

Exploring the Old Testament

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Numbers

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

Numbers 1:1

Hebrew Title For Numbers

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Numbers 1:1

4 Key Promises

The people of God are attempting to occupy a place where they can enjoy God's presence and so be a blessing to the nations.

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Why do these 4 Key Promises not come to pass in Numbers?

Theme

God's Past Promises will Prevail in Spite of
People's Present Problems

Section 1 - Chapters 1-10

God's Preparations Preserve His Promises

Numbers 1:2 “Take a census of all the congregation of the people of Israel, by clans, by fathers' houses, according to the number of names, every male, head by head. **3** From twenty years old and upward, all in Israel who are able to go to war, you and Aaron shall list them, company by company.

God's Preparations Preserve His Promises

- God prepares His people to enter the promised land through the census.

God's Preparations Preserve His Promises

So all those listed of the people of Israel, by their fathers' houses, from twenty years old and upward, every man able to go to war in Israel— all those listed were 603,550.

Numbers 1:45-46

God's Preparations Preserve His Promises

- God prepares His people for his presence to move with them through cleansing.

¹⁵ On the day that the tabernacle was set up, the cloud covered the tabernacle, the tent of the testimony. And at evening it was over the tabernacle like the appearance of fire until morning. ¹⁶ So it was always: the cloud covered it by day and the appearance of fire by night. ¹⁷ And whenever the cloud lifted from over the tent, after that the people of Israel set out, and in the place where the cloud settled down, there the people of Israel camped.

Numbers 9:15-17

Section 2 - Chapters 11-16

God's Punishment Preserves His Promises

Complaints

- at hardships (11:1)
- at food (11:13)
- at Moses (12:1)
- at God! (13:31-33, 14:1-7)

“We came to the land to which you sent us. It flows with milk and honey, and this is its fruit. However, the people who dwell in the land are strong, and the cities are fortified and very large. And besides, we saw the descendants of Anak there.”

Numbers 13:27-28

Caleb quieted the people before Moses and said, “Let us go up at once and occupy it, for we are well able to overcome it.”

Numbers 13:30

Then all the congregation raised a loud cry, and the people wept that night. ² And all the people of Israel grumbled against Moses and Aaron. The whole congregation said to them, “Would that we had died in the land of Egypt! Or would that we had died in this wilderness! ³ Why is the Lord bringing us into this land, to fall by the sword? Our wives and our little ones will become a prey. Would it not be better for us to go back to Egypt?” ⁴ And they said to one another, “Let us choose a leader and go back to Egypt.”

Numbers 14-1-4

¹⁰ Then all the congregation said to stone them [that is, Moses, Aaron, Joshua, and Caleb] with stones. But the glory of the Lord appeared at the tent of meeting to all the people of Israel. ¹¹ And the Lord said to Moses, “How long will this people despise me? And how long will they not believe in me, in spite of all the signs that I have done among them? ¹² I will strike them with the pestilence and disinherit them, and I will make of you a nation greater and mightier than they.”

Numbers 14:10-12

“I have pardoned, according to your word. ²¹ But truly, as I live, and as all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the Lord, ²² none of the men who have seen my glory and my signs that I did in Egypt and in the wilderness, and yet have put me to the test these ten times and have not obeyed my voice, ²³ shall see the land that I swore to give to their fathers. And none of those who despised me shall see it.

Numbers 14:21-23

God's Punishment Preserves His Promises

-The first generation does not trust God, but complains and fears for their children's safety and do not get to enter the promised land.

naam

“But your little ones, who you said would become a prey, I will bring in, and they shall know the land that you have rejected.”

Numbers 14:31

God's Punishment Preserves His Promises

-The first generation does not trust God, but complains and fears for their children's safety and do not get to enter the promised land.

-God is merciful and protects their children and only the second generation of Israel get to enter Canaan.

¹⁶ For who were those who heard and yet rebelled? Was it not all those who left Egypt led by Moses? ¹⁷ And with whom was he provoked for forty years? Was it not with those who sinned, whose bodies fell in the wilderness? ¹⁸ And to whom did he swear that they would not enter his rest, but to those who were disobedient? ¹⁹ So we see that they were unable to enter because of unbelief.

Hebrews 3:16-19

“Today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion, on the day of testing in the wilderness, where your fathers put me to the test and saw my works for forty years. Therefore I was provoked with that generation, and said, ‘They always go astray in their heart; they have not known my ways.’ As I swore in my wrath, ‘They shall not enter my rest.’” Take care, brothers, lest there be in any of you an evil, unbelieving heart, leading you to fall away from the living God. But exhort one another every day, as long as it is called “today,” that none of you may be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin. For we have come to share in Christ, if indeed we hold our original confidence firm to the end. As it is said, “Today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion.”

Hebrews 3:8-15

“Turn tomorrow and set out for the wilderness by the way to the Red Sea”.

Numbers 14:25

Section 3 - Chapters 17-36

God's Patience Preserves His Promises

From Mount Hor they set out by the way to the Red Sea, to go around the land of Edom. And the people became impatient on the way. And the people spoke against God and against Moses, “Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness?”

Numbers 21:4

Pattern of Numbers

The people sin → God displays his righteous anger →

The people need a mediator → God displays his patience

The Lord your God who goes before you will himself fight for you, just as he did for you in Egypt before your eye and in the wilderness, where you have seen how the Lord your God carried you, as a man carries his son, all the way that you went until you came to this place.' Yet in spite of this word you did not believe the Lord your God, who went before you in the way to seek you out a place to pitch your tents, in fire by night and in the cloud by day, to show you by what way you should go.

Deuteronomy 1:30-33

That the next generation might know them, the children yet unborn, and arise and tell them to their children, so that they should set their hope in God and not forget the works of God, but keep his commandments, and that they should not be like their fathers, a stubborn and rebellious generation, a generation whose heart was not steadfast, whose spirit was not faithful to God.

Psalm 78:6-8

Today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts, as at Meribah, as on the day at Massah in the wilderness, when your fathers put me to the test and put me to the proof, though they had seen my work.

Psalm 95:7-9

For I do not want you to be unaware, brothers, that our fathers were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, **2** and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea, **3** and all ate the same spiritual food, **4** and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank from the spiritual Rock that followed them, and the Rock was Christ. **5** Nevertheless, with most of them God was not pleased, for they were overthrown in the wilderness.

1 Corinthians 10:1-12

Now these things took place as examples for us, that we might not desire evil as they did. Do not be idolaters as some of them were; as it is written, “The people sat down to eat and drink and rose up to play.”

We must not indulge in sexual immorality as some of them did, and twenty-three thousand fell in a single day. We must not put Christ to the test, as some of them did and were destroyed by serpents, nor grumble, as some of them did and were destroyed by the Destroyer.

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

1 Corinthians 10:1-12

“take care brothers, lest there be in any of
you an evil, unbelieving heart, leading you
to fall away from the living God”

Hebrews 3:12

“For the glory descended upon the new Israel at Pentecost, and we have the living water of the Spirit and the true bread that has come down out of heaven and given life to the world. We are not sheep without a shepherd because the good shepherd has laid down his life for us and taken it up again, and he has appointed undershepherds over us so that we will know the provision and protection of God until we enter into our final rest!”

-Michael Goldo

And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.

John 3:14-15

“The Lord bless you and keep you, the Lord
make his face shine upon you and be gracious to
you, the Lord lift up his countenance upon you
and give you peace.”

Numbers 6:24-26

To Do

Watch Bible Project Video on Deuteronomy

Memorize Deuteronomy 6:4-6