mourned bitterly.

THE DEFEAT AT HORMAH // DEUTERONOMY 1:41–46

⁴⁰ Early the next morning they got up and went up toward the ridge of the hill country. "We have indeed sinned," they said, "but we will go to the place Yahweh has promised."

⁴¹ But Moses said, "Why are you transgressing the commandment of Yahweh?

This will not succeed! ⁴² Do not go up, lest you be struck down by your enemies, because Yahweh is not among you. ⁴³ For there the Amalekites and Canaanites will face you, and you will fall by the sword. Because you have turned away from Yahweh, He will not be with you."

⁴⁴ But they dared to go up to the ridge of the hill country, though neither Moses nor the ark of the covenant of Yahweh moved from the camp. ⁴⁵ Then the Amalekites and Canaanites who lived in that part of the hill country came down, attacked them, and routed them all the way to Hormah.

15

CHAPTER 15 IN 30 SECONDS

Rules for offerings once they are in the land, and what to do about sins nobody meant to commit. A man gathering sticks on the Sabbath is put to death. Then God tells them to wear tassels with a blue cord on their clothes, so every time they look down, they remember His commands.

LAWS ABOUT OFFERINGS

¹ Then Yahweh said to Moses, ² "Speak to the Israelites and tell them: After you enter the land that I am giving you as a home ³ and you present a food offering to Yahweh from the herd or flock to produce a pleasing aroma to Yahweh—either a burnt offering or a sacrifice, for a special vow or freewill offering or appointed feast—⁴

then the one presenting his offering to Yahweh shall also present a grain offering of two quarts of fine flour mixed with a quart of olive oil. ⁵ With the burnt offering or sacrifice of each lamb, you are to prepare a quart of wine as a drink offering.

⁶ With a ram you are to prepare a grain offering of four quarts of fine flour mixed with a third of a gallon of olive oil, ⁷ and a third of a gallon of wine as a drink offering, a pleasing aroma to Yahweh.

⁸ When you prepare a young bull as a burnt offering or sacrifice to fulfill a vow or as a peace offering to Yahweh, ⁹ pre-

■ **NUM 14:28 [PROPHECY]** That generation would die in the wilderness over 40 years → NUM 26:64–65; JOSH 14:6–15 p.–

■ **NUM 14:29 [ALLUDE TO]** The New Testament refers to this → JUDE 1:5 p.–

■ **NUM 14:42 [PROPHECY]** If they went up without God they would fall by the sword → NUM 14:45 p.–

■ **NUM 14:45 [FULFILLS]** If they went up without God they would fall by the sword ← NUM 14:42–43 p.–

GOD SPEAKING

sent with the bull a grain offering of six quarts of fine flour mixed with two quarts of olive oil. ¹⁰ Also present two quarts of wine as a drink offering. It is a food offering, a pleasing aroma to Yahweh. ¹¹ This is to be done for each bull, ram, lamb, or goat. ¹² This is how you must prepare each one, no matter how many.

¹³ Everyone who is native-born shall prepare these things in this way when he presents a food offering as a pleasing aroma to Yahweh. ¹⁴ And for the generations to come, if a foreigner residing with you or someone else among you wants to prepare a food offering as a pleasing aroma to Yahweh, he is to do exactly as you do. ¹⁵ The assembly is to have the same statute both for you and for the foreign resident; it is a permanent statute for the generations to come. You and the foreigner shall be the same before Yahweh.

¹⁶ The same law and the same ordinance will apply both to you and to the foreigner residing with you."

¹⁷ Then Yahweh said to Moses, ¹⁸ "Speak to the Israelites and tell them: When you enter the land to which I am bringing you ¹⁹ and you eat the food of the land, you shall lift up an offering to Yahweh. ²⁰ From the first of your dough, you are to lift up a cake as a contribution; offer it just like an offering from the threshing floor. ²¹ Throughout your generations, you are to give Yahweh an offering from the first of your dough.

OFFERINGS FOR UNINTENTIONAL SINS

²² Now if you stray unintentionally and do not obey all these commandments that Yahweh has spoken to Moses— ²³ all that Yahweh has commanded you through Moses from the day Yahweh gave them and continuing through the generations to come— ²⁴ and if it was done unintentionally without the knowledge of the congregation, then the whole congregation is to prepare one young bull as a burnt offering, a pleasing aroma to Yahweh, with its grain offering and drink offering according to the regulation, and one male goat as a sin offering.

²⁵ The priest is to make atonement for the whole congregation of Israel, so that they may be forgiven; for the sin was unintentional and they have brought to Yahweh a food offering and a sin offering, presented before Yahweh for their unintentional sin.

²⁶ Then the whole congregation of Israel and the foreigners residing among them will be forgiven, since it happened to all the people unintentionally.

²⁷ Also, if one person sins unintentionally, he is to present a year-old female goat as a sin offering. ²⁸ And the priest shall make atonement before Yahweh on behalf of the person who erred by sinning unintentionally; and when atonement has been made for him, he will be forgiven. ²⁹ You shall have the same law for the one who acts in error, whether he is a native-born Israelite or a foreigner residing among you.

³⁰ But the person who sins defiantly, whether a native or foreigner, blasphemes Yahweh. That person shall be cut off from among his people. ³¹ He shall certainly be cut off, because he has despised the word of Yahweh and broken His commandment; his guilt remains on him."

A SABBATH-BREAKER STONED // EXODUS 31:12–17

³² While the Israelites were in the wilderness, a man was found gathering wood on the Sabbath day. ³³ Those who found the man gathering wood brought him to Moses, Aaron, and the whole congregation, ³⁴ and because it had not been declared what should be done to him, they placed him in custody.

³⁵ And Yahweh said to Moses, "The man must surely be put to death. The whole congregation is to stone him outside the camp."

³⁶ So the whole congregation took the man outside the camp and stoned him to death, as Yahweh had commanded Moses.

THE LAW OF TASSELS

³⁷ And Yahweh said to Moses, ³⁸ "Speak to the Israelites and tell them that throughout the generations to come they are to make

THE HEART OLD TESTAMENT QUOTED IN THE NEW NOTABLE GOD SPEAKING

for themselves tassels for the corners of their garments, with a blue cord on each tassel. ³⁹ These will serve as tassels for you to look at, so that you may remember all the commandments of Yahweh, that you may obey them and not prostitute yourselves by following your own heart and your own eyes.

⁴⁰ Then you will remember and obey all My commandments, and you will be holy to your God. ⁴¹ I am Yahweh your God who brought you out of the land of Egypt to be your God. I am Yahweh your God."

16

CHAPTER 16 IN 30 SECONDS

Korah, a Levite, and Dathan and Abiram from Reuben lead 250 leaders against Moses and Aaron. Moses says, Tomorrow God will show who is His. The ground opens and swallows the rebels, and fire burns up the 250. The next day the people blame Moses, and a plague stops only when Aaron stands between the living and the dead.

KORAH'S REBELLION

¹ Now Korah son of Izhar, the son of Kohath son of Levi, along with some Reubenites—Dathan and Abiram, sons of Eliab, and On son of Peleth—conducted ² a rebellion against Moses, along with 250 men of Israel renowned as leaders of the congregation and representatives in the assembly. ³ They came together against Moses and Aaron and told them, "You have taken too much upon yourselves! For everyone in the entire congregation is holy, and Yahweh is in their midst. Why then do you exalt yourselves above the assembly of Yahweh?"

⁴ When Moses heard this, he fell face-down. ⁵ Then he said to Korah and all his followers, "Tomorrow morning Yahweh will reveal who belongs to Him and who is holy, and He will bring that person near to Himself. The one He chooses He will bring near to Himself."

⁶ You, Korah, and all your followers are to do as follows: Take censers, ⁷ and tomorrow you are to place fire and incense in them in the presence of Yahweh. Then the man Yahweh chooses will be the one who is holy. It is you sons of Levi who have taken too much upon yourselves!"

⁸ Moses also said to Korah, "Now listen, you sons of Levi! ⁹ Is it not enough for you that the God of Israel has separated you from the congregation of Israel and brought you near to Himself to perform the work at Yahweh's tabernacle, and to stand before the congregation to minister to them? ¹⁰ He has brought you near, you and all your fellow Levites, but you are seeking the priesthood as well. ¹¹ Therefore, it is you and all your followers who have conspired against Yahweh! As for Aaron, who is he that you should grumble against him?"

¹² Then Moses summoned Dathan and Abiram, the sons of Eliab, but they said, "We will not come! ¹³ Is it not enough that you have brought us up out of a land flowing with milk and honey to kill us in the wilderness? Must you also appoint yourself as ruler over us? ¹⁴ Moreover, you have not brought us into a land flowing with milk and honey or given us an inheritance of fields and vineyards. Will you gouge out the eyes of these men? No, we will not come!"

¹⁵ Then Moses became very angry and said to Yahweh, "Do not regard their offering. I have not taken one donkey from them or mistreated a single one of them."

¹⁶ And Moses said to Korah, "You and all your followers are to appear before Yahweh tomorrow—you and they and Aaron. ¹⁷ Each man is to take his censer, place incense in it, and present it before Yahweh—250 censers. You and Aaron are to present your censers as well."

¹⁸ So each man took his censer, put fire and incense in it, and stood with Moses and Aaron at the entrance to the Tent of Meeting. ¹⁹ When Korah had gathered his

■ NUM 15:39 [HEART] The tassels were a reminder not to chase whatever your own heart and eyes want. God knew the heart can lead you astray.

■ NUM 16:1 [ALLUDED TO] The New Testament refers to this → JUDE 1:11 p. 7

■ NUM 16:1 [NOTABLE] Judgment on those who claim priestly authority without appointment; the censers were then hammered into a bronze covering for the altar as a memorial

■ NUM 16:5 [QUOTED] Quoted in the New Testament → 2TI 2:19 p. 7

PROPHECIES FULFILLED IN SCRIPTURE MIRACLES NOTABLE GOD SPEAKING

whole assembly against them at the entrance to the Tent of Meeting, the glory of Yahweh appeared to the whole congregation.

²⁰ And Yahweh said to Moses and Aaron,

²¹ "Separate yourselves from this congregation so that I may consume them in an instant."

²² But Moses and Aaron fell facedown and said, "O God, the God of the spirits of all flesh, when one man sins, will You be angry with the whole congregation?"

MOSES SEPARATES THE PEOPLE

²³ Then Yahweh said to Moses, ²⁴ "Tell the congregation to move away from the dwellings of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram."

²⁵ So Moses got up and went to Dathan and Abiram, and the elders of Israel followed him. ²⁶ And he warned the congregation, "Move away now from the tents of these wicked men. Do not touch anything that belongs to them, or you will be swept away because of all their sins."

²⁷ So they moved away from the dwellings of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram. Meanwhile, Dathan and Abiram had come out and stood at the entrances to their tents with their wives and children and infants.

THE EARTH SWALLOWS KORAH

²⁸ Then Moses said, "This is how you will know that Yahweh has sent me to do all these things, for it was not my own doing:

²⁹ If these men die a natural death, or if they suffer the fate of all men, then Yahweh has not sent me. ³⁰ But if Yahweh brings about something unprecedented, and the earth opens its mouth and swallows them and all that belongs to them so that they go down alive into Sheol, then you will know that these men have treated Yahweh with contempt."

³¹ As soon as Moses had finished saying all this, the ground beneath them split open, ³² and the earth opened its mouth

and swallowed them and their households—all Korah's men and all their possessions. ³³ They went down alive into Sheol with all they owned. The earth closed over them, and they vanished from the assembly.

³⁴ At their cries, all the people of Israel who were around them fled, saying, "The earth may swallow us too!" ³⁵ And fire came forth from Yahweh and consumed the 250 men who were offering the incense.

THE CENSERS RESERVED FOR HOLY USE

³⁶ Then Yahweh said to Moses, ³⁷ "Tell Eleazar son of Aaron the priest to remove the censers from the flames and to scatter the coals far away, because the censers are holy. ³⁸ As for the censers of those who sinned at the cost of their own lives, hammer them into sheets to overlay the altar, for these were presented before Yahweh, and so have become holy. They will serve as a sign to the Israelites."

³⁹ So Eleazar the priest took the bronze censers brought by those who had been burned up, and he had them hammered out to overlay the altar, ⁴⁰ just as Yahweh commanded him through Moses. This was to be a reminder to the Israelites that no outsider who is not a descendant of Aaron should approach to offer incense before Yahweh, lest he become like Korah and his followers.

MURMURING AND PLAGUE // 1 CORINTHIANS 10:1-13

⁴¹ The next day the whole congregation of Israel grumbled against Moses and Aaron, saying, "You have killed Yahweh's people!" ⁴² But when the congregation gathered against them, Moses and Aaron turned toward the Tent of Meeting, and suddenly the cloud covered it and the glory of Yahweh appeared.

⁴³ Then Moses and Aaron went to the front of the Tent of Meeting, ⁴⁴ and Yahweh said to Moses, ⁴⁵ "Get away from this congregation so that I may consume them in an instant." And Moses and Aaron fell facedown.

■ NUM 16:28 [PROPHECY] The earth would open and swallow Korah and his men → NUM 16:31-33 p.-

■ NUM 16:31 [MIRACLE] Earth opened and swallowed Korah and his company; fire consumed 250

■ NUM 16:31 [ALLUDED TO] The New Testament refers to this → JUDE 1:11 p.-

■ NUM 16:31 [FULFILLS] The earth would open and swallow Korah and his men ← NUM 16:28-30 p.-

PROPHECIES FULFILLED IN SCRIPTURE MIRACLES GOD SPEAKING

⁴⁶ Moses said to Aaron, "Take your censer, place fire from the altar in it, and add incense. Go quickly to the congregation and make atonement for them, because wrath has come out from Yahweh; the plague has begun."

⁴⁷ So Aaron took the censer as Moses had ordered and ran into the midst of the assembly. And seeing that the plague had begun among the people, he offered the incense and made atonement for the people. ⁴⁸ He stood between the living and the dead, and the plague was halted. ⁴⁹ But those who died from the plague numbered 14,700, in addition to those who had died on account of Korah.

⁵⁰ Then Aaron returned to Moses at the entrance to the Tent of Meeting, since the plague had been halted.

17

CHAPTER 17 IN 30 SECONDS

To end the argument about who God chose, each tribe puts a staff in the tent overnight. In the morning Aaron's staff has sprouted, budded, bloomed and grown ripe almonds. It is kept in front of the ark as a warning to rebels. Case closed.

AARON'S STAFF BUDS

¹ And Yahweh said to Moses, ² "Speak to the Israelites and take from them twelve staffs, one from the leader of each tribe. Write each man's name on his staff, ³ and write Aaron's name on the staff of Levi, because there must be one staff for the head of each tribe. ⁴ Place the staffs in the Tent of Meeting in front of the Testimony, where I meet with you. ⁵ The staff belonging to the man I choose will sprout, and I will rid Myself of the constant grumbling of the Israelites against you."

⁶ So Moses spoke to the Israelites, and each of their leaders gave him a staff—one for each of the leaders of their tribes, twelve staffs in all. And Aaron's staff was among them. ⁷ Then Moses

placed the staffs before Yahweh in the Tent of the Testimony.

⁸ The next day Moses entered the Tent of the Testimony and saw that Aaron's staff, representing the house of Levi, had sprouted, put forth buds, blossomed, and produced almonds. ⁹ Then Moses brought out all the staffs from Yahweh's presence to all the Israelites. They saw them, and each man took his own staff.

¹⁰ Yahweh said to Moses, "Put Aaron's staff back in front of the Testimony, to be kept as a sign for the rebellious, so that you may put an end to their grumbling against Me, lest they die." ¹¹ So Moses did as Yahweh had commanded him.

¹² Then the Israelites declared to Moses, "Look, we are perishing! We are lost; we are all lost! ¹³ Anyone who comes near the tabernacle of Yahweh will die. Are we all going to perish?"

18

CHAPTER 18 IN 30 SECONDS

The priests and Levites guard the tent so nobody else dies coming too close. They get no land. Instead God says, I am your inheritance, and they live on the tithes of Israel. Even the Levites have to give a tenth of what they get. Nobody gets out of tithing.

DUTIES OF PRIESTS AND LEVITES

¹ So Yahweh said to Aaron, "You and your sons and your father's house must bear the iniquity involving the sanctuary. And you and your sons alone must bear the iniquity involving your priesthood. ² But bring with you also your brothers from the tribe of Levi, the tribe of your father, that they may join you and assist you and your sons before the Tent of the Testimony. ³ And they shall attend to your duties and to all the duties of the Tent; but they must not come near to the furnishings of the sanctuary or the altar, or both they and you will die. ⁴ They are to join you and attend to the duties of the Tent of Meeting,

■ NUM 16:46 [MIRACLE] Aaron stands between the living and the dead and the plague stops

■ NUM 17:5 [PROPHECY] The staff of the man God chose would sprout → NUM 17:8; HEB 9:4 p.--

■ NUM 17:8 [MIRACLE] Aaron's rod budded, blossomed, yielded almonds overnight

■ NUM 17:8 [FULFILLS] The staff of the man God chose would sprout ← NUM 17:5 p.--

GOD SPEAKING

doing all the work at the Tent; but no outsider may come near you.

⁵ And you shall attend to the duties of the sanctuary and of the altar, so that wrath may not fall on the Israelites again. ⁶ Behold, I Myself have selected your fellow Levites from the Israelites as a gift to you, dedicated to Yahweh to perform the service for the Tent of Meeting. ⁷ But only you and your sons shall attend to your priesthood for everything concerning the altar and what is inside the veil, and you are to perform that service. I am giving you the work of the priesthood as a gift, but any outsider who comes near the sanctuary must be put to death."

OFFERINGS FOR PRIESTS AND LEVITES

⁸ Then Yahweh said to Aaron, "Behold, I have put you in charge of My offerings. As for all the sacred offerings of the Israelites, I have given them to you and your sons as a portion and a permanent statute. ⁹ A portion of the most holy offerings reserved from the fire will be yours. From all the offerings they render to Me as most holy offerings, whether grain offerings or sin offerings or guilt offerings, that part belongs to you and your sons. ¹⁰ You are to eat it as a most holy offering, and every male may eat it. You shall regard it as holy.

¹¹ And this is yours as well: the offering of their gifts, along with all the wave offerings of the Israelites. I have given this to you and your sons and daughters as a permanent statute. Every ceremonially clean person in your household may eat it.

¹² I give you all the freshest olive oil and all the finest new wine and grain that the Israelites give to Yahweh as their firstfruits.

¹³ The firstfruits of everything in their land that they bring to Yahweh will belong to you. Every ceremonially clean person in your household may eat them.

¹⁴ Every devoted thing in Israel belongs to you. ¹⁵ The firstborn of every womb, whether man or beast, that is offered to Yahweh belongs to you. But you must surely redeem every firstborn son and every firstborn male of unclean animals. ¹⁶

You are to pay the redemption price for a month-old male according to your valuation: 2 ounces of silver, weighed by the sanctuary standard.

¹⁷ But you must not redeem the firstborn of an ox, a sheep, or a goat; they are holy. You are to splatter their blood on the altar and burn their fat as a food offering, a pleasing aroma to Yahweh. ¹⁸ And their meat belongs to you, just as the breast and right thigh of the wave offering belong to you.

¹⁹ All the holy offerings that the Israelites present to Yahweh I give to you and to your sons and daughters as a permanent statute. It is a permanent covenant of salt before Yahweh for you and your offspring."

²⁰ Then Yahweh said to Aaron, "You will have no inheritance in their land, nor will you have any portion among them. I am your portion and your inheritance among the Israelites.

²¹ Behold, I have given to the Levites all the tithes in Israel as an inheritance in return for the work they do, the service of the Tent of Meeting. ²² No longer may the Israelites come near to the Tent of Meeting, or they will incur guilt and die.

²³ The Levites are to perform the work of the Tent of Meeting, and they must bear their iniquity. This is a permanent statute for the generations to come. The Levites will not receive an inheritance among the Israelites. ²⁴ For I have given to the Levites as their inheritance the tithe that the Israelites present to Yahweh as a contribution. That is why I told them that they would not receive an inheritance among the Israelites."

²⁵ And Yahweh instructed Moses, ²⁶

"Speak to the Levites and tell them: 'When you receive from the Israelites the tithe that I have given you as your inheritance, you must present part of it as an offering to Yahweh—a tithe of the tithe. ²⁷ Your offering will be reckoned to you as grain from the threshing floor or juice from the winepress. ²⁸ So you are to present an of-

MESSIANIC FORESHADOW GOD SPEAKING

fering to Yahweh from all the tithes you receive from the Israelites, and from these you are to give Yahweh's offering to Aaron the priest. ²⁹ You must present the offering due Yahweh from all the best of every gift, the holiest part of it.'

³⁰ Therefore say to the Levites, 'When you have presented the best part, it will be reckoned to you as the produce of the threshing floor or winepress. ³¹ And you and your households may eat the rest of it anywhere; it is the compensation for your work at the Tent of Meeting. ³² Once you have presented the best part of it, you will not incur guilt because of it. But you must not defile the sacred offerings of the Israelites, or else you will die.'"

19

CHAPTER 19 IN 30 SECONDS

The red heifer: a perfect red cow with no defect, never yoked, is burned outside the camp with cedar, hyssop and red yarn. Its ashes are mixed with water to make clean anyone who touched a dead body. Even the priest who does it becomes unclean. It is one of the strangest laws in the Bible.

THE RED HEIFER

¹ Then Yahweh said to Moses and Aaron, ² "This is the statute of the law that Yahweh has commanded: Instruct the Israelites to bring you an unblemished red heifer that has no defect and has never been placed under a yoke. ³ Give it to Eleazar the priest, and he will have it brought outside the camp and slaughtered in his presence.

⁴ Eleazar the priest is to take some of its blood on his finger and sprinkle it seven times toward the front of the Tent of Meeting. ⁵ Then the heifer must be burned in his sight. Its hide, its flesh, and its blood are to be burned, along with its dung. ⁶ The priest is to take cedar wood, hyssop, and scarlet wool and throw them onto the burning heifer.

⁷ Then the priest must wash his clothes and bathe his body in water; after that he

may enter the camp, but he will be ceremonially unclean until evening. ⁸ The one who burned the heifer must also wash his clothes and bathe his body in water, and he too will be ceremonially unclean until evening.

⁹ Then a man who is ceremonially clean is to gather up the ashes of the heifer and store them in a ceremonially clean place outside the camp. They must be kept by the congregation of Israel for preparing the water of purification; this is for purification from sin. ¹⁰ The man who has gathered up the ashes of the heifer must also wash his clothes, and he will be ceremonially unclean until evening. This is a permanent statute for the Israelites and for the foreigner residing among them.

PURIFICATION OF THE UNCLEAN

¹¹ Whoever touches any dead body will be unclean for seven days. ¹² He must purify himself with the water on the third day and on the seventh day; then he will be clean. But if he does not purify himself on the third and seventh days, he will not be clean. ¹³ Anyone who touches a human corpse and fails to purify himself defiles the tabernacle of Yahweh. That person must be cut off from Israel. He remains unclean, because the water of purification has not been sprinkled on him, and his uncleanness is still on him.

¹⁴ This is the law when a person dies in a tent: Everyone who enters the tent and everyone already in the tent will be unclean for seven days, ¹⁵ and any open container without a lid fastened on it is unclean.

¹⁶ Anyone in the open field who touches someone who has been killed by the sword or has died of natural causes, or anyone who touches a human bone or a grave, will be unclean for seven days.

¹⁷ For the purification of the unclean person, take some of the ashes of the burnt sin offering, put them in a jar, and pour fresh water over them. ¹⁸ Then a man who is ceremonially clean is to take some hyssop, dip it in the water, and sprinkle the tent, all the furnishings, and the people

NUM 19:2 [PROPHECY] A spotless red heifer was killed outside the camp for cleansing → HEB 9:13-14; HEB 13:12
· MEDIUM p. -

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who were there. He is also to sprinkle the one who touched a bone, a grave, or a person who has died or been slain.

¹⁹ The man who is ceremonially clean is to sprinkle the unclean person on the third day and on the seventh day. After he purifies the unclean person on the seventh day, the one being cleansed must wash his clothes and bathe in water, and that evening he will be clean. ²⁰ But if a person who is unclean does not purify himself, he will be cut off from the assembly, because he has defiled the sanctuary of Yahweh. The water of purification has not been sprinkled on him; he is unclean.

²¹ This is a permanent statute for the people: The one who sprinkles the water of purification must wash his clothes, and whoever touches the water of purification will be unclean until evening. ²² Anything the unclean person touches will become unclean, and anyone who touches it will be unclean until evening."

20

CHAPTER 20 IN 30 SECONDS

Miriam dies at Kadesh. The people have no water and blame Moses again. God tells him to speak to the rock, but Moses strikes it twice. Water comes out, but God tells Moses and Aaron they will not lead Israel into the land. Edom will not let them pass, and Aaron dies on Mount Hor.

WATER FROM THE ROCK // EXODUS 17:1–7

¹ In the first month, the whole congregation of Israel entered the Wilderness of Zin and stayed in Kadesh. There Miriam died and was buried.

² Now there was no water for the congregation, so they gathered against Moses and Aaron. ³ The people quarreled with Moses and said, "If only we had perished with our brothers before Yahweh! ⁴ Why have you brought Yahweh's assembly into this wilderness for us and our livestock to die here? ⁵ Why have you led us up out of Egypt to bring us to this wretched place? It is not a place of grain, figs, vines, or pomegranates—and there is no water to drink!"

⁶ Then Moses and Aaron went from the presence of the assembly to the entrance to the Tent of Meeting. They fell face-down, and the glory of Yahweh appeared to them. ⁷ And Yahweh said to Moses, ⁸

"Take the staff and assemble the congregation. You and your brother Aaron are to speak to the rock while they watch, and it will pour out its water. You will bring out water from the rock and provide drink for the congregation and their livestock."

⁹ So Moses took the staff from Yahweh's presence, just as he had been commanded. ¹⁰ Then Moses and Aaron gathered the assembly in front of the rock, and Moses said to them, "Listen now, you rebels, must we bring you water out of this rock?" ¹¹ Then Moses raised his hand and struck the rock twice with his staff, so that a great amount of water gushed out, and the congregation and their livestock were able to drink.

¹² But Yahweh said to Moses and Aaron, "Because you did not trust Me to show My holiness in the sight of the Israelites, you will not bring this assembly into the land that I have given them."

¹³ These were the waters of Meribah, where the Israelites quarreled with Yahweh, and He showed His holiness among them.

■ NUM 20:8 [PROPHECY] Water would flow from the rock for the people → 1CO 10:4 • MEDIUM p. –

■ NUM 20:8 [MIRACLE] Moses strikes the rock and water gushes out

■ NUM 20:11 [NOTE] WHY WAS MOSES BANNED? See the Big Question pages after 20:13.

■ NUM 20:12 [PROPHECY] Moses and Aaron would not enter the Promised Land because of their unbelief at the rock → NUM 20:24–29 (Aaron); DT 34 (Moses) p. –

DEBATED THE BIG QUESTION

WHY WAS MOSES BANNED?*The Rock at Meribah*

NUMBERS 20:2 TO 13 · 20:24 · 27:14 · PSALM 106:32 TO 33

WHAT HAPPENED

The people had no water and blamed Moses again. God told him to take the staff and speak to the rock in front of everyone. Moses said, Listen, you rebels, must we bring you water out of this rock? Then he struck the rock twice. Water poured out, but God said, Because you did not trust Me to show My holiness, you will not bring this assembly into the land, 20:12.

THE FIRST TIME

This was not the first rock. Almost forty years earlier, in Exodus 17:6, God told Moses to strike a rock at Horeb, and water came out. This time God told him to take the staff but speak to the rock. That difference is where most of the explanations start.

HE STRUCK INSTEAD OF SPEAKING

The great Jewish teacher Rashi, about AD 1100, said the sin was hitting the rock when God said to speak to it. Speaking would have shown God's power even more. Others, like Nachmanides, answered that God told Moses to take the staff, so some striking was expected.

HE LOST HIS TEMPER

Maimonides, about AD 1170, said the sin was anger. Moses called the people rebels when God was not angry with them, and the people thought God was. Psalm 106:32 to 33 says they made his spirit bitter and he spoke rashly with his lips.

HE TOOK THE CREDIT

Some Jewish teachers point to one word: must we bring you water? It sounded like Moses and Aaron were doing the miracle, not God. Numbers 27:14 says they failed to treat God as holy in front of the people.

The Rock Was Christ

DEUTERONOMY 1:37 · 3:26 · 1 CORINTHIANS 10:4 · MATTHEW 17:3

HE DID NOT BELIEVE

God names the problem in 20:12: you did not trust Me. John Calvin said unbelief was the root of it. The Bible teacher Matthew Poole said striking twice looked like Moses doubted one strike would do it.

BECAUSE OF YOU

In Deuteronomy 1:37 and 3:26 Moses tells Israel that God was angry with him because of you. Many read this as the people pushing Moses into his sin. Some scholars think Deuteronomy gives a different reason that goes back to the spies.

THE ROCK WAS CHRIST

Paul says Israel drank from the spiritual rock that followed them, and that Rock was Christ, 1 Corinthians 10:4. Old Jewish stories also told of a rock or well that rolled along with Israel. Many Christian teachers, especially from the 1800s on, say God struck the rock once in Exodus 17, a picture of Christ dying once. They say striking it again spoiled that picture, since Hebrews 10:10 says Christ was offered once for all.

A HAPPY ENDING

Moses never entered the land in his lifetime. But many preachers point out that centuries later he stood on a mountain in the Promised Land, talking with Jesus at the Transfiguration, Matthew 17:3.

WHAT ALL SIDES AGREE ON

God said speak, and Moses struck. He spoke harshly to the people. God said he did not trust Him or honor Him as holy in front of everyone. Even so, God still gave the water. Leaders are held to a higher standard, Numbers 20:12 and James 3:1.

EDOM REFUSES PASSAGE

¹⁴ From Kadesh, Moses sent messengers to tell the king of Edom, "This is what your brother Israel says: You know all the hardship that has befallen us, ¹⁵ how our fathers went down to Egypt, where we lived many years. The Egyptians mistreated us and our fathers, ¹⁶ and when we cried out

MESSIANIC FORESHADOW

PROPHECIES FULFILLED IN SCRIPTURE

to Yahweh, He heard our voice, sent an angel, and brought us out of Egypt.

Now look, we are in Kadesh, a city on the edge of your territory. ¹⁷ Please let us pass through your land. We will not go through any field or vineyard, or drink water from any well. We will stay on the King's Highway; we will not turn to the right or to the left until we have passed through your territory."

¹⁸ But Edom answered, "You may not travel through our land, or we will come out and confront you with the sword."

¹⁹ "We will stay on the main road," the Israelites replied, "and if we or our herds drink your water, we will pay for it. There will be no problem; only let us pass through on foot."

²⁰ But Edom insisted, "You may not pass through." And they came out to confront the Israelites with a large army and a strong hand. ²¹ So Edom refused to allow Israel to pass through their territory, and Israel turned away from them.

THE DEATH OF AARON

²² After they had set out from Kadesh, the whole congregation of Israel came to Mount Hor. ²³ And at Mount Hor, near the border of the land of Edom, Yahweh said to Moses and Aaron, ²⁴ "Aaron will be gathered to his people; he will not enter the land that I have given the Israelites, because both of you rebelled against My command at the waters of Meribah." ²⁵

Take Aaron and his son Eleazar and bring them up Mount Hor. ²⁶ Remove Aaron's priestly garments and put them on his son Eleazar. Aaron will be gathered to his people and will die there."

²⁷ So Moses did as Yahweh had commanded, and they climbed Mount Hor in the sight of the whole congregation. ²⁸ After Moses had removed Aaron's garments and put them on his son Eleazar, Aaron died there on top of the mountain. Then Moses and Eleazar came down from the mountain. ²⁹ When the whole congrega-

MIRACLES

GOD SPEAKING

tion saw that Aaron had died, the entire house of Israel mourned for him thirty days.

21

CHAPTER 21 IN 30 SECONDS

Israel defeats the king of Arad. Then the people complain about the manna again, and venomous snakes bite them. God tells Moses to make a bronze snake on a pole, and anyone who looks at it lives. Then Israel sings at a well and defeats two kings, Sihon and Og.

THE DEFEAT OF ARAD

¹ When the Canaanite king of Arad, who lived in the Negev, heard that Israel was coming along the road to Atharim, he attacked Israel and captured some prisoners. ² So Israel made a vow to Yahweh: "If You will deliver this people into our hands, we will devote their cities to destruction." ³ And Yahweh heard Israel's plea and delivered up the Canaanites. Israel devoted them and their cities to destruction; so they named the place Hormah.

THE BRONZE SERPENT

⁴ Then they set out from Mount Hor along the route to the Red Sea, in order to bypass the land of Edom. But the people grew impatient on the journey ⁵ and spoke against God and against Moses: "Why have you led us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? There is no bread or water, and we detest this wretched food!"

⁶ So Yahweh sent venomous snakes among the people, and many of the Israelites were bitten and died.

⁷ Then the people came to Moses and said, "We have sinned by speaking against Yahweh and against you. Intercede with Yahweh so He will take the snakes away from us." So Moses interceded for the people.

⁸ Then Yahweh said to Moses, "Make a fiery serpent and mount it on a pole. When anyone who is bitten looks at it, he will live." ⁹ So Moses made a bronze snake and mounted it on a pole. If anyone who

NUM 20:24 [FULFILLS] Moses and Aaron would not enter the Promised Land because of their unbelief at the rock ← NUM 20:12 p.~

NUM 21:6 [MIRACLE] Bronze serpent — Israelites healed by looking
 NUM 21:8 [ALLUDED TO] The New Testament refers to this → JN 3:14 p.~

was bitten looked at the bronze snake, he would live.

DEBATED FIELD NOTES · ARCHAEOLOGY · CONFIDENCE: HIGH FOR THE FIND, DEBATED FOR ANY LINK TO MOSES

THE TIMNA COPPER SNAKE

NUMBERS 21:6 TO 9 · 2 KINGS 18:4 · JOHN 3:14 TO 15 · EXODUS 18:1



Site 200 at Timna today: the shrine under the cliff, with standing stones at the left. Photo Erez Ben Yosef, CC BY SA 4.0.

WHAT IT IS

A small copper snake, about 5 inches long, with a head covered in gold. It was found in a desert shrine at Timna, the copper mines in the far south of Israel. Many say it reminds them of the bronze snake Moses made in Numbers 21:9.

HOW OLD IT IS

The snake comes from the shrine's last phase, when Midianites used it, about the 1100s BC. Experts date it by the layers of the site and the pottery found with it.

WHERE AND WHEN FOUND

Beno Rothenberg dug the shrine, now called Site 200, in 1969. It sits at the foot of the red sandstone cliffs called Solomon's Pillars.

THE SHRINE

Egyptian miners built a small shrine to their goddess Hathor here, beginning around 1300 BC. After the Egyptians

left, Midianites took it over. They scratched out Hathor's face, set up a row of standing stones, and covered the shrine with red and yellow wool cloth held up by poles, like a tent. Some scholars say it looks a lot like the tabernacle.

WHY MIDIANITES MATTER

Moses' father in law Jethro was a priest of Midian, Exodus 18:1, and Moses lived in Midian for forty years, Acts 7:30. Midian shows up again in Numbers 22, 25 and 31.

WHERE IT IS TODAY

The snake is shown at the Eretz Israel Museum in Tel Aviv, in its Nehushtan Pavilion, named after the bronze snake in 2 Kings 18:4.

THE BIG DEBATE

Reports disagree on exactly where in the shrine the snake lay, and some scholars now think a local shrine was there before the Egyptians came, not after. There is no writing on the snake, so nobody knows who made it or why. Snakes were used as symbols of healing and protection all over the ancient world.

WHAT IT DOES NOT PROVE

It is not Moses' snake, and it does not prove Numbers 21 happened. It shows that people in the same desert, in about the same age, made copper snakes for their worship.

THE JOURNEY TO MOAB

¹⁰ Then the Israelites set out and camped at Oboth. ¹¹ They journeyed from Oboth and camped at Iye-abarim in the wilderness opposite Moab to the east. ¹² From there they set out and camped in the Valley of Zered. ¹³ From there they moved on and camped on the other side of the Arnon, in the wilderness that extends into the Amorite territory.

Now the Arnon is the border between the Moabites and the Amorites. ¹⁴ Therefore it is stated in the Book of the Wars of Yahweh:

“Waheb in Suphah
and the wadis of the Arnon,

■ **NUM 21:9 [PROPHECY]** The bronze serpent lifted up foreshadows Christ lifted on the cross → JN 3:14-18; 12:32 p. –
■ **NUM 21:9 [NOTE]** Israel kept this bronze snake for centuries, until King Hezekiah smashed it because people were burning incense to it, 2 Kings 18:4.
■ **NUM 21:9 [FIELD NOTES]** A small copper snake was found in a desert shrine at Timna. See the Timna Copper Snake Field Notes page.

DEMONIC GOD SPEAKING

¹⁵ even the slopes of the wadis that extend to the site of Ar and lie along the border of Moab."

¹⁶ From there they went on to Beer, the well where Yahweh said to Moses, "Gather the people so that I may give them water." ¹⁷ Then Israel sang this song:

"Spring up, O well,
all of you sing to it!

¹⁸ The princes dug the well;
the nobles of the people hollowed it out
with their scepters
and with their staffs."

From the wilderness the Israelites went on to Mattanah, ¹⁹ and from Mattanah to Nahaliel, and from Nahaliel to Bamoth, ²⁰ and from Bamoth to the valley in Moab where the top of Pisgah overlooks the waste-land.

THE DEFEAT OF SIHON // DEUTERONOMY 2:24–37

²¹ Then Israel sent messengers to Sihon king of the Amorites, saying, ²² "Let us pass through your land. We will not turn aside into any field or vineyard, or drink water from any well. We will stay on the King's Highway until we have passed through your territory."

²³ But Sihon would not let Israel pass through his territory. Instead, he gathered his whole army and went out to confront Israel in the wilderness. When he came to Jahaz, he fought against Israel. ²⁴ And Israel put him to the sword and took possession of his land, from the Arnon to the Jabbok—but only up to the border of the Ammonites, because it was fortified.

²⁵ Israel captured all the cities of the Amorites and occupied them, including Heshbon and all its villages. ²⁶ Heshbon was the city of Sihon king of the Amorites, who had fought against the former king of Moab and taken all his land as far as the Arnon. ²⁷ That is why the poets say:

"Come to Heshbon, let it be rebuilt;
let the city of Sihon be restored.

²⁸ For a fire went out from Heshbon,
a blaze from the city of Sihon.

It consumed Ar of Moab,
the rulers of Arnon's heights.

²⁹ Woe to you, O Moab!

You are destroyed, O people of
Chemosh!

He gave up his sons as refugees,
and his daughters into captivity
to Sihon king of the Amorites.

³⁰ But we have overthrown them;
Heshbon is destroyed as far as Dibon.
We demolished them as far as Nophah,
which reaches to Medeba."

THE DEFEAT OF OG // DEUTERONOMY 3:1–11

³¹ So Israel lived in the land of the Amorites. ³² After Moses had sent spies to Jazer, Israel captured its villages and drove out the Amorites who were there.

³³ Then they turned and went up the road to Bashan, and Og king of Bashan and his whole army came out to meet them in battle at Edrei.

³⁴ But Yahweh said to Moses, "Do not fear him, for I have delivered him into your hand, along with all his people and his land. Do to him as you did to Sihon king of the Amorites, who lived in Heshbon."

³⁵ So they struck down Og, along with his sons and his whole army, until no remnant was left. And they took possession of his land.

22

CHAPTER 22 IN 30 SECONDS

Balak, king of Moab, is scared of Israel and hires Balaam, a famous seer, to curse them. God tells Balaam not to go, then lets him go but says to speak only what He says. On the way, the angel of Yahweh blocks the road, and Balaam's donkey sees him first and starts talking. The donkey wins the argument.

BALAK SUMMONS BALAAM

¹ Then the Israelites traveled on and camped in the plains of Moab near the Jordan, across from Jericho.

² Now Balak son of Zippor saw all that Israel had done to the Amorites, ³ and Moab was terrified of the people because they were numerous. Indeed, Moab dreaded

■ **NUM 21:14 [NOTE]** The Book of the Wars of Yahweh is a lost book. It is quoted only here, and no copy has ever been found.

■ **NUM 21:29 [DEMONIC]** Woe to Moab, the people of Chemosh

■ **NUM 21:33 [DEMONIC]** Israel defeats Og king of Bashan

ARCHAEOLOGY MIRACLES DEMONIC GOD SPEAKING

the Israelites. ⁴ So the Moabites said to the elders of Midian, "This horde will devour everything around us, as an ox licks up the grass of the field."

Since Balak son of Zippor was king of Moab at that time, ⁵ he sent messengers to summon Balaam son of Beor at Pethor, which is by the Euphrates in the land of his people.

"Behold, a people has come out of Egypt," said Balak. "They cover the face of the land and have settled next to me." ⁶ So please come now and put a curse on this people, because they are too mighty for me. Perhaps I may be able to defeat them and drive them out of the land; for I know that those you bless are blessed, and those you curse are cursed."

⁷ The elders of Moab and Midian departed with the fees for divination in hand. They came to Balaam and relayed to him the words of Balak.

⁸ "Spend the night here," Balaam replied, "and I will give you the answer that Yahweh speaks to me." So the princes of Moab stayed with Balaam.

⁹ Then God came to Balaam and asked, "Who are these men with you?"

¹⁰ And Balaam said to God, "Balak son of Zippor, king of Moab, sent me this message: ¹¹ 'Behold, a people has come out of Egypt, and they cover the face of the land. Now come and put a curse on them for me. Perhaps I may be able to fight against them and drive them away.'"

¹² But God said to Balaam, "Do not go with them. You are not to curse this people, for they are blessed."

¹³ So Balaam got up the next morning and said to Balak's princes, "Go back to your homeland, because Yahweh has refused to let me go with you."

¹⁴ And the princes of Moab arose, returned to Balak, and said, "Balaam refused to come with us."

¹⁵ Then Balak sent other princes, more numerous and more distinguished than the first messengers. ¹⁶ They came to Balaam and said, "This is what Balak son of Zippor says: 'Please let nothing hinder you from coming to me, ¹⁷ for I will honor you richly and do whatever you say. So please come and put a curse on this people for me!'"

¹⁸ But Balaam replied to the servants of Balak, "If Balak were to give me his house full of silver and gold, I could not do anything small or great to go beyond the command of Yahweh my God. ¹⁹ So now, please stay here overnight as the others did, that I may find out what else Yahweh has to tell me."

²⁰ That night God came to Balaam and said, "Since these men have come to summon you, get up and go with them, but you must only do what I tell you." ²¹ So in the morning Balaam got up, saddled his donkey, and went with the princes of Moab.

THE ANGEL AND BALAAM'S DONKEY

²² Then God's anger was kindled because Balaam was going along, and the angel of Yahweh stood in the road to oppose him. Balaam was riding his donkey, and his two servants were with him.

²³ When the donkey saw the angel of Yahweh standing in the road with a drawn sword in his hand, she turned off the path and went into a field. So Balaam beat her to return her to the path.

²⁴ Then the angel of Yahweh stood in a narrow passage between two vineyards, with walls on either side. ²⁵ And the donkey saw the angel of Yahweh and pressed herself against the wall, crushing Balaam's foot against it. So he beat her once again.

²⁶ And the angel of Yahweh moved on ahead and stood in a narrow place where there was no room to turn to the right or left. ²⁷ When the donkey saw the angel of Yahweh, she lay down under Balaam, and he became furious and beat her with his staff.

NUM 22:5 [ARCHAEOLOGY] Deir Alla Inscription →

FIELD NOTES p.40

NUM 22:7 [DEMONIC] Moab's elders bring Balaam fees for divination

NUM 22:22 [MIRACLE] The angel of Yahweh with a drawn sword blocks Balaam's path

MIRACLES GOD SPEAKING

²⁸ Then Yahweh opened the donkey's mouth, and she said to Balaam, "What have I done to you that you have beaten me these three times?"

²⁹ Balaam answered the donkey, "You have made a fool of me! If I had a sword in my hand, I would kill you right now!"

³⁰ But the donkey said to Balaam, "Am I not the donkey you have ridden all your life until today? Have I ever treated you this way before?"

"No," he replied.

³¹ Then Yahweh opened Balaam's eyes, and he saw the angel of Yahweh standing in the road with a drawn sword in his hand. And Balaam bowed low and fell facedown.

³² The angel of Yahweh asked him, "Why have you beaten your donkey these three times? Behold, I have come out to oppose you, because your way is perverse before me. ³³ The donkey saw me and turned away from me these three times. If she had not turned away, then by now I would surely have killed you and let her live."

³⁴ "I have sinned," Balaam said to the angel of Yahweh, "for I did not realize that you were standing in the road to confront me. And now, if this is displeasing in your sight, I will go back home."

³⁵ But the angel of Yahweh said to Balaam, "Go with the men, but you are to speak only what I tell you." So Balaam went with the princes of Balak.

³⁶ When Balak heard that Balaam was coming, he went out to meet him at the Moabite city on the Arnon border, at the edge of his territory. ³⁷ And he said to Balaam, "Did I not send you an urgent summons? Why did you not come to me? Am I really not able to reward you richly?"

³⁸ "See, I have come to you," Balaam replied, "but can I say just anything? I must speak only the word that God puts in my mouth."

³⁹ So Balaam accompanied Balak, and they came to Kiriath-huzoth. ⁴⁰ Balak sacrificed cattle and sheep, and he gave portions to Balaam and the princes who were with him.

⁴¹ The next morning, Balak took Balaam and brought him up to Bamoth-baal. From there he could see the outskirts of the camp of the people.

23

CHAPTER 23 IN 30 SECONDS

Balak builds seven altars and waits for a curse. Instead Balaam blesses Israel. Balak tries another hill and gets another blessing: God is not a man, that He should lie. Balak is having a very bad day.

BALAAM'S FIRST ORACLE

¹ Then Balaam said to Balak, "Build for me seven altars here, and prepare for me seven bulls and seven rams."

² So Balak did as Balaam had instructed, and Balak and Balaam offered a bull and a ram on each altar.

³ "Stay here by your burnt offering while I am gone," Balaam said to Balak. "Perhaps Yahweh will meet with me. And whatever He reveals to me, I will tell you."

So Balaam went off to a barren height, ⁴ and God met with him. "I have set up seven altars," Balaam said, "and on each altar I have offered a bull and a ram."

⁵ Then Yahweh put a message in Balaam's mouth, saying, "Return to Balak and give him this message."

⁶ So he returned to Balak, who was standing there beside his burnt offering, with all the princes of Moab.

⁷ And Balaam lifted up an oracle, saying:

"Balak brought me from Aram,
the king of Moab from the mountains of the east.

'Come,' he said, 'put a curse on Jacob for me;
come and denounce Israel!'

⁸ How can I curse those whom God has not cursed?

How can I denounce those whom Yahweh has not denounced?

⁹ For I see them from atop the rocky cliffs,

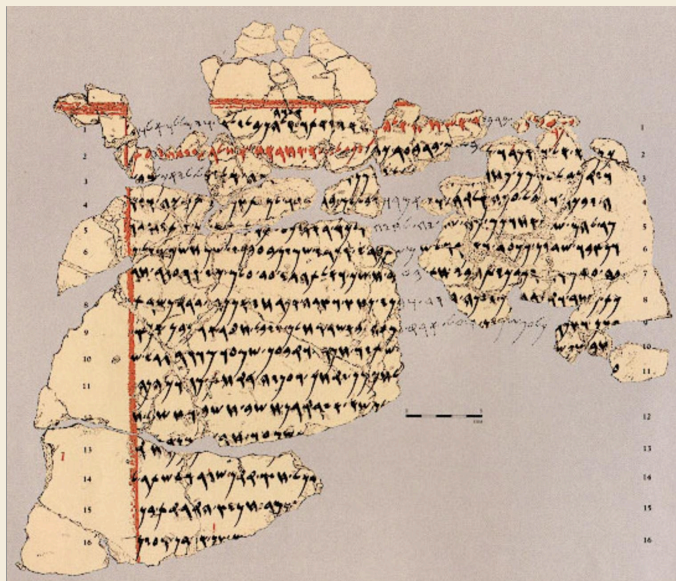
■ NUM 22:28 [MIRACLE] Yahweh opens the donkey's mouth and she speaks

■ NUM 22:28 [NOTE] PROPHET OR SORCERER? See the Big Question pages on Balaam after chapter 24.

FIELD NOTES · ARCHAEOLOGY · CONFIDENCE: HIGH

THE DEIR ALLA BALAAM INSCRIPTION

NUMBERS 22 TO 24 · 31:8 · JOSHUA 13:22



A drawing of the largest group of plaster pieces, Combination I. The red lines and words are in red ink on the wall. Drawing by Disdero, CC BY SA 4.0.

WHAT IT IS

Writing in black and red ink on a white plaster wall, found at Tell Deir Alla in the Jordan Valley. It begins, The book of Balaam son of Beor, a seer of the gods. It is the same name and the same father as the Balaam of Numbers 22:5.

HOW OLD IT IS

About 800 BC. Different experts give dates from about 840 to 700 BC. It was painted long after the time of Moses.

WHERE AND WHEN FOUND

A Dutch team from Leiden University led by H. J. Franken found it in 1967. An earthquake had knocked the wall down, leaving about 119 pieces of inked plaster. Jacob Hoftijzer and Gerrit van der Kooij put the pieces together and published them in 1976.

WHAT IT SAYS

The gods come to Balaam at night and show him a vision. The Shaddayin, gods whose name sounds like Shaddai, plan a disaster: darkness, no sun and fire. In the morning Balaam fasts and weeps, then tells his people what he saw. Much of the rest is broken and hard to read.

THE LANGUAGE

Scholars still argue. It has some things in common with Aramaic and some with Hebrew and the languages of Canaan. Many call it a local dialect from the east side of the Jordan.

WHERE IT IS TODAY

In Amman, the capital of Jordan.

WHAT IT CONFIRMS

People east of the Jordan were still telling stories about a famous seer named Balaam son of Beor, centuries after Numbers places him there. Like Numbers 24:4, it connects him with visions and with the name Shaddai.

WHAT IT DOES NOT PROVE

It says nothing about Israel, Moab, Balak or a talking donkey. Its Balaam serves many gods. It shows the Bible's Balaam was a well known figure in the region, not that the events of Numbers 22 to 24 happened.

MESSIANIC FORESHADOW | DEMONIC | GOD SPEAKING

and I watch them from the hills.
Behold, a people dwelling apart,
not reckoning themselves among the
nations.

¹⁰ Who can count the dust of Jacob
or number even a fourth of Israel?
Let me die the death of the righteous;
let my end be like theirs!"

¹¹ Then Balak said to Balaam, "What have
you done to me? I brought you here to
curse my enemies, and behold, you have
only blessed them!"

¹² But Balaam replied, "Should I not speak
exactly what Yahweh puts in my mouth?"

BALAAM'S SECOND ORACLE

¹³ Then Balak said to him, "Please come
with me to another place where you can
see them. You will only see the outskirts
of their camp—not all of them. And from
there, curse them for me."

¹⁴ So Balak took him to the field of Zophim,
to the top of Pisgah, where he built seven
altars and offered a bull and a ram on
each altar.

¹⁵ Balaam said to Balak, "Stay here beside
your burnt offering while I meet Yahweh
over there."

¹⁶ And Yahweh met with Balaam and put a
message in his mouth, saying, "Return to
Balak and speak what I tell you."

¹⁷ So he returned to Balak, who was stand-
ing there by his burnt offering with the
princes of Moab.

"What did Yahweh say?" Balak asked.

¹⁸ Then Balaam lifted up an oracle, saying:

"Arise, O Balak, and listen;
give ear to me, O son of Zippor.

¹⁹ God is not a man, that He should lie,
or a son of man, that He should change
His mind.

Does He speak and not act?

Does He promise and not fulfill?

²⁰ I have indeed received a command to
bless;

He has blessed, and I cannot change it.

²¹ He considers no disaster for Jacob;
He sees no trouble for Israel.

Yahweh their God is with them,

and the shout of the King is among
them.

²² God brought them out of Egypt
with strength like a wild ox.

²³ For there is no spell against Jacob
and no divination against Israel.

It will now be said of Jacob and Israel,
'What great things God has done!'

²⁴ Behold, the people rise like a lioness;
they rouse themselves like a lion,
not resting until they devour their prey
and drink the blood of the slain."

²⁵ Now Balak said to Balaam, "Then nei-
ther curse them at all nor bless them at
all!"

²⁶ But Balaam replied, "Did I not tell you
that whatever Yahweh says, I must do?"

²⁷ "Please come," said Balak, "I will take
you to another place. Perhaps it will
please God that you curse them for me
from there."

²⁸ And Balak took Balaam to the top of
Peor, which overlooks the wasteland.

²⁹ Then Balaam said, "Build for me seven
altars here, and prepare for me seven
bulls and seven rams."

³⁰ So Balak did as Balaam had instructed,
and he offered a bull and a ram on each
altar.

24

CHAPTER 24 IN 30 SECONDS

Balaam blesses Israel a third time, and Balak is furious. So Balaam gives him a bonus prophecy for free: A star will come out of Jacob, and a scepter will rise out of Israel. Then he prophesies against Moab, Edom and Amalek and goes home. Balak paid for a curse and got a sermon.

BALAAM'S THIRD ORACLE

¹ And when Balaam saw that it pleased
Yahweh to bless Israel, he did not seek
omens as on previous occasions, but he
turned his face toward the wilderness. ²
When Balaam looked up and saw Israel
encamped tribe by tribe, the Spirit of God

NUM 23:21 [PROPHECY] 'The King is among them' →
Matt 1:23 - MEDIUM D.C.

NUM 23:23 [DEMONIC] No spell or divination works
against Israel

NUM 24:1 [DEMONIC] Balaam stops seeking omens and
looks toward the desert

MESSIANIC PROPHECIES PROPHECIES FULFILLED IN SCRIPTURE

came upon him, ³and he lifted up an oracle, saying:

"This is the prophecy of Balaam son of Beor,
the prophecy of a man whose eyes are open,

⁴the prophecy of one who hears the words of God,
who sees a vision from the Almighty,
who bows down with eyes wide open:

⁵How lovely are your tents, O Jacob,
your dwellings, O Israel!

⁶They spread out like palm groves,
like gardens beside a stream,
like aloes Yahweh has planted,
like cedars beside the waters.

⁷Water will flow from his buckets,
and his seed will have abundant water.
His king will be greater than Agag,
and his kingdom will be exalted.

⁸God brought him out of Egypt
with strength like a wild ox,
to devour hostile nations and crush their bones,
to pierce them with arrows.

⁹He crouches, he lies down like a lion,
like a lioness—who dares to rouse him?
Blessed are those who bless you
and cursed are those who curse you."

BALAK DISMISSES BALAAM

¹⁰Then Balak's anger burned against Balaam, and he struck his hands together and said to Balaam, "I summoned you to curse my enemies, but behold, you have persisted in blessing them these three times. ¹¹Therefore, flee at once to your home! I said I would reward you richly, but instead Yahweh has denied your reward."

¹²Balaam answered Balak, "Did I not already tell the messengers you sent me ¹³that even if Balak were to give me his house full of silver and gold, I could not do anything of my own accord, good or bad, to go beyond the command of Yahweh? I must speak whatever Yahweh says. ¹⁴Now I am going back to my people, but come, let me warn you what this

people will do to your people in the days to come."

BALAAM'S FOURTH ORACLE

¹⁵Then Balaam lifted up an oracle, saying,

"This is the prophecy of Balaam son of Beor,
the prophecy of a man whose eyes are open,

¹⁶the prophecy of one who hears the words of God,
who has knowledge from the Most High,
who sees a vision from the Almighty,
who bows down with eyes wide open:

¹⁷I see him, but not now;

I behold him, but not near.

A star will come forth from Jacob,
and a scepter will arise from Israel.

He will crush the skulls of Moab
and strike down all the sons of Sheth.

¹⁸Edom will become a possession,
as will Seir, his enemy;
but Israel will perform with valor.

¹⁹A ruler will come from Jacob
and destroy the survivors of the city."

BALAAM'S FINAL THREE ORACLES

²⁰Then Balaam saw Amalek and lifted up an oracle, saying:

"Amalek was first among the nations,
but his end is destruction."

²¹Next he saw the Kenites and lifted up an oracle, saying:

"Your dwelling place is secure,
and your nest is set in a cliff.

²²Yet Kain will be destroyed
when Asshur takes you captive."

²³Once more Balaam lifted up an oracle, saying:

"Ah, who can live
unless God has ordained it?

²⁴Ships will come from the coasts of Cyprus;
they will subdue Asshur and Eber,
but they too will perish forever."

NUM 24:7 [PROPHECY] Israel's king would be greater than Agag → 1SA 15:8 p.--

NUM 24:17 [PROPHECY] Balaam's prophecy: a Star and Scepter to come out of Jacob → MT 2:2; REV 22:16; 2PE 1:19 p.--

NUM 24:18 [PROPHECY] Edom would become Israel's possession → 2SA 8:14 p.--

NUM 24:20 [PROPHECY] Amalek's end would be destruction → 1SA 15:7-8; 1CH 4:43 · MEDIUM p.--

²⁵ Then Balaam arose and returned to his homeland, and Balak also went on his way.

DEBATED THE BIG QUESTION

BALAAM

Prophet or Sorcerer?

NUMBERS 22 TO 24 · 31:8, 16 · DEUTERONOMY 23:4 TO 5 · JOSHUA 13:22

WHAT NUMBERS SAYS

Balak, king of Moab, hired Balaam to curse Israel. God spoke to Balaam, the Spirit of God came on him, 24:2, and every time he opened his mouth to curse, a blessing came out. His last prophecy says a star will come out of Jacob, 24:17. Then he went home. But later Israel killed him with the kings of Midian, and Moses said the sin at Peor happened on Balaam's advice, 31:8 and 31:16.

WHAT THE REST OF THE BIBLE SAYS

Deuteronomy 23:4 to 5 and Nehemiah 13:2 say he was hired to curse and God turned it into a blessing. Joshua 13:22 calls him the diviner, a word for a fortune teller. Peter calls him a prophet who loved the wages of wickedness, 2 Peter 2:15 to 16. Jude 11 warns about Balaam's error for profit. Jesus says Balaam taught Balak to lead Israel into idol feasts and sexual sin, Revelation 2:14.

WHO WAS BALAAM?

He came from Pethor, near the Euphrates River, hundreds of miles away, 22:5. Balak's messengers brought him the fee for divination, 22:7, so he was a famous seer for hire. A wall inscription from about 800 BC, found in Jordan, also names Balaam son of Beor. See the Deir Alla Field Notes page.

THE TALKING DONKEY

Many readers take it as a real miracle, and 2 Peter 2:16 talks about it as something that happened. An old Jewish teaching says the donkey's mouth was one of the things God made on the evening of the sixth day of creation. Maimonides said the whole scene happened in a vision. A few later teachers thought Balaam only heard the donkey's cries as words.

The Star out of Jacob

NUMBERS 24:17 · MATTHEW 2:2 · REVELATION 22:16

A REAL PROPHET WHO WENT BAD

Some say God really spoke through Balaam, as Peter calls him a prophet, but his heart was set on money. He said the right words and still found another way to hurt Israel.

A SORCERER GOD USED ANYWAY

Others say Balaam was a pagan fortune teller, as Joshua 13:22 calls him, and God took over his mouth for a few days to show that nobody can curse what God has blessed.

JEWISH TRADITION

The rabbis remembered him two ways. One old teaching says no prophet like Moses arose in Israel, but one did among the nations, and names Balaam. Another says the students of Abraham have a good eye and a humble spirit, but the students of wicked Balaam have an evil eye, a proud spirit and endless greed.

THE STAR

An old Aramaic translation of 24:17 reads, a king will rise from Jacob, and the Messiah will be anointed from Israel. The Dead Sea Scrolls use the star verse too. About AD 132, Rabbi Akiva called the rebel leader Simon bar Kosiba the star and the Messiah, and his followers called him Bar Kokhba, son of the star. Christians like Origen linked the star to the one the wise men followed, Matthew 2:2.

WHAT ALL SIDES AGREE ON

Balaam was a famous seer from outside Israel, hired to curse, who blessed instead. Outside these chapters the Bible remembers him for greed and for Peor. His star prophecy became one of the most loved Messiah promises.

25

CHAPTER 25 IN 30 SECONDS

What Balaam could not do with a curse, Moab and Midian do with sin. Israelite men sleep with Moabite women and worship Baal of Peor. A plague breaks out. When an Israelite brings a Midianite woman into his tent in front of everyone, Phinehas stops the plague with a spear. 24,000 die.

DEMONIC GOD SPEAKING

MOAB SEDUCES ISRAEL // 1 CORINTHIANS 10:1-13

¹While Israel was staying in Shittim, the men began to indulge in sexual immorality with the daughters of Moab, ²who also invited them to the sacrifices for their gods. And the people ate and bowed down to these gods. ³So Israel joined in worshipping Baal of Peor, and the anger of Yahweh burned against them.

⁴Then Yahweh said to Moses, "Take all the leaders of the people and execute them in broad daylight before Yahweh, so that His fierce anger may turn away from Israel."

⁵So Moses told the judges of Israel, "Each of you must kill all of his men who have joined in worshipping Baal of Peor."

THE ZEAL OF PHINEHAS

⁶Just then an Israelite man brought to his family a Midianite woman in the sight of Moses and the whole congregation of Israel while they were weeping at the entrance to the Tent of Meeting. ⁷On seeing this, Phinehas son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron the priest, got up from the assembly, took a spear in his hand, ⁸followed the Israelite into the tent, and drove the spear through both of them—through the Israelite and on through the belly of the woman.

So the plague against the Israelites was halted, ⁹but those who died in the plague numbered 24,000.

¹⁰Then Yahweh said to Moses, ¹¹"Phinehas son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron the priest, has turned My wrath away from the Israelites; for he was zealous for My sake among them, so that I did not consume the Israelites in My zeal. ¹²Declare, therefore, that I am granting him My covenant of peace. ¹³It will be a covenant of permanent priesthood for him and his descendants, because he was zealous for his God and made atonement for the Israelites."

■ NUM 25:1 [DEMONIC] Israel joins in worshipping Baal of Peor

■ NUM 25:9 [TEXT] Paul says 23,000 fell in one day, 1 Corinthians 10:8. Many say Paul counts those who died in one day and Numbers counts the whole plague. Others think Paul was quoting from memory or a different count.

¹⁴The name of the Israelite who was slain with the Midianite woman was Zimri son of Salu, the leader of a Simeonite family.

¹⁵And the name of the slain Midianite woman was Cozbi, the daughter of Zur, a tribal chief of a Midianite family.

¹⁶And Yahweh said to Moses, ¹⁷"Attack the Midianites and strike them dead. ¹⁸For they assailed you deceitfully when they seduced you in the matter of Peor and their sister Cozbi, the daughter of the Midianite leader, the woman who was killed on the day the plague came because of Peor."

26

CHAPTER 26 IN 30 SECONDS

Forty years later, God orders a second census. The new total is 601,730. And of all the men counted at Sinai, only two are still alive besides Moses: Caleb and Joshua, just as God said. A whole generation is gone. The new one is ready.

THE SECOND CENSUS OF ISRAEL // NUMBERS 1:1-4

¹After the plague had ended, Yahweh said to Moses and Eleazar son of Aaron the priest, ²"Take a census of the whole congregation of Israel by the houses of their fathers—all those twenty years of age or older who can serve in the army of Israel."

³So on the plains of Moab by the Jordan, across from Jericho, Moses and Eleazar the priest issued the instruction, ⁴"Take a census of the men twenty years of age or older, as Yahweh has commanded Moses."

And these were the Israelites who came out of the land of Egypt:

THE TRIBE OF REUBEN

⁵Reuben was the firstborn of Israel. These were the descendants of Reuben:

The Hanochite clan from Hanoch, the Palluite clan from Pallu,

⁶the Hezronite clan from Hezron, and the Carmite clan from Carmi.

⁷These were the clans of Reuben, and their registration numbered 43,730.

■ NUM 25:18 [DEMONIC] Midian lured Israel into sin at Peor

BLOODLINE OF CHRIST

⁸ Now the son of Pallu was Eliab, ⁹ and the sons of Eliab were Nemuel, Dathan, and Abiram.

It was Dathan and Abiram, chosen by the congregation, who rebelled against Moses and Aaron with the followers of Korah who rebelled against Yahweh. ¹⁰ And the earth opened its mouth and swallowed them along with Korah, whose followers died when the fire consumed 250 men. They serve as a warning sign. ¹¹ However, the line of Korah did not die out.

THE TRIBE OF SIMEON

¹² These were the descendants of Simeon by their clans:

The Nemuelite clan from Nemuel,
the Jaminite clan from Jamin,
the Jachinite clan from Jachin,
¹³ the Zerahite clan from Zerah,
and the Shaulite clan from Shaul.

¹⁴ These were the clans of Simeon, and there were 22,200 men.

THE TRIBE OF GAD

¹⁵ These were the descendants of Gad by their clans:

The Zephonite clan from Zephon,
the Haggite clan from Haggi,
the Shunite clan from Shuni,
¹⁶ the Oznite clan from Ozni,
the Erite clan from Eri,
¹⁷ the Arodite clan from Arod,
and the Arelite clan from Areli.

¹⁸ These were the clans of Gad, and their registration numbered 40,500.

THE TRIBE OF JUDAH

¹⁹ The sons of Judah were Er and Onan, but they died in the land of Canaan. ²⁰ These were the descendants of Judah by their clans:

The Shelanite clan from Shelah,
the Perezite clan from Perez,
and the Zerahite clan from Zerah.

²¹ And these were the descendants of Perez:

the Hezronite clan from Hezron
and the Hamulite clan from Hamul.

²² These were the clans of Judah, and their registration numbered 76,500.

THE TRIBE OF ISSACHAR

²³ These were the descendants of Issachar by their clans:

The Tolaite clan from Tola,
the Punite clan from Puvah,
²⁴ the Jashubite clan from Jashub,
and the Shimronite clan from Shimron.

²⁵ These were the clans of Issachar, and their registration numbered 64,300.

THE TRIBE OF ZEBULUN

²⁶ These were the descendants of Zebulun by their clans:

The Seredite clan from Sered,
the Elonite clan from Elon,
and the Jahleelite clan from Jahleel.

²⁷ These were the clans of Zebulun, and their registration numbered 60,500.

THE TRIBE OF MANASSEH

²⁸ The descendants of Joseph included the clans of Manasseh and Ephraim.

²⁹ These were the descendants of Manasseh:

The Machirite clan from Machir, the father of Gilead,
and the Gileadite clan from Gilead.

³⁰ These were the descendants of Gilead:

the Iezerite clan from Iezer,
the Helekite clan from Helek,
³¹ the Asrielite clan from Asriel,
the Shechemite clan from Shechem,
³² the Shemidaite clan from Shemida,
and the Hephherite clan from Hephher.

³³ Now Zelophehad son of Hephher had no sons but only daughters. The names of his daughters were Mahlah, Noah, Hoglah, Milcah, and Tirzah.

³⁴ These were the clans of Manasseh, and their registration numbered 52,700.

THE TRIBE OF EPHRAIM

³⁵ These were the descendants of Ephraim by their clans:

The Shuthelahite clan from Shuthelah,
the Becherite clan from Becher,
and the Tahanite clan from Tahan.

³⁶ And the descendants of Shuthelah were the Eranite clan from Eran.

GOD SPEAKING

³⁷ These were the clans of Ephraim, and their registration numbered 32,500.

These clans were the descendants of Joseph.

THE TRIBE OF BENJAMIN

³⁸ These were the descendants of Benjamin by their clans:

The Belaite clan from Bela,
the Ashbelite clan from Ashbel,
the Ahiramite clan from Ahiram,
³⁹ the Shuphamite clan from Shupham,
and the Huphamite clan from Hupham.

⁴⁰ And the descendants of Bela from Ard and Naaman were the Ardite clan from Ard and the Naamite clan from Naaman.

⁴¹ These were the clans of Benjamin, and their registration numbered 45,600.

THE TRIBE OF DAN

⁴² These were the descendants of Dan by their clans:

The Shuhamite clan from Shuham.

These were the clans of Dan. ⁴³ All of them were Shuhamite clans, and their registration numbered 64,400.

THE TRIBE OF ASHER

⁴⁴ These were the descendants of Asher by their clans:

The Imnite clan from Imnah,
the Ishvite clan from Ishvi,
and the Beriite clan from Beriah.

⁴⁵ And these were the descendants of Beriah:

the Heberite clan from Heber
and the Malchielite clan from Malchiel.

⁴⁶ And the name of Asher's daughter was Serah.

⁴⁷ These were the clans of Asher, and their registration numbered 53,400.

THE TRIBE OF NAPHTALI

⁴⁸ These were the descendants of Naphtali by their clans:

The Jahzeelite clan from Jahzeel,
the Gunitite clan from Guni,
⁴⁹ the Jezerite clan from Jezer,
and the Shillemite clan from Shillem.

⁵⁰ These were the clans of Naphtali, and their registration numbered 45,400.

⁵¹ These men of Israel numbered 601,730 in all.

INHERITANCE BY LOT

⁵² Then Yahweh said to Moses, ⁵³ "The land is to be divided among the tribes as an inheritance, according to the number of names. ⁵⁴ Increase the inheritance for a large tribe and decrease it for a small one; each tribe is to receive its inheritance according to the number of those registered.

⁵⁵ Indeed, the land must be divided by lot; they shall receive their inheritance according to the names of the tribes of their fathers. ⁵⁶ Each inheritance is to be divided by lot among the larger and smaller tribes."

THE LEVITES NUMBERED

⁵⁷ Now these were the Levites numbered by their clans:

The Gershonite clan from Gershon,
the Kohathite clan from Kohath,
and the Merarite clan from Merari.

⁵⁸ These were the families of the Levites:

The Libnite clan,
the Hebronite clan,
the Mahlite clan,
the Mushite clan,
and the Korahite clan.

Now Kohath was the father of Amram, ⁵⁹ and Amram's wife was named Jochebed. She was also a daughter of Levi, born to Levi in Egypt. To Amram she bore Aaron, Moses, and their sister Miriam. ⁶⁰ Nadab, Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar were born to Aaron, ⁶¹ but Nadab and Abihu died when they offered unauthorized fire before Yahweh.

⁶² The registration of the Levites totaled 23,000, every male a month old or more; they were not numbered among the other Israelites, because no inheritance was given to them among the Israelites.

ONLY CALEB AND JOSHUA REMAIN

⁶³ These were the ones numbered by Moses and Eleazar the priest when they counted the Israelites on the plains of Moab by the Jordan, across from Jericho.

■ NUM 26:51 [NOTE] The new count is 601,730, almost the same as the first census, 603,550, forty years earlier.

MESSIANIC FORESHADOW

PROPHECIES FULFILLED IN SCRIPTURE

GOD SPEAKING

⁶⁴ Among all these, however, there was not one who had been numbered by Moses and Aaron the priest when they counted the Israelites in the Wilderness of Sinai. ⁶⁵ For Yahweh had told them that they would surely die in the wilderness. Not one was left except Caleb son of Jephunneh and Joshua son of Nun.

27

CHAPTER 27 IN 30 SECONDS

Five sisters, the daughters of Zelophehad, ask Moses for their dead father's land, since he had no sons. God says they are right, and it becomes law. Then God shows Moses the land he will not enter, and Moses asks for a new shepherd. God picks Joshua.

THE DAUGHTERS OF ZELOPHEHAD // NUMBERS 36:1–13

¹ Now the daughters of Zelophehad son of Hephher, the son of Gilead, the son of Machir, the son of Manasseh, belonged to the clans of Manasseh son of Joseph. These were the names of his daughters: Mahlah, Noah, Hoglah, Milcah, and Tirzah. They approached ² the entrance to the Tent of Meeting, stood before Moses, Eleazar the priest, the leaders, and the whole congregation, and said, ³ “Our father died in the wilderness, but he was not among the followers of Korah who gathered together against Yahweh. Instead, he died because of his own sin, and he had no sons. ⁴ Why should the name of our father disappear from his clan because he had no sons? Give us property among our father's brothers.”

⁵ So Moses brought their case before Yahweh, ⁶ and Yahweh answered him, ⁷ “The daughters of Zelophehad speak correctly. You certainly must give them property as an inheritance among their father's brothers and transfer their father's inheritance to them.

⁸ Furthermore, you shall say to the Israelites, ‘If a man dies and leaves no son, you are to transfer his inheritance to his

daughter. ⁹ If he has no daughter, give his inheritance to his brothers. ¹⁰ If he has no brothers, give his inheritance to his father's brothers. ¹¹ And if his father has no brothers, give his inheritance to the next of kin from his clan, that he may take possession of it. This is to be a statutory ordinance for the Israelites, as Yahweh has commanded Moses.”

MOSES REQUESTS A SUCCESSOR // DEUTERONOMY 3:23–29

¹² Then Yahweh said to Moses, “Go up this mountain of the Abarim range and see the land that I have given the Israelites. ¹³ After you have seen it, you too will be gathered to your people, as your brother Aaron was; ¹⁴ for when the congregation contended in the Wilderness of Zin, both of you rebelled against My command to show My holiness in their sight regarding the waters.” Those were the waters of Meribah in Kadesh, in the Wilderness of Zin.

¹⁵ So Moses appealed to Yahweh, ¹⁶ “May Yahweh, the God of the spirits of all flesh, appoint a man over the congregation ¹⁷ who will go out and come in before them, and who will lead them out and bring them in, so that the congregation of Yahweh will not be like sheep without a shepherd.”

JOSHUA TO SUCCEED MOSES // DEUTERONOMY 31:1–8

¹⁸ And Yahweh replied to Moses, “Take Joshua son of Nun, a man with the Spirit in him, and lay your hands on him. ¹⁹ Have him stand before Eleazar the priest and the whole congregation, and commission him in their sight. ²⁰ Confer on him some of your authority, so that the whole congregation of Israel will obey him. ²¹ He shall stand before Eleazar the priest, who will seek counsel for him before Yahweh by the judgment of the Urim. At his command, he and all the Israelites with him—the entire congregation—will go out and come in.”

■ **NUM 26:64 [FULFILLS]** That generation would die in the wilderness over 40 years ← NUM 14:28–35 p.–

■ **NUM 27:1 [NOTE]** Five sisters asked Moses for their father's land, and God said they were right. Their case became a law for every family with no sons.

■ **NUM 27:16 [PROPHECY]** Moses' request for a leader so the congregation be not as sheep without a shepherd → Matt 9:36; JN 10:11 · MEDIUM p.–

GOD SPEAKING

²² Moses did as Yahweh had commanded him. He took Joshua, had him stand before Eleazar the priest and the whole congregation, ²³ and laid his hands on him and commissioned him, as Yahweh had instructed through Moses.

28

CHAPTER 28 IN 30 SECONDS

God's calendar of offerings: two lambs every day, morning and evening, more on the Sabbath, more on the first of each month, then Passover and the Feast of Weeks. Worship was not a once a week thing. It was all day, every day.

THE DAILY OFFERINGS // EXODUS 29:38-44

¹ Then Yahweh said to Moses, ² "Command the Israelites and say to them: See that you present to Me at its appointed time the food for My food offerings, as a pleasing aroma to Me.

³ And tell them that this is the food offering you are to present to Yahweh as a regular burnt offering each day: two unblemished year-old male lambs. ⁴ Offer one lamb in the morning and the other at twilight, ⁵ along with two quarts of fine flour as a grain offering, mixed with a quart of oil from pressed olives.

⁶ This is a regular burnt offering established at Mount Sinai as a pleasing aroma, a food offering to Yahweh. ⁷ The drink offering accompanying each lamb shall be a quart of wine. Pour out the offering of fermented drink to Yahweh in the sanctuary area. ⁸ And offer the second lamb at twilight, with the same grain offering and drink offering as in the morning. It is a food offering, a pleasing aroma to Yahweh.

THE SABBATH OFFERINGS

⁹ On the Sabbath day, present two unblemished year-old male lambs, accompanied by a grain offering of four quarts of fine flour mixed with oil, as well as a drink offering.

¹⁰ This is the burnt offering for every Sabbath, in addition to the regular burnt offering and its drink offering.

THE MONTHLY OFFERINGS

¹¹ At the beginning of every month, you are to present to Yahweh a burnt offering of two young bulls, one ram, and seven male lambs a year old, all unblemished, ¹² along with six quarts of fine flour mixed with oil as a grain offering with each bull, four quarts of fine flour mixed with oil as a grain offering with the ram, ¹³ and two quarts of fine flour mixed with oil as a grain offering with each lamb. This is a burnt offering, a pleasing aroma, a food offering to Yahweh.

¹⁴ Their drink offerings shall be two quarts of wine with each bull, a third of a gallon with the ram, and a quart with each lamb. This is the monthly burnt offering to be made at each new moon throughout the year.

¹⁵ In addition to the regular burnt offering with its drink offering, one male goat is to be presented to Yahweh as a sin offering.

PASSOVER AND THE FEAST OF UNLEAVENED

BREAD // EXODUS 12:14-28; LEVITICUS 23:4-8; DEUTERONOMY 16:1-8

¹⁶ The fourteenth day of the first month is Yahweh's Passover. ¹⁷ On the fifteenth day of this month, there shall be a feast; for seven days unleavened bread is to be eaten.

¹⁸ On the first day there is to be a sacred assembly; you must not do any regular work. ¹⁹ Present to Yahweh a food offering, a burnt offering of two young bulls, one ram, and seven male lambs a year old, all unblemished. ²⁰ The grain offering shall consist of fine flour mixed with oil; offer six quarts with each bull, four quarts with the ram, ²¹ and two quarts with each of the seven lambs. ²² Include one male goat as a sin offering to make atonement for you.

²³ You are to present these in addition to the regular morning burnt offering. ²⁴ Offer the same food each day for seven days as a food offering, a pleasing aroma to Yahweh. It is to be offered with its drink offering and the regular burnt offering.

GOD SPEAKING

²⁵ On the seventh day you shall hold a sacred assembly; you must not do any regular work.

THE FEAST OF WEEKS // DEUTERONOMY 16:9–12

²⁶ On the day of firstfruits, when you present an offering of new grain to Yahweh during the Feast of Weeks, you are to hold a sacred assembly; you must not do any regular work.

²⁷ Present a burnt offering of two young bulls, one ram, and seven male lambs a year old as a pleasing aroma to Yahweh, ²⁸ together with their grain offerings of fine flour mixed with oil—six quarts with each bull, four quarts with the ram, ²⁹ and two quarts with each of the seven lambs.

³⁰ Include one male goat to make atonement for you. ³¹ Offer them with their drink offerings in addition to the regular burnt offering and its grain offering. The animals must be unblemished.

29

CHAPTER 29 IN 30 SECONDS

The busy seventh month: the Feast of Trumpets, the Day of Atonement and the Feast of Booths. During Booths the bulls count down each day, thirteen, then twelve, then eleven, all the way to seven. That adds up to seventy bulls in one week. Somebody had a lot of grilling to do.

THE FEAST OF TRUMPETS // LEVITICUS 23:23–25

¹ “On the first day of the seventh month, you are to hold a sacred assembly, and you must not do any regular work. This will be a day for you to sound the trumpets.

² As a pleasing aroma to Yahweh, you are to present a burnt offering of one young bull, one ram, and seven male lambs a year old, all unblemished, ³ together with their grain offerings of fine flour mixed with oil—six quarts with the bull, four quarts with the ram, ⁴ and two quarts with each of the seven male lambs.

⁵ Include one male goat as a sin offering to make atonement for you. ⁶ These are in addition to the monthly and daily burnt offerings with their prescribed grain offerings and drink offerings. They are a pleasing aroma, a food offering to Yahweh.

THE DAY OF ATONEMENT // LEVITICUS 16:1–34; LEVITICUS 23:26–32

⁷ On the tenth day of this seventh month, you are to hold a sacred assembly, and you shall humble yourselves; you must not do any work.

⁸ Present as a pleasing aroma to Yahweh a burnt offering of one young bull, one ram, and seven male lambs a year old, all unblemished, ⁹ together with their grain offerings of fine flour mixed with oil—six quarts with the bull, four quarts with the ram, ¹⁰ and two quarts with each of the seven lambs.

¹¹ Include one male goat for a sin offering, in addition to the sin offering of atonement and the regular burnt offering with its grain offering and drink offerings.

THE FEAST OF TABERNACLES // DEUTERONOMY 16:13–17

¹² On the fifteenth day of the seventh month, you are to hold a sacred assembly; you must not do any regular work, and you shall observe a feast to Yahweh for seven days.

¹³ As a pleasing aroma to Yahweh, you are to present a food offering, a burnt offering of thirteen young bulls, two rams, and fourteen male lambs a year old, all unblemished, ¹⁴ along with the grain offering of six quarts of fine flour mixed with oil with each of the thirteen bulls, four quarts with each of the two rams, ¹⁵ and two quarts with each of the fourteen lambs. ¹⁶ Include one male goat as a sin offering, in addition to the regular burnt offering with its grain offering and drink offering.

¹⁷ On the second day you are to present twelve young bulls, two rams, and fourteen male lambs a year old, all unblemished, ¹⁸ along with the grain and drink offerings for the bulls, rams, and lambs, according to the number prescribed. ¹⁹ Include one male goat as a sin offering, in addition to the regular burnt offering with its grain offering and drink offering.

²⁰ On the third day you are to present eleven bulls, two rams, and fourteen male lambs a year old, all unblemished, ²¹ along with the grain and drink offerings for the

OLD TESTAMENT QUOTED IN THE NEW GOD SPEAKING

bulls, rams, and lambs, according to the number prescribed. ²² Include one male goat as a sin offering, in addition to the regular burnt offering with its grain offering and drink offering.

²³ On the fourth day you are to present ten bulls, two rams, and fourteen male lambs a year old, all unblemished, ²⁴ along with the grain and drink offerings for the bulls, rams, and lambs, according to the number prescribed. ²⁵ Include one male goat as a sin offering, in addition to the regular burnt offering with its grain offering and drink offering.

²⁶ On the fifth day you are to present nine bulls, two rams, and fourteen male lambs a year old, all unblemished, ²⁷ along with the grain and drink offerings for the bulls, rams, and lambs, according to the number prescribed. ²⁸ Include one male goat as a sin offering, in addition to the regular burnt offering with its grain offering and drink offering.

²⁹ On the sixth day you are to present eight bulls, two rams, and fourteen male lambs a year old, all unblemished, ³⁰ along with the grain and drink offerings for the bulls, rams, and lambs, according to the number prescribed. ³¹ Include one male goat as a sin offering, in addition to the regular burnt offering with its grain offering and drink offering.

³² On the seventh day you are to present seven bulls, two rams, and fourteen male lambs a year old, all unblemished, ³³ along with the grain and drink offerings for the bulls, rams, and lambs, according to the number prescribed. ³⁴ Include one male goat as a sin offering, in addition to the regular burnt offering with its grain offering and drink offering.

³⁵ On the eighth day you are to hold a solemn assembly; you must not do any regular work. ³⁶ As a pleasing aroma to Yahweh, you are to present a food offering, a burnt offering of one bull, one ram, and seven male lambs a year old, all unblemished, ³⁷ along with the grain and drink offerings for the bulls, rams, and lambs, according to the number pre-

scribed. ³⁸ Include one male goat as a sin offering, in addition to the regular burnt offering with its grain offering and drink offering.

³⁹ You are to present these offerings to Yahweh at your appointed times, in addition to your vow and freewill offerings, whether burnt offerings, grain offerings, drink offerings, or peace offerings."

⁴⁰ So Moses spoke all this to the Israelites just as Yahweh had commanded him.

30

CHAPTER 30 IN 30 SECONDS

Keep your vows. A man's promise to God stands. A young woman's vow or a wife's vow can be canceled by her father or husband, but only on the day he hears about it. If he says nothing, it stands. God takes your words seriously.

LAWS ABOUT VOWS // MATTHEW 5:33–37

¹ Then Moses said to the heads of the tribes of Israel, "This is what Yahweh has commanded: ² If a man makes a vow to Yahweh or swears an oath to obligate himself by a pledge, he must not break his word; he must do everything he has promised.

³ And if a woman in her father's house during her youth makes a vow to Yahweh or obligates herself by a pledge, ⁴ and her father hears about her vow or pledge but says nothing to her, then all the vows or pledges by which she has bound herself shall stand. ⁵ But if her father prohibits her on the day he hears about it, then none of the vows or pledges by which she has bound herself shall stand. Yahweh will absolve her because her father has prohibited her.

⁶ If a woman marries while under a vow or rash promise by which she has bound herself, ⁷ and her husband hears of it but says nothing to her on that day, then the vows or pledges by which she has bound herself shall stand. ⁸ But if her husband prohibits her when he hears of it, he nullifies the vow that binds her or the rash promise she has made, and Yahweh will absolve her.

DEMONIC GOD SPEAKING

⁹ Every vow a widow or divorced woman pledges to fulfill is binding on her.

¹⁰ If a woman in her husband's house has made a vow or put herself under an obligation with an oath, ¹¹ and her husband hears of it but says nothing to her and does not prohibit her, then all the vows or pledges by which she has bound herself shall stand. ¹² But if her husband nullifies them on the day he hears of them, then nothing that came from her lips, whether her vows or pledges, shall stand. Her husband has nullified them, and Yahweh will absolve her.

¹³ Her husband may confirm or nullify any vow or any sworn pledge to deny herself.

¹⁴ But if her husband says nothing to her from day to day, then he confirms all the vows and pledges that bind her. He has confirmed them, because he said nothing to her on the day he heard about them. ¹⁵ But if he nullifies them after he hears of them, then he will bear her iniquity."

¹⁶ These are the statutes that Yahweh commanded Moses concerning the relationship between a man and his wife, and between a father and a young daughter still in his home.

31

CHAPTER 31 IN 30 SECONDS

God tells Moses to take vengeance on Midian for Peor. Israel sends 12,000 soldiers. They kill the five kings of Midian and Balaam too. Then Moses orders something terribly hard to read about the captives. The plunder is split, and not one Israelite soldier is lost.

VENGEANCE ON MIDIAN

¹ And Yahweh said to Moses, ² "Take vengeance on the Midianites for the Israelites. After that, you will be gathered to your people."

³ So Moses told the people, "Arm some of your men for war, that they may go against the Midianites and execute Yahweh's vengeance on them. ⁴ Send into battle a thousand men from each tribe of Israel."

⁵ So a thousand men were recruited from each tribe of Israel—twelve thousand

armed for war. ⁶ And Moses sent the thousand from each tribe into battle, along with Phinehas son of Eleazar the priest, who took with him the vessels of the sanctuary and the trumpets for signaling.

⁷ Then they waged war against Midian, as Yahweh had commanded Moses, and they killed every male. ⁸ Among the slain were Evi, Rekem, Zur, Hur, and Reba—the five kings of Midian. They also killed Balaam son of Beor with the sword.

⁹ The Israelites captured the Midianite women and their children, and they plundered all their herds, flocks, and goods. ¹⁰ Then they burned all the cities where the Midianites had lived, as well as all their encampments, ¹¹ and carried away all the plunder and spoils, both people and animals.

¹² They brought the captives, spoils, and plunder to Moses, to Eleazar the priest, and to the congregation of Israel at the camp on the plains of Moab, by the Jordan across from Jericho. ¹³ And Moses, Eleazar the priest, and all the leaders of the congregation went to meet them outside the camp.

¹⁴ But Moses was angry with the officers of the army—the commanders of thousands and commanders of hundreds—who were returning from the battle. ¹⁵ "Have you spared all the women?" he asked them. ¹⁶ "Look, these women caused the sons of Israel, through the counsel of Balaam, to turn unfaithfully against Yahweh at Peor, so that the plague struck the congregation of Yahweh. ¹⁷ So now, kill all the boys, as well as every woman who has had relations with a man, ¹⁸ but spare for yourselves every girl who has never had relations with a man.

¹⁹ All of you who have killed a person or touched the dead are to remain outside the camp for seven days. On the third day and the seventh day you are to purify both

■ **NUM 31:7 [NOTE]** THE WAR ON MIDIAN. This is one of the hardest chapters in the Bible. See the Big Question pages after chapter 31.

■ **NUM 31:16 [DEMONIC]** Balaam's advice led Israel into sin at Peor

GOD SPEAKING

yourselves and your captives. ²⁰ And purify every garment and leather good, everything made of goat's hair, and every article of wood."

²¹ Then Eleazar the priest said to the soldiers who had gone into battle, "This is the statute of the law which Yahweh has commanded Moses: ²² Only the gold, silver, bronze, iron, tin, and lead— ²³ everything that can withstand the fire—must be put through the fire, and it will be clean. But it must still be purified with the water of purification. And everything that cannot withstand the fire must pass through the water. ²⁴ On the seventh day you are to wash your clothes, and you will be clean. After that you may enter the camp."

DIVISION OF THE SPOILS

²⁵ Yahweh said to Moses, ²⁶ "You and Eleazar the priest and the family heads of the congregation are to take a count of what was captured, both of man and beast. ²⁷ Then divide the captives between the troops who went out to battle and the rest of the congregation.

²⁸ Set aside a tribute for Yahweh from what belongs to the soldiers who went into battle: one out of every five hundred, whether persons, cattle, donkeys, or sheep. ²⁹ Take it from their half and give it to Eleazar the priest as an offering to Yahweh.

³⁰ From the Israelites' half, take one out of every fifty, whether persons, cattle, donkeys, sheep, or other animals, and give them to the Levites who keep charge of the tabernacle of Yahweh."

³¹ So Moses and Eleazar the priest did as Yahweh had commanded Moses, ³² and this plunder remained from the spoils the soldiers had taken:

675,000 sheep,

³³ 72,000 cattle,

³⁴ 61,000 donkeys,

³⁵ and 32,000 women who had not slept with a man.

³⁶ This was the half portion for those who had gone to war:

337,500 sheep, ³⁷ including a tribute to Yahweh of 675,

³⁸ 36,000 cattle, including a tribute to Yahweh of 72,

³⁹ 30,500 donkeys, including a tribute to Yahweh of 61,

⁴⁰ and 16,000 people, including a tribute to Yahweh of 32.

⁴¹ Moses gave the tribute to Eleazar the priest as an offering for Yahweh, as Yahweh had commanded Moses.

⁴² From the Israelites' half, which Moses had set apart from the men who had gone to war, ⁴³ this half belonged to the congregation:

337,500 sheep,

⁴⁴ 36,000 cattle,

⁴⁵ 30,500 donkeys,

⁴⁶ and 16,000 people.

⁴⁷ From the Israelites' half, Moses took one out of every fifty persons and animals and gave them to the Levites who kept charge of the tabernacle of Yahweh, as Yahweh had commanded him.

THE VOLUNTARY OFFERING

⁴⁸ Then the officers who were over the units of the army—the commanders of thousands and of hundreds—approached Moses ⁴⁹ and said, "Your servants have counted the soldiers under our command, and not one of us is missing. ⁵⁰ So we have brought to Yahweh an offering of the gold articles each man acquired—armlets, bracelets, rings, earrings, and necklaces—to make atonement for ourselves before Yahweh."

⁵¹ So Moses and Eleazar the priest received from them all the articles made out of gold. ⁵² All the gold that the commanders of thousands and of hundreds presented as an offering to Yahweh weighed about 420 pounds. ⁵³ Each of the soldiers had taken plunder for himself. ⁵⁴ And Moses and Eleazar the priest received the gold from the commanders of thousands and of hundreds and brought it into the Tent of Meeting as a memorial for the Israelites before Yahweh.

DEBATED THE BIG QUESTION

THE WAR ON MIDIAN

One of the Hardest Chapters

NUMBERS 25:1 TO 18 · 31:1 TO 54 · DEUTERONOMY 21:10 TO 14

WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS

God told Moses to take vengeance on Midian for Peor. Israel sent 12,000 soldiers and killed every man, the five kings of Midian and Balaam. They brought back the women and children. Moses was angry with the officers and ordered them to kill the boys and the women who had slept with a man, and to keep alive the girls who had not, 31:14 to 18. The text says 32,000 girls were spared and no Israelite soldier died.

WHY MIDIAN

At Peor, Moabite and Midianite women led Israel into idol worship and sexual sin, and 24,000 died in the plague, 25:1 to 9. Moses says it was Balaam's advice, 31:16. The text treats the war as God's judgment on that plan.

GOD'S JUDGMENT VIEW

Many Christians, from Augustine to today, say God has the right to judge nations, as He did in the flood and at Sodom. Augustine wrote that in a war God commands, Moses showed obedience, not cruelty. This was a one time judgment, not a pattern for anyone today.

MOSES ADDED IT VIEW

Some point out that God commanded the battle, and that the order about the captives in 31:15 to 18 comes from Moses, in anger, not as God speaking. Even the Jewish teacher Rashi said Moses' anger in this chapter led him into a mistake about another law, in 31:21.

How Christians Read It

JUDGES 6:1 TO 6 · MATTHEW 5:43 TO 44 · LUKE 9:54 TO 55

WHAT HAPPENED TO THE GIRLS?

Many say they became wives or servants, protected by the law in Deuteronomy 21:10 to 14, which gave a captive woman a month to mourn and forbade selling her or treating her as a slave. Others, including some Jewish scholars, say the plain words mean they were taken for sex. Numbers 31 itself does not say.

THE BIG LANGUAGE VIEW

Some scholars, like Paul Copan, say ancient war reports used sweeping words, like we say a team got wiped out. They point out that a few generations later Midian is back and strong, coming like locusts, Judges 6:5. Others answer that the chapter still reads as a real command.

THE LATER STORY VIEW

Many critical scholars say the chapter was written much later as a lesson about purity, and that this war never happened as told. They point to Midian in Judges 6 and to the round numbers, like no soldier lost.

WHAT THE EARLY CHURCH SAID

About AD 144, Marcion said the God of the Old Testament was a different, harsher god than the Father of Jesus. The church rejected that and said it is one God in both testaments. Origen read the Old Testament wars as pictures of our spiritual war against sin.

WHAT ALL SIDES AGREE ON

This chapter is hard, and honest readers should feel it. It is not a pattern for Christians. Jesus told us to love our enemies, Matthew 5:44, and rebuked His disciples when they wanted to call fire down on a village, Luke 9:54 to 55.

32

CHAPTER 32 IN 30 SECONDS

The tribes of Reuben and Gad have lots of cattle and like the land east of the Jordan. Moses thinks they are pulling another Kadesh and refusing to fight. They promise to cross over and fight first, then come home. Moses agrees, and warns them: Be assured that your sin will find you out.

THE HEART

THE TRIBES EAST OF THE JORDAN // DEUTERONOMY 3:12-22; JOSHUA 13:8-14

¹Now the Reubenites and Gadites, who had very large herds and flocks, surveyed the lands of Jazer and Gilead, and they saw that the region was suitable for livestock. ²So the Gadites and Reubenites came to Moses, Eleazar the priest, and the leaders of the congregation, and said, ³"Ataroth, Dibon, Jazer, Nimrah, Heshbon, Elealeh, Sebam, Nebo, and Beon, ⁴which Yahweh conquered before the congregation of Israel, are suitable for livestock—and your servants have livestock."

⁵"If we have found favor in your sight," they said, "let this land be given to your servants as a possession. Do not make us cross the Jordan."

⁶But Moses asked the Gadites and Reubenites, "Shall your brothers go to war while you sit here? ⁷Why are you discouraging the Israelites from crossing into the land that Yahweh has given them? ⁸This is what your fathers did when I sent them from Kadesh-barnea to inspect the land.

⁹For when your fathers went up to the Valley of Eshcol and saw the land, they discouraged the Israelites from entering the land that Yahweh had given them. ¹⁰

So the anger of Yahweh was kindled that day, and He swore an oath, saying, ¹¹"Because they did not follow Me wholeheartedly, not one of the men twenty years of age or older who came out of Egypt will see the land that I swore to give Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob— ¹²not one except Caleb son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite and Joshua son of Nun—because they did follow Yahweh wholeheartedly." ¹³The anger of Yahweh burned against Israel, and He made them wander in the wilderness forty years, until the whole generation who had done evil in His sight was gone.

¹⁴Now behold, you, a brood of sinners, have risen up in place of your fathers to further stoke the burning anger of Yahweh against Israel. ¹⁵For if you turn away from

following Him, He will once again leave this people in the wilderness, and you will be the cause of their destruction."

¹⁶Then the Gadites and Reubenites approached Moses and said, "We want to build sheepfolds here for our livestock and cities for our little ones. ¹⁷But we will arm ourselves and be ready to go ahead of the Israelites until we have brought them into their place. Meanwhile, our little ones will remain in the fortified cities for protection from the inhabitants of the land. ¹⁸We will not return to our homes until every Israelite has taken possession of his inheritance. ¹⁹Yet we will not have an inheritance with them across the Jordan and beyond, because our inheritance has come to us on the east side of the Jordan."

²⁰Moses replied, "If you will do this—if you will arm yourselves before Yahweh for battle, ²¹and if every one of your armed men crosses the Jordan before Yahweh, until He has driven His enemies out before Him, ²²then when the land is subdued before Yahweh, you may return and be free of obligation to Yahweh and to Israel. And this land will belong to you as a possession before Yahweh. ²³But if you do not do this, you will certainly sin against Yahweh—and be assured that your sin will find you out. ²⁴Build cities for your little ones and folds for your flocks, but do what you have promised."

²⁵The Gadites and Reubenites said to Moses, "Your servants will do just as our lord commands. ²⁶Our children, our wives, our livestock, and all our animals will remain here in the cities of Gilead. ²⁷But your servants are equipped for war, and every man will cross over to the battle before Yahweh, just as our lord says."

²⁸So Moses gave orders about them to Eleazar the priest, to Joshua son of Nun, and to the family leaders of the tribes of Israel. ²⁹And Moses said to them, "If the Gadites and Reubenites cross the Jordan

NUM 32:7 [HEART] The spies saw the good land and still discouraged the hearts of the people. Moses warns Reuben and Gad not to do it again.

NUM 32:23 [NOTE] Be assured that your sin will find you out. The King James says, Be sure your sin will find you out. Moses said it to two tribes who were thinking about skipping the war, and it became a well known saying.

DEMONIC

with you, with every man armed for battle before Yahweh, and the land is subdued before you, then you are to give them the land of Gilead as a possession. ³⁰ But if they do not arm themselves and go across with you, then they must accept their possession among you in the land of Canaan."

³¹ The Gadites and Reubenites replied, "As Yahweh has spoken to your servants, so we will do. ³² We will cross over into the land of Canaan armed before Yahweh, that we may have our inheritance on this side of the Jordan."

³³ So Moses gave to the Gadites, to the Reubenites, and to the half-tribe of Manasseh son of Joseph the kingdom of Sihon king of the Amorites and the kingdom of Og king of Bashan—the land including its cities and the territory surrounding them.

³⁴ And the Gadites built up Dibon, Ataroth, Aroer, ³⁵ Atroth-shophan, Jazer, Jogbehah, ³⁶ Beth-nimrah, and Beth-haran as fortified cities, and they built folds for their flocks.

³⁷ The Reubenites built up Heshbon, Elealeh, Kiriathaim, ³⁸ as well as Nebo and Baal-meon (whose names were changed), and Sibmah. And they renamed the cities they rebuilt.

³⁹ The descendants of Machir son of Manasseh went to Gilead, captured it, and drove out the Amorites who were there. ⁴⁰ So Moses gave Gilead to the clan of Machir son of Manasseh, and they settled there. ⁴¹ Jair, a descendant of Manasseh, went and captured their villages and called them Havvoth-jair. ⁴² And Nobah went and captured Kenath and its villages and called it Nobah, after his own name.

33

CHAPTER 33 IN 30 SECONDS

A travel log of the whole trip from Egypt to the plains of Moab, stop by stop, written down by Moses. Then God says to drive out the people of Canaan and destroy their idols, or they will become thorns in your sides. It is the wilderness road trip in one chapter.

FORTY-TWO JOURNEYS OF THE ISRAELITES

¹ These are the journeys of the Israelites when they came out of the land of Egypt by their divisions under the leadership of Moses and Aaron. ² At Yahweh's command, Moses recorded the stages of their journey. These are the stages listed by their starting points:

³ On the fifteenth day of the first month, on the day after the Passover, the Israelites set out from Rameses. They marched out defiantly in full view of all the Egyptians, ⁴ who were burying all their firstborn, whom Yahweh had struck down among them; for Yahweh had executed judgment against their gods. ⁵ The Israelites set out from Rameses and camped at Succoth.

⁶ They set out from Succoth and camped at Etham, on the edge of the wilderness.

⁷ They set out from Etham and turned back to Pi-hahiroth, opposite Baalzephon, and they camped near Migdol.

⁸ They set out from Pi-hahiroth and crossed through the sea, into the wilderness, and they journeyed three days into the Wilderness of Etham and camped at Marah.

⁹ They set out from Marah and came to Elim, where there were twelve springs and seventy palm trees, and they camped there.

¹⁰ They set out from Elim and camped by the Red Sea.

¹¹ They set out from the Red Sea and camped in the Desert of Sin.

¹² They set out from the Desert of Sin and camped at Dophkah.

¹³ They set out from Dophkah and camped at Alush.

¹⁴ They set out from Alush and camped at Rephidim, where there was no water for the people to drink.

¹⁵ They set out from Rephidim and camped in the Wilderness of Sinai.

■ NUM 33:4 [DEMONIC] God executed judgment against Egypt's gods

DEMONIC GOD SPEAKING

- ¹⁶ They set out from the Wilderness of Sinai and camped at Kibroth-hat-taavah.
- ¹⁷ They set out from Kibroth-hattaavah and camped at Hazeroth.
- ¹⁸ They set out from Hazeroth and camped at Rithmah.
- ¹⁹ They set out from Rithmah and camped at Rimmon-perez.
- ²⁰ They set out from Rimmon-perez and camped at Libnah.
- ²¹ They set out from Libnah and camped at Rissah.
- ²² They set out from Rissah and camped at Kehelathah.
- ²³ They set out from Kehelathah and camped at Mount Shepher.
- ²⁴ They set out from Mount Shepher and camped at Haradah.
- ²⁵ They set out from Haradah and camped at Makheloth.
- ²⁶ They set out from Makheloth and camped at Tahath.
- ²⁷ They set out from Tahath and camped at Terah.
- ²⁸ They set out from Terah and camped at Mithkah.
- ²⁹ They set out from Mithkah and camped at Hashmonah.
- ³⁰ They set out from Hashmonah and camped at Moseroth.
- ³¹ They set out from Moseroth and camped at Bene-jaakan.
- ³² They set out from Bene-jaakan and camped at Hor-haggidgad.
- ³³ They set out from Hor-haggidgad and camped at Jotbathah.
- ³⁴ They set out from Jotbathah and camped at Abronah.
- ³⁵ They set out from Abronah and camped at Ezion-geber.
- ³⁶ They set out from Ezion-geber and camped at Kadesh in the Wilderness of Zin.
- ³⁷ They set out from Kadesh and camped at Mount Hor, on the outskirts of the land of Edom. ³⁸ At Yahweh's command, Aaron the priest climbed Mount Hor and died there on the first day of the fifth month, in the fortieth year af-

ter the Israelites had come out of the land of Egypt. ³⁹ Aaron was 123 years old when he died on Mount Hor.

- ⁴⁰ Now the Canaanite king of Arad, who lived in the Negev in the land of Canaan, heard that the Israelites were coming. ⁴¹ And the Israelites set out from Mount Hor and camped at Zalmonah.
- ⁴² They set out from Zalmonah and camped at Punon.
- ⁴³ They set out from Punon and camped at Oboth.
- ⁴⁴ They set out from Oboth and camped at Iye-abarim on the border of Moab.
- ⁴⁵ They set out from Iyim and camped at Dibon-gad.
- ⁴⁶ They set out from Dibon-gad and camped at Almon-diblathaim.
- ⁴⁷ They set out from Almon-diblathaim and camped in the mountains of Abarim facing Nebo.
- ⁴⁸ They set out from the mountains of Abarim and camped on the plains of Moab by the Jordan across from Jericho.
- ⁴⁹ And there on the plains of Moab they camped by the Jordan, from Beth-jeshimoth to Abel-shittim.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR OCCUPYING CANAAN

- ⁵⁰ On the plains of Moab by the Jordan across from Jericho, Yahweh said to Moses, ⁵¹ "Speak to the Israelites and tell them: When you cross the Jordan into the land of Canaan, ⁵² you must drive out before you all the inhabitants of the land, destroy all their carved images and cast idols, and demolish all their high places.
- ⁵³ You are to take possession of the land and settle in it, for I have given you the land to possess. ⁵⁴ And you are to divide the land by lot according to your clans. Give a larger inheritance to a larger clan and a smaller inheritance to a smaller one. Whatever falls to each one by lot will be his. You will receive an inheritance according to the tribes of your fathers.

NUM 33:52 [DEMONIC] Destroy their carved images, idols, and high places

PROPHECIES FULFILLED IN SCRIPTURE GOD SPEAKING

55 But if you do not drive out the inhabitants of the land before you, those you allow to remain will become barbs in your eyes and thorns in your sides; they will harass you in the land where you settle. **56** And then I will do to you what I had planned to do to them."

34

CHAPTER 34 IN 30 SECONDS

God draws the borders of the Promised Land, from the Wilderness of Zin to the sea and up to the north. Then He names the leaders from each tribe who will divide it up. The map is ready. Now they just have to go in.

THE BOUNDARIES OF CANAAN // GENESIS 15:8–21

1 Then Yahweh said to Moses, **2** "Command the Israelites and say to them: When you enter the land of Canaan, it will be allotted to you as an inheritance with these boundaries:

3 Your southern border will extend from the Wilderness of Zin along the border of Edom. On the east, your southern border will run from the end of the Salt Sea, **4** cross south of the Ascent of Akrabbim, continue to Zin, and go south of Kadesh-barnea. Then it will go on to Hazar-addar and proceed to Azmon, **5** where it will turn from Azmon, join the Brook of Egypt, and end at the Sea.

6 Your western border will be the coastline of the Great Sea; this will be your boundary on the west.

7 Your northern border will run from the Great Sea directly to Mount Hor, **8** and from Mount Hor to Lebo-hamath, then extend to Zedad, **9** continue to Ziphron, and end at Hazar-enan. This will be your boundary on the north.

10 And your eastern border will run straight from Hazar-enan to Shepham, **11** then go down from Shepham to Riblah on the east side of Ain and continue along the slopes east of the Sea of Chinnereth. **12** Then the border will go down along the Jordan and end at the Salt Sea.

This will be your land, defined by its borders on all sides."

13 So Moses commanded the Israelites, "Apportion this land by lot as an inheritance. Yahweh has commanded that it be given to the nine and a half tribes. **14** For the tribes of the Reubenites and Gadites, along with the half-tribe of Manasseh, have already received their inheritance. **15** These two and a half tribes have received their inheritance across the Jordan from Jericho, toward the sunrise."

LEADERS TO DIVIDE THE LAND

16 Then Yahweh said to Moses, **17** "These are the names of the men who are to assign the land as an inheritance for you: Eleazar the priest and Joshua son of Nun.

18 Appoint one leader from each tribe to distribute the land. **19** These are their names:

Caleb son of Jephunneh from the tribe of Judah;

20 Shemuel son of Ammihud from the tribe of Simeon;

21 Elidad son of Chislon from the tribe of Benjamin;

22 Bukki son of Jogli, a leader from the tribe of Dan;

23 Hanniel son of Ephod, a leader from the tribe of Manasseh son of Joseph;

24 Kemuel son of Shipthan, a leader from the tribe of Ephraim;

25 Eli-zaphan son of Parnach, a leader from the tribe of Zebulun;

26 Paltiel son of Azzan, a leader from the tribe of Issachar;

27 Ahihud son of Shelomi, a leader from the tribe of Asher;

28 and Pedahel son of Ammihud, a leader from the tribe of Naphtali."

29 These are the ones whom Yahweh commanded to apportion the inheritance to the Israelites in the land of Canaan.

NUM 33:55 [PROPHECY] Nations left in the land would become thorns in Israel's sides → JUDG 2:1–3 p.–

MESSIANIC FORESHADOW GOD SPEAKING

35

CHAPTER 35 IN 30 SECONDS

The Levites get 48 cities with pastureland. Six of them are cities of refuge, where someone who killed by accident can run and be safe until the high priest dies. A murderer, though, is put to death. Blood pollutes the land, and God lives there with them.

FORTY-EIGHT CITIES FOR THE LEVITES //

JOSHUA 21:1-45; 1 CHRONICLES 6:54-81

¹Again Yahweh spoke to Moses on the plains of Moab by the Jordan across from Jericho: ²"Command the Israelites to give, from the inheritance they will possess, cities for the Levites to live in and pasturelands around the cities. ³The cities will be for them to live in, and the pasturelands will be for their herds, their flocks, and all their other livestock.

⁴The pasturelands around the cities you are to give the Levites will extend 1,500 feet from the wall on every side. ⁵You are also to measure 3,000 feet outside the city on the east, 3,000 feet on the south, 3,000 feet on the west, and 3,000 feet on the north, with the city in the center.

These areas will serve as larger pasturelands for the cities.

⁶Six of the cities you give the Levites are to be appointed as cities of refuge, to which a manslayer may flee. In addition to these, give the Levites forty-two other cities. ⁷The total number of cities you give the Levites will be forty-eight, with their corresponding pasturelands. ⁸The cities that you apportion from the territory of the Israelites should be given to the Levites in proportion to the inheritance of each tribe: more from a larger tribe and less from a smaller one."

SIX CITIES OF REFUGE // DEUTERONOMY 4:41-43; DEUTERONOMY 19:1-14; JOSHUA 20:1-9

⁹Then Yahweh said to Moses, ¹⁰"Speak to the Israelites and tell them: When you cross the Jordan into the land of Canaan, ¹¹designate cities to serve as your cities of refuge, so that a person who kills someone unintentionally may flee there. ¹²You

are to have these cities as a refuge from the avenger, so that the manslayer will not die until he stands trial before the assembly.

¹³The cities you select will be your six cities of refuge. ¹⁴Select three cities across the Jordan and three in the land of Canaan as cities of refuge. ¹⁵These six cities will serve as a refuge for the Israelites and for the foreigner or stranger among them, so that anyone who kills a person unintentionally may flee there.

¹⁶If, however, anyone strikes a person with an iron object and kills him, he is a murderer; the murderer must surely be put to death. ¹⁷Or if anyone has in his hand a stone of deadly size, and he strikes and kills another, he is a murderer; the murderer must surely be put to death. ¹⁸If anyone has in his hand a deadly object of wood, and he strikes and kills another, he is a murderer; the murderer must surely be put to death.

¹⁹The avenger of blood is to put the murderer to death; when he finds him, he is to kill him.

²⁰Likewise, if anyone maliciously pushes another or intentionally throws an object at him and kills him, ²¹or if in hostility he strikes him with his hand and he dies, the one who struck him must surely be put to death; he is a murderer. When the avenger of blood finds the murderer, he is to kill him.

²²But if anyone pushes a person suddenly, without hostility, or throws an object at him unintentionally, ²³or without looking drops a heavy stone that kills him, but he was not an enemy and did not intend to harm him, ²⁴then the congregation must judge between the slayer and the avenger of blood according to these ordinances. ²⁵The assembly is to protect the manslayer from the hand of the avenger of blood. Then the assembly will return him to the city of refuge to which he fled, and he must live there until the death of

NUM 35:11 [PROPHECY] Cities of refuge gave safety to those who fled there → HEB 6:18 · MEDIUM p.-

■ NUM 35:11 [NOTE] Hebrews 6:18 says we have fled to take hold of the hope set before us, and many see the cities of refuge as a picture of Jesus.

GOD SPEAKING

the high priest, who was anointed with the holy oil.

²⁶ But if the manslayer ever goes outside the limits of the city of refuge to which he fled ²⁷ and the avenger of blood finds him outside of his city of refuge and kills him, then the avenger will not be guilty of bloodshed, ²⁸ because the manslayer must remain in his city of refuge until the death of the high priest. Only after the death of the high priest may he return to the land he owns. ²⁹ This will be a statutory ordinance for you for the generations to come, wherever you live.

³⁰ If anyone kills a person, the murderer is to be put to death on the testimony of the witnesses. But no one is to be put to death based on the testimony of a lone witness.

³¹ You are not to accept a ransom for the life of a murderer who deserves to die; he must surely be put to death. ³² Nor should you accept a ransom for the person who flees to a city of refuge and allow him to return and live on his own land before the death of the high priest.

³³ Do not pollute the land where you live, for bloodshed pollutes the land, and no atonement can be made for the land on which the blood is shed, except by the blood of the one who shed it. ³⁴ Do not defile the land where you live and where I dwell. For I, Yahweh, dwell among the Israelites."

36

CHAPTER 36 IN 30 SECONDS

The family of Zelophehad's daughters worries that their land will leave the tribe if the sisters marry outside it. So Moses rules that they must marry within their own tribe, and they marry cousins. The book ends on the plains of Moab, across the Jordan from Jericho.

ZELOPHEHAD'S DAUGHTERS MARRY // NUMBERS 27:1–11

¹ Now the family heads of the clan of Gilead son of Machir son of Manasseh, one of the clans of Joseph, approached Moses and the leaders who were the heads of the Israelite families and ad-

dressed them, ² saying, "When Yahweh commanded my lord to give the land as an inheritance to the Israelites by lot, He also commanded him to give the inheritance of our brother Zelophehad to his daughters. ³ But if they marry any of the men from the other tribes of Israel, their inheritance will be withdrawn from the portion of our fathers and added to the tribe into which they marry. So our allotted inheritance would be taken away. ⁴ And when the Jubilee for the Israelites comes, their inheritance will be added to the tribe into which they marry and taken away from the tribe of our fathers."

⁵ So at the word of Yahweh, Moses commanded the Israelites: "The tribe of the sons of Joseph speaks correctly. ⁶ This is what Yahweh has commanded concerning the daughters of Zelophehad: They may marry anyone they please, provided they marry within a clan of the tribe of their father. ⁷ No inheritance in Israel may be transferred from tribe to tribe, because each of the Israelites is to retain the inheritance of the tribe of his fathers. ⁸ Every daughter who possesses an inheritance from any Israelite tribe must marry within a clan of the tribe of her father, so that every Israelite will possess the inheritance of his fathers. ⁹ No inheritance may be transferred from one tribe to another, for each tribe of Israel must retain its inheritance."

¹⁰ So the daughters of Zelophehad did as Yahweh had commanded Moses. ¹¹ Mahlah, Tirzah, Hoglah, Milcah, and Noah, the daughters of Zelophehad, were married to cousins on their father's side. ¹² They married within the clans of the descendants of Manasseh son of Joseph, and their inheritance remained within the tribe of their father's clan.

¹³ These are the commandments and ordinances that Yahweh gave the Israelites through Moses on the plains of Moab by the Jordan across from Jericho.