

FAITHFUL MEN LIBRARY · STUDY OUTLINE

Numbers: A Study Outline

Old Testament Digest, Volume 1

From the *Old Testament Digest* of William MacDonald

Outline based on Old Testament Digest, Volume 1: Genesis–Deuteronomy by William MacDonald.

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Numbers

A study outline from William MacDonald's *Old Testament Digest, Volume 1* · online: kee-ministry-library.netlify.app/.../outline/numbers

Overview of Numbers

Numbers follows Israel from Mount Sinai through nearly forty years of wilderness travel to the Plains of Moab. MacDonald shows a nation counted and ordered for the march, then turned back by unbelief at Kadesh, until a new generation stands ready to enter the land.

Key themes

- The unbelief of the human heart
- God's holiness tempered with mercy
- Moses as mediator and intercessor
- Order and separation in God's camp
- God's purposes never thwarted
- Written as examples for us

Christ in Numbers. MacDonald sees Christ in Aaron's budding rod (the risen Priest), the rock smitten once, the brazen serpent lifted up, the red heifer, the Star out of Jacob, and the high priest whose death frees the manslayer. Moses as mediator finds his antitype in the Lord Jesus.

Read Numbers in the NET Bible: [Numbers 1](#) · MacDonald's full commentary: [Numbers in the Digest](#)

MacDonald's Outline of Numbers

- I. Last Days at Sinai ([Numbers 1:1–10:10](#))
 - A. Census and arrangement of tribes ([Numbers 1–2](#))
 - B. Service of the Levites ([Numbers 3–4](#))
 - C. Miscellaneous laws ([Numbers 5:1–10:10](#))
- II. Journey from Sinai to the Plains of Moab ([Numbers 10:11–22:1](#))
 - A. From Sinai to Kadesh Barnea ([Numbers 10:11–12:16](#))
 - B. The expedition of the spies ([Numbers 13:1–14:45](#))
 - C. The wilderness wandering ([Numbers 15–19](#))
 - A. Miscellaneous legislation ([Numbers 15](#))
 - B. Rebellion of Korah ([Numbers 16–17](#))
 - C. Instructions to Levites ([Numbers 18–19](#))
 - D. Events from Kadesh to the Plains of Moab ([Numbers 20:1–22:1](#))
 - A. Sin of Moses ([Numbers 20:1–13](#))
 - B. The death of Aaron ([Numbers 20:14–29](#))
 - C. Brazen serpent ([Numbers 21:1–22:1](#))
- III. Events at the Plains of Moab ([Numbers 22:2–36:13](#))
 - A. Balaam the prophet ([Numbers 22:2–25:18](#))
 - B. Second census ([Numbers 26:1–27:11](#))
 - C. Joshua succeeds Moses ([Numbers 27:12–23](#))
 - D. Offerings and vows ([Numbers 28–30](#))
 - E. Destruction of the Midianites ([Numbers 31](#))
 - F. The inheritance of Reuben, Gad, and half-Manasseh ([Numbers 32](#))
 - G. Review of journeys of the Israelites ([Numbers 33](#))
 - H. Borders of the Land of Promise ([Numbers 34](#))
 - I. Cities of Levites and cities of refuge ([Numbers 35:1–8](#))
 - J. Miscellaneous legislation ([Numbers 35:9–36:13](#))

I • Israel Counted as a Marching Army

[Numbers 1](#)

God orders a census of Israel's fighting men so the nation can march to Canaan in order, with the Levites set apart.

- I. Setting: one year and one month after leaving Egypt – [Numbers 1:1](#)
 - A. One month after the tabernacle was raised ([Exodus 40:17](#))
 - B. The book is named for its two numberings (chapters 1 and 26) – [Numbers 1; 26](#)
 - C. Not the same census as [Exodus 30:11–16](#); different time and purpose
- II. The purpose: an orderly army ready to march – [Numbers 1:2–3](#)
 - A. All men twenty and older able to go to war – [Numbers 1:3](#)

- III. Helpers from each tribe assist Moses and Aaron — [Numbers 1:4-19](#)
 - A. "Tabernacle of the congregation" means "tent of meeting" — [Numbers 1:1](#)
- IV. The totals: 603,550 fighting men — [Numbers 1:20-46](#)
 - A. Ephraim outnumbers Manasseh, as Jacob foretold ([Genesis 48:19-20](#)) — [Numbers 1:32-35](#)
 - B. Tribes listed by camps: Reuben, Judah, Dan, Ephraim
- V. Levites not counted as warriors — [Numbers 1:47-54](#)
 - A. They put up, took down, and served the tabernacle — [Numbers 1:50-51](#)
 - B. Camping around it, they guarded it and shielded the people from wrath — [Numbers 1:53](#)

CROSS REFERENCES

[Exodus 40:17](#) [Exodus 30:11-16](#) [Genesis 48:19-20](#)

RELATED READING

- “The Claims of God's Sovereignty and Holiness” (John Gifford Bellett, [plymouthbrethren.org](#)) — Bellett on God's claims in Numbers 1-4

ALSO DISCUSSED IN THE LIBRARY

- *Men of the Mountains & Valleys* (T. Ernest Wilson)
- *Types of the Tabernacle* (Thomas Newberry)
- *The Book of Genesis* (James Gunn)

[Read MacDonald on Chapter 1](#) →

2 • The Camp Arranged Around the Tabernacle

[Numbers 2](#)

The twelve tribes camp in four groups of three facing the tabernacle and march in a set order.

- I. Each tribe pitches facing the tabernacle under its own banner — [Numbers 2:1-2](#)
 - A. "Far off about" means "facing" or "over against" — [Numbers 2:2](#)
- II. The four camps and their totals — [Numbers 2:3-31](#)
 - A. East — Judah, Issachar, Zebulun: 186,400 — [Numbers 2:3-9](#)
 - B. South — Reuben, Simeon, Gad: 151,450 — [Numbers 2:10-16](#)
 - C. West — Ephraim, Manasseh, Benjamin: 108,100 — [Numbers 2:18-24](#)
 - D. North — Dan, Asher, Naphtali: 157,600 — [Numbers 2:25-31](#)
- III. Order of march, with Levites in the middle — [Numbers 2:9, 17](#)
 - A. Judah leads; Levites march after Gad, before Ephraim — [Numbers 2:17](#)
- IV. Size of the nation — [Numbers 2:32](#)
 - A. 603,550 warriors; 625,550 with the Levites ([Numbers 3:39](#)) — [Numbers 2:32](#)
 - B. Total population likely near two million

CROSS REFERENCES

[Numbers 3:39](#)

LESSONS

- A church's strength is better measured by its warriors than by its pew-sitters.

RELATED READING

- “The Claims of God's Sovereignty and Holiness” (John Gifford Bellett, [plymouthbrethren.org](#)) — Bellett on God's claims in Numbers 1-4

ALSO DISCUSSED IN THE LIBRARY

- *Current Issues* (Dan Snaddon)

- *Expository Notes on Ezekiel* (H. A. Ironside)
- *Bible Gems: Gospel Light* (Milton Haack)

Read MacDonald on Chapter 2 →

3 · The Levites Taken in Place of the Firstborn

Numbers 3

God sets apart the tribe of Levi for tabernacle service in place of Israel's firstborn, under Aaron's priestly family.

- I. Levi chosen for the sanctuary instead of the firstborn — [Numbers 3:11-13](#)
 - A. Three sons: Gershon, Kohath, Merari — [Numbers 3:17](#)
- II. Priests and Levites distinguished — [Numbers 3:1-10](#)
 - A. Only Aaron's family were priests; Eleazar and Ithamar remain after Nadab and Abihu — [Numbers 3:2-4](#)
 - B. Levites serve the priests — [Numbers 3:5-9](#)
 - C. "The priests the Levites" means Levitical priests, not all Levites
- III. Old Testament distance versus New Testament access — [Numbers 3:10](#)
 - A. The ordinary Israelite came near the holy things on pain of death — [Numbers 3:10](#)
 - B. Through Christ we have boldness to enter God's presence ([Hebrews 4:16](#))
- IV. Each Levite family's charge and camp — [Numbers 3:14-39](#)
 - A. Gershon (west): curtains, coverings, hangings — 7,500 — [Numbers 3:18-26](#)
 - B. Kohath (south): the most holy things — 8,600 — [Numbers 3:27-32](#)
 - C. Merari (north): boards, bars, pillars, sockets — 6,200 — [Numbers 3:33-37](#)
 - D. Moses and Aaron's family on the east at the entrance — [Numbers 3:38](#)
- V. Redeeming the extra firstborn — [Numbers 3:39-51](#)
 - A. 22,000 Levites (the 300 difference perhaps firstborn Levites) against 22,273 firstborn — [Numbers 3:39, 43](#)
 - B. 273 redeemed at five shekels each — 1,365 shekels to Aaron — [Numbers 3:46-51](#)

CROSS REFERENCES

[Hebrews 4:16](#)

LESSONS

- Calvary has changed everything: believers now draw near to God with boldness through Christ.

RELATED READING

- "The Claims of God's Sovereignty and Holiness" (John Gifford Bellett, plymouthbrethren.org) — Bellett on God's claims in Numbers 1-4

ALSO DISCUSSED IN THE LIBRARY

- *Current Issues* (Dan Snaddon)
- *Church Truths* (Dan Snaddon)
- *Truths to Live By: One Day at a Time* (William MacDonald)

Read MacDonald on Chapter 3 →

4 • Carrying the Tabernacle Through the Wilderness

Numbers 4

The Levites aged 30 to 50 are counted and assigned their tasks in moving the tabernacle.

- I. Active service from 30 to 50 years of age – [Numbers 4:3](#)
- II. The Kohathites carry the holy things – [Numbers 4:4-20](#)
 - A. Aaron and his sons cover each sacred vessel first – [Numbers 4:5-14](#)
 - B. "Put in the staves" may mean adjust the poles ([Exodus 25:15](#)) – [Numbers 4:6](#)
 - C. Kohathites must not touch or look on them uncovered, lest they die – [Numbers 4:15-20](#)
- III. The ark always hidden by the veil – [Numbers 4:5](#)
 - A. The veil pictures Christ's body, torn at Calvary to open the way
- IV. The Gershonites and Merarites – [Numbers 4:21-33](#)
 - A. Gershonites carry curtains and hangings, under Ithamar – [Numbers 4:21-28](#)
 - B. Merarites carry boards, bars, pillars, and sockets – [Numbers 4:29-33](#)
- V. Census of working Levites: 8,580 – [Numbers 4:34-49](#)
 - A. Kohathites 2,750; Gershonites 2,630; Merarites 3,200 – [Numbers 4:36, 40, 44](#)

CROSS REFERENCES

[Exodus 25:15](#)

RELATED READING

- [“The Claims of God's Sovereignty and Holiness”](#) (John Gifford Bellett, [plymouthbrethren.org](#)) – Bellett on God's claims in Numbers 1-4
- [Lectures on the Tabernacle](#) (William J. McClure) – McClure on Kohathites bearing the ark on shoulders

ALSO DISCUSSED IN THE LIBRARY

- [Church Truths](#) (Dan Snaddon)
- [I Will Build My Church](#) (James Gunn)
- [Through the Scriptures: Sunday School Lesson Outlines](#) (Alfred P. Gibbs)

[Read MacDonald on Chapter 4](#) →

5 • Keeping the Camp Clean

Numbers 5

Because God dwells among His people, the camp is kept free of defilement, wrongs are repaid, and suspected unfaithfulness is judged by God.

- I. Defiled persons put outside the camp – [Numbers 5:1-4](#)
 - A. Reason: God walked in the midst of the camp ([Deuteronomy 23:14](#)) – [Numbers 5:3](#)
 - B. Lepers, those with discharges, those defiled by the dead – [Numbers 5:2](#)
- II. Making things right after wronging another – [Numbers 5:5-10](#)
 - A. Confession, trespass offering, restitution plus a fifth – [Numbers 5:6-7](#)
 - B. If no one remains to repay, payment goes to the priest – [Numbers 5:8-10](#)
- III. The trial of jealousy – [Numbers 5:11-31](#)
 - A. A suspicious husband brings his wife and a meal offering to the priest – [Numbers 5:12-15](#)
 - B. She drinks holy water mixed with dust and the washed-off curses – [Numbers 5:17-26](#)
 - C. Guilt brings the curse; innocence brings freedom and fruitfulness – [Numbers 5:27-28](#)

- IV. Its purpose and possible future meaning — [Numbers 5:29-31](#)
- A. It settled jealousy once for all, clearing the innocent — [Numbers 5:29-31](#)
 - B. Some see a coming trial of Israel for unfaithfulness to Jehovah

CROSS REFERENCES

[Deuteronomy 23:14](#)

LESSONS

- Jealousy can wreck a marriage; God provided a way to settle it and clear the innocent.

ALSO DISCUSSED IN THE LIBRARY

- *Angola Beloved* (T. Ernest Wilson)
- *Miscellaneous Writings, Volume 2* (C. H. Mackintosh)

[Read MacDonald on Chapter 5](#) →

6 • The Nazarite Vow and the Priestly Blessing

[Numbers 6](#)

Men or women could voluntarily separate themselves to God as Nazarites, and the priests were to bless Israel in God's name.

- I. The Nazarite: one separated to God — [Numbers 6:1-2](#)
 - A. A voluntary vow, usually about 30 days; a few for life (Samuel, Samson, John the Baptist)
- II. Three provisions and their meaning — [Numbers 6:3-8](#)
 - A. No fruit of the vine — giving up natural joy — [Numbers 6:3-4](#)
 - B. No razor — accepting humiliation — [Numbers 6:5](#)
 - C. No contact with the dead — avoiding defilement — [Numbers 6:6-8](#)
 - D. Strength through weakness, love that "hates" kin ([Luke 14:26](#))
- III. When the vow was broken by accident — [Numbers 6:9-12](#)
 - A. Seven-day cleansing ([Numbers 19](#)), shaving, and offerings — [Numbers 6:9-11](#)
 - B. The earlier days were lost; he began again — [Numbers 6:12](#)
- IV. Completing the vow — [Numbers 6:13-21](#)
 - A. Burnt, sin, peace, and meal offerings — [Numbers 6:14-15](#)
 - B. Hair burned under the peace offering — [Numbers 6:18](#)
- V. The priestly benediction — [Numbers 6:22-27](#)

CROSS REFERENCES

[Luke 14:26](#) [Numbers 19](#)

LESSONS

- Separation to God may look strange to the world, but it is the path to true joy and strength.

RELATED READING

- *Separation and Service: Thoughts on Numbers 6 and 7* (Hudson Taylor) — Hudson Taylor on the Nazarite's separation
- *Separation and Service: Thoughts on Numbers 6 and 7* (Hudson Taylor) — Hudson Taylor on the priestly blessing

ALSO DISCUSSED IN THE LIBRARY

- *Articles by C. H. Mackintosh* (C. H. Mackintosh)
- *Through the Scriptures: Sunday School Lesson Outlines* (Alfred P. Gibbs)
- *Jeremiah and Lamentations* (H. A. Ironside)

[Read MacDonald on Chapter 6](#) →

7 • The Princes' Gifts at the Altar's Dedication

Numbers 7

The tribal leaders give wagons for the Levites and, over twelve days, identical offerings for the altar, all carefully recorded by God.

- I. Timing: back to the day the tabernacle was set up – [Numbers 7:1](#)
 - A. Compare [Exodus 40:17](#); the princes are named in [Numbers 1:5–16](#)
- II. Six wagons and twelve oxen – [Numbers 7:3–9](#)
 - A. Gershonites get two wagons; Merarites four – [Numbers 7:7–8](#)
 - B. Kohathites get none – they carry holy things on their shoulders – [Numbers 7:9](#)
- III. Twelve days of offerings, one prince per day – [Numbers 7:10–83](#)
 - A. Beginning with Nahshon of Judah, ending with Ahira of Naphtali – [Numbers 7:12, 78](#)
- IV. God keeps a full record of service – [Numbers 7:84–88](#)
- V. God speaks to Moses from the mercy seat – [Numbers 7:89](#)
 - A. Moses, though not a priest, was commanded to enter ([Exodus 25:21–22](#))

CROSS REFERENCES

[Exodus 40:17](#) [Numbers 1:5–16](#) [Exodus 25:21–22](#)

LESSONS

- God never forgets any service done for Him; He keeps careful account.

RELATED READING

- *Separation and Service: Thoughts on Numbers 6 and 7* (Hudson Taylor) – Hudson Taylor on the princes' offerings
- *Lectures on the Tabernacle* (William J. McClure) – McClure on the wagons and the Kohathites

ALSO DISCUSSED IN THE LIBRARY

- *Current Issues* (Dan Snaddon)
- *The Pilgrim's Progress* (John Bunyan)
- *Types of the Tabernacle* (Thomas Newberry)

Read MacDonald on Chapter 7 →

8 • Lighting the Lamps and Consecrating the Levites

Numbers 8

The lamps are set to shine forward, and the Levites are cleansed and offered to God to serve the priests.

- I. The lamps shine in front of the lampstand – [Numbers 8:1–4](#)
 - A. If the lampstand is Christ and the light the Spirit, the Spirit glorifies Christ
- II. Cleansing and offering the Levites – [Numbers 8:5–22](#)
 - A. Sprinkled with water of purification, shaved, and washed – [Numbers 8:7](#)
 - B. The people lay hands on them; Aaron offers them as a wave offering – [Numbers 8:10–11](#)
 - C. Burnt, sin, and meal offerings made for them – [Numbers 8:8, 12](#)
 - D. Taken in place of the firstborn – [Numbers 8:14–18](#)
- III. Age of service: 25 to 50 – [Numbers 8:23–26](#)
 - A. Differs from 30 in [Numbers 4:3](#): perhaps land service, or apprenticeship – [Numbers 8:24](#)
 - B. After 50, oversight ("keep the charge") instead of heavy work – [Numbers 8:25–26](#)

IV. Levites picture Christians

A. Redeemed, cleansed, set apart to serve, with no earthly inheritance

CROSS REFERENCES

[Numbers 4:3](#)

LESSONS

- Like the Levites, believers are redeemed and cleansed to serve the Lord, not to settle down on earth.

RELATED READING

- *Lectures on the Tabernacle* (William J. McClure) — McClure on the golden lampstand

ALSO DISCUSSED IN THE LIBRARY

- *Through the Scriptures: Sunday School Lesson Outlines* (Alfred P. Gibbs)
- *I Will Build My Church* (James Gunn)
- *Bible Commentary on Joshua* (H. L. Rossier)

Read MacDonald on Chapter 8 →

9 • The Passover and the Guiding Cloud

[Numbers 9](#)

Israel keeps the Passover with provision for the defiled, and learns to move and stop at the cloud's direction.

I. Passover kept on the fourteenth of the first month — [Numbers 9:1-5](#)

A. These instructions came before chapter 1; Numbers is not strictly chronological — [Numbers 9:1](#)

II. A second Passover for the defiled — [Numbers 9:6-12](#)

A. Those unclean by a dead body keep it a month later — [Numbers 9:10-11](#)

III. Warnings and welcome — [Numbers 9:13-14](#)

A. Neglect without cause meant being cut off — [Numbers 9:13](#)

B. Gentile strangers could keep it on the same terms — [Numbers 9:14](#)

IV. The cloud over the tabernacle — [Numbers 9:15-23](#)

A. Cloud by day, fire by night — [Numbers 9:15-16](#)

B. When it lifted, they marched; when it rested, they camped — [Numbers 9:17-23](#)

LESSONS

- Move when the Lord moves, and not before: "darkness about going is light about staying."

ALSO DISCUSSED IN THE LIBRARY

- *Egypt-Canaan* (Dan Snaddon)
- *Collected Messages of Dan Snaddon* (Dan Snaddon)
- *Articles by C. H. Mackintosh* (C. H. Mackintosh)

Read MacDonald on Chapter 9 →

10 • Silver Trumpets and Departure from Sinai

[Numbers 10](#)

Israel receives signal trumpets and sets out from Sinai in order, while Moses invites Hobab to come along.

I. Two silver trumpets and their uses — [Numbers 10:1-10](#)

A. Assemble the people or the princes — [Numbers 10:3-4](#)

B. Signal the camps to march — [Numbers 10:5-6](#)

C. Sound alarm in war and announce feasts — [Numbers 10:9-10](#)

D. "In your land" — God would keep His promise to Abraham — [Numbers 10:9](#)

II. A turning point: leaving Sinai – [Numbers 10:11-13](#)

A. Verse 11 to [Numbers 22:1](#) covers nearly forty years of travel – [Numbers 10:11](#)

B. Start delayed to the twentieth for the second Passover ([Numbers 9:10-11](#))

III. The marching order – [Numbers 10:14-28](#)

A. Gershonites and Merarites go ahead to set up before the Kohathites arrive – [Numbers 10:17, 21](#)

IV. Moses invites Hobab – [Numbers 10:29-32](#)

A. Many see a lack of faith in wanting human "eyes" – [Numbers 10:31](#)

B. Kurtz: the cloud set the route; Hobab's skill could help with details

V. The ark goes before them – [Numbers 10:33-36](#)

A. Perhaps a rebuke to leaning on human eyes; compare [Joshua 3](#) – [Numbers 10:33](#)

B. Hobab seems to have come ([Judges 1:16](#); [Judges 4:11](#))

CROSS REFERENCES

[Numbers 9:10-11](#) [Joshua 3](#) [Judges 1:16](#) [Judges 4:11](#)

LESSONS

- Disobedience can delay, though not cancel, the blessings God has promised.

ALSO DISCUSSED IN THE LIBRARY

- *Revelation: A Complete Commentary* (William R. Newell)
- *Isaiah* (F. C. Jennings)
- *Everyone Has a Psalm* (R. Edward Harlow)

[Read MacDonald on Chapter 10](#) →

II • Complaints, Seventy Elders, and the Quail

[Numbers 11](#)

Israel complains about hardship and food; God answers with judgment, help for Moses, and a surfeit of meat that ends in a plague.

I. Burning at Taberah – [Numbers 11:1-3](#)

A. The complainers were at the edges of the camp, far from the ark – [Numbers 11:1](#)

B. A merciful warning of more severe judgment

II. The mixed multitude stirs up craving for Egypt's food – [Numbers 11:4-9](#)

A. Unbelievers who left Egypt with Israel spread discontent – [Numbers 11:4](#)

B. They despise the manna; see [Psalm 78:27-32](#) – [Numbers 11:6-9](#)

III. Moses' despair and the seventy elders – [Numbers 11:10-17](#)

A. He feels unable to carry the people and asks to die – [Numbers 11:11-15](#)

B. Some think sharing the load meant less divine enabling for Moses – [Numbers 11:17](#)

C. Distinct from the civil judges of [Exodus 18:25](#)

IV. Moses doubts God's promise of meat – [Numbers 11:18-23](#)

A. God had fed them with quail before ([Exodus 16:13](#))

V. The Spirit on the elders; Moses' generous spirit – [Numbers 11:24-30](#)

A. Eldad and Medad prophesy in the camp – [Numbers 11:26](#)

B. Moses refuses to see them as rivals – [Numbers 11:29](#)

VI. Quail and the graves of lust — [Numbers 11:31-35](#)

A. Kibroth-hattaavah: their craving brought them to the grave — [Numbers 11:33-34](#)

CROSS REFERENCES

[Psalm 78:27-32](#) [Exodus 18:25](#) [Deuteronomy 1:9-15](#) [Exodus 16:13](#)

LESSONS

- How quickly we forget the Lord's past mercies when circumstances press in.
- Those who stay far from the Lord's presence are the first to complain.

ALSO DISCUSSED IN THE LIBRARY

- *Egypt-Canaan* (Dan Snaddon)
- *Proverbs* (H. A. Ironside)
- *Dr. Ironside's Bible* (H. A. Ironside)

[Read MacDonald on Chapter 11](#) →

12 • Miriam and Aaron Oppose Moses

[Numbers 12](#)

Moses' own sister and brother challenge his leadership; God vindicates His humble servant and strikes Miriam with leprosy.

I. The complaint and its real cause — [Numbers 12:1-2](#)

A. Pretext: his Ethiopian wife; real motive: jealousy of his leadership — [Numbers 12:1-2](#)

II. The meekness of Moses — [Numbers 12:3](#)

A. He left his defense to God and later prayed for his opponents

III. God affirms Moses' unique nearness — [Numbers 12:4-9](#)

A. To others God spoke by visions and dreams; to Moses face to face — [Numbers 12:6-8](#)

B. Even the prophetess Miriam ([Exodus 15:20](#)) was not his equal

IV. Miriam struck with leprosy — [Numbers 12:10-15](#)

A. Likely the ringleader; Aaron perhaps spared because of his office — [Numbers 12:10](#)

B. Healed at Moses' prayer but shut out seven days — [Numbers 12:13-15](#)

V. On to the Wilderness of Paran — [Numbers 12:16](#)

CROSS REFERENCES

[Exodus 15:20](#) [Numbers 20:1](#) [Numbers 10:12](#)

LESSONS

- God defends the servant who leaves his vindication with Him.

RELATED READING

- *Egypt-Canaan* (Dan Snaddon) — Snaddon on Miriam and Aaron's sin

ALSO DISCUSSED IN THE LIBRARY

- *Studies in Hebrews* (Dan Snaddon)
- *Collected Messages of Dan Snaddon* (Dan Snaddon)
- *Church Truths* (Dan Snaddon)

[Read MacDonald on Chapter 12](#) →

13 • The Twelve Spies Search the Land

[Numbers 13](#)

Twelve spies explore Canaan; ten see only giants, while Caleb and Joshua see the land from God's point of

view.

- I. The spies sent and named – [Numbers 13:1-16](#)
 - A. God's command answered the people's request ([Deuteronomy 1:19-22](#))
 - B. Hoshea renamed Joshua – [Numbers 13:16](#)
- II. The mission and the search – [Numbers 13:17-24](#)
 - A. From the Wilderness of Zin to Rehob – [Numbers 13:21](#)
 - B. Sons of Anak at Hebron ([Deuteronomy 2:10-11](#)) – [Numbers 13:22](#)
 - C. The great cluster of grapes from the valley of Eshcol – [Numbers 13:23-24](#)
- III. The majority report: good land, impossible foes – [Numbers 13:25-33](#)
 - A. A land that "eats up" anyone trying to settle there – [Numbers 13:32](#)
 - B. Nephilim: a name borrowed from pre-flood giants – [Numbers 13:33](#)
- IV. Caleb's confident minority report – [Numbers 13:30](#)

CROSS REFERENCES

[Deuteronomy 1:19-22](#) [Deuteronomy 2:10-11](#)

LESSONS

- Unbelief sees ourselves as our enemies see us; faith sees giants as small beside God.

RELATED READING

- *Egypt-Canaan* (Dan Snaddon) – Snaddon on the mission of the spies

ALSO DISCUSSED IN THE LIBRARY

- *Through the Scriptures: Sunday School Lesson Outlines* (Alfred P. Gibbs)
- *Men of the Mountains & Valleys* (T. Ernest Wilson)
- *Bible Commentary on Joshua* (H. L. Rossier)

[Read MacDonald on Chapter 13](#) →

14 · Unbelief at Kadesh and Forty Years' Wandering

[Numbers 14](#)

Israel refuses to enter the land, Moses intercedes, and God sentences the unbelieving generation to die in the wilderness.

- I. Revolt and the folly of unbelief – [Numbers 14:1-10](#)
 - A. They want a new leader to take them back to Egypt – [Numbers 14:3-4](#)
 - B. They doubted both God's love and His power – [Numbers 14:3](#)
 - C. They plan to stone Joshua and Caleb – [Numbers 14:6-10](#)
- II. Moses intercedes for God's honor – [Numbers 14:11-19](#)
 - A. God offers to make a nation from Moses – [Numbers 14:12](#)
 - B. Moses pleads what the nations would say – [Numbers 14:13-16](#)
 - C. He prays God's own self-revelation back ([Exodus 34:6-7](#)) – [Numbers 14:18](#)
- III. Pardon, yet discipline – [Numbers 14:20-35](#)
 - A. Only Joshua and Caleb of the fighting men will enter – [Numbers 14:30](#)
 - B. A year for each day of spying – about 38 years in fact – [Numbers 14:34](#)
 - C. Ten times they tested God, from the Red Sea to Kadesh – [Numbers 14:22](#)
 - D. Excluded from the land, but not necessarily lost eternally
- IV. The ten spies die by plague – [Numbers 14:36-38](#)

V. Too late: defeat at Hormah — [Numbers 14:39–45](#)

CROSS REFERENCES

[Exodus 34:6–7](#) [Deuteronomy 2:14](#) [Exodus 14:11–12](#) [Exodus 17:1](#) [Exodus 32:7](#) [Numbers 11:1](#) [Numbers 3:39](#)

LESSONS

- A low view of God can ruin a person or a whole nation.
- True prayer rests on what God has revealed of Himself, not on human imagination.

RELATED READING

- *Egypt-Canaan* (Dan Snaddon) — Snaddon on Israel's refusal at Kadesh

ALSO DISCUSSED IN THE LIBRARY

- *Through the Scriptures: Sunday School Lesson Outlines* (Alfred P. Gibbs)
- *Bible Commentary on Joshua* (H. L. Rossier)
- *Isaiah* (F. C. Jennings)

[Read MacDonald on Chapter 14](#) →

15 • Laws for Life in the Land

[Numbers 15](#)

Right after the judgment at Kadesh, God gives laws "when ye be come into the land," showing His purpose stands.

- I. God's purpose is never thwarted — [Numbers 15:1–2](#)
 - A. Contrast "they shall not see the land" ([Numbers 14:23](#))
- II. Offerings to be brought in the land — [Numbers 15:1–21](#)
 - A. "Of the first ... unto the Lord": God gets the best — [Numbers 15:20–21](#)
- III. Sins of ignorance — [Numbers 15:22–29](#)
 - A. For the congregation: a bull and a goat (compare [Leviticus 4](#)) — [Numbers 15:24](#)
 - B. For the individual — [Numbers 15:27–29](#)
- IV. No offering for presumptuous sin — [Numbers 15:30–36](#)
 - A. Defiant rebellion meant death — [Numbers 15:30–31](#)
 - B. The sabbath stick-gatherer stoned ([Exodus 31:15](#)) — [Numbers 15:32–36](#)
- V. A cord of blue on the tassels — [Numbers 15:37–41](#)
 - A. Heaven's color, a reminder of holiness and obedience

CROSS REFERENCES

[Numbers 14:23](#) [Leviticus 4](#) [Exodus 31:15](#)

LESSONS

- Everything we have comes from God and belongs to Him, so He deserves the first and best.

ALSO DISCUSSED IN THE LIBRARY

- *Articles by S. Lewis Johnson* (S. Lewis Johnson)
- *Romans: Verse by Verse* (William R. Newell)
- *Men of the Mountains & Valleys* (T. Ernest Wilson)

[Read MacDonald on Chapter 15](#) →

16 • The Rebellion of Korah

[Numbers 16](#)

Korah, Dathan, Abiram, and 250 leaders challenge Moses and Aaron, and God judges them dramatically,

then stops a plague through Aaron.

I. The rebels and their claim – [Numbers 16:1-3](#)

- A. Korah, a Levite, wanted the priesthood – [Numbers 16:1, 10](#)
- B. Dathan and Abiram of Reuben resented Moses' rule – [Numbers 16:12-14](#)
- C. They argued all the people were holy – [Numbers 16:3](#)

II. The test of the censers – [Numbers 16:4-22](#)

- A. Dathan and Abiram call Egypt a land of milk and honey – [Numbers 16:13](#)
- B. Moses and Aaron intercede for the congregation – [Numbers 16:22](#)

III. The earth swallows the rebels – [Numbers 16:23-35](#)

- A. Korah apparently swallowed too ([Numbers 26:10](#)); his sons spared – [Numbers 16:32](#)
- B. Fire consumes the 250 – [Numbers 16:35](#)
- C. Sheol here means the grave – [Numbers 16:30](#)

IV. Censers hammered into altar plates – [Numbers 16:36-40](#)

- A. A memorial that only Aaron's family are priests – [Numbers 16:40](#)

V. Aaron stands between the dead and the living – [Numbers 16:41-50](#)

- A. The people blame Moses and Aaron; 14,700 die – [Numbers 16:41, 49](#)
- B. The priesthood they despised stops the plague – [Numbers 16:46-48](#)

CROSS REFERENCES

[Exodus 6:18-21](#) [Numbers 26:10](#) [Genesis 19:24-25](#) [Leviticus 10:1-2](#) [Numbers 12:10](#) [Acts 5:5, 10](#)

LESSONS

- God sometimes judges a sin instantly as a warning to all later generations.
- Those accused of harming God's people were the very ones who saved them.

RELATED READING

- “[The Rebellion of Korah \(Numbers 16\)](#)” (Mark Kolchin, [plymouthbrethren.org](#)) – Kolchin on the rebellion of Korah

ALSO DISCUSSED IN THE LIBRARY

- *Everyone Has a Psalm* (R. Edward Harlow)
- *Through the Scriptures: Sunday School Lesson Outlines* (Alfred P. Gibbs)
- *Worship and Remembrance, Volume 3* (Daniel Smith)

[Read MacDonald on Chapter 16](#) →

17 • Aaron's Rod That Budded

[Numbers 17](#)

God settles the priesthood by making Aaron's rod bud, blossom, and bear almonds overnight.

I. Twelve rods laid before the Lord – [Numbers 17:1-7](#)

- A. Levi's rod bears Aaron's name – [Numbers 17:3](#)

II. Aaron's rod buds, blossoms, and bears almonds – [Numbers 17:8](#)

- A. A picture of the risen Christ, the Priest of God's choosing – [Numbers 17:8](#)
- B. Almond blooms first, as Christ is the firstfruits ([1 Corinthians 15:20, 23](#))
- C. Matches the almond-shaped lampstand ([Exodus 25:33-34](#))

III. The rod kept as a sign against rebels – [Numbers 17:10-13](#)

- A. The people now fear to come near the tabernacle – [Numbers 17:12-13](#)

CROSS REFERENCES

[1 Corinthians 15:20, 23](#) [Exodus 25:33-34](#)

RELATED READING

- *Egypt-Canaan* (Dan Snaddon) — Snaddon on Aaron's rod that budded

ALSO DISCUSSED IN THE LIBRARY

- *The Tabernacle* (Dan Snaddon)
- *Tabernacle Types and Shadows* (Leonard Sheldrake)
- *Through the Scriptures: Sunday School Lesson Outlines* (Alfred P. Gibbs)

Read MacDonald on Chapter 17 →

18 • Duties and Support of Priests and Levites

[Numbers 18](#)

To quiet the people's fears, God restates the duties of priests and Levites and how they are to be provided for.

- I. Bearing the iniquity of the sanctuary and the priesthood — [Numbers 18:1](#)
 - A. Being answerable for any failure in sacred duties — [Numbers 18:1](#)
- II. Levites assist but may not do priestly work — [Numbers 18:2-7](#)
- III. The priests' portions — [Numbers 18:8-19](#)
 - A. Shares of offerings and firstfruits — [Numbers 18:8-13](#)
 - B. Devoted things and the firstborn or their redemption — [Numbers 18:14-18](#)
 - C. A covenant of salt: unbreakable and permanent — [Numbers 18:19](#)
- IV. The Lord Himself is the priests' inheritance — [Numbers 18:20](#)
- V. Tithes to Levites; a tithe of the tithe to priests — [Numbers 18:21-32](#)

ALSO DISCUSSED IN THE LIBRARY

- *Through the Scriptures: Sunday School Lesson Outlines* (Alfred P. Gibbs)
- *The Kings of Judah and Israel* (Christopher Knapp)
- *Articles by David Dunlap* (David Dunlap)

Read MacDonald on Chapter 18 →

19 • The Ashes of the Red Heifer

[Numbers 19](#)

God provides the ashes of a red heifer to cleanse those defiled by contact with death during the wilderness years.

- I. Why it was needed — [Numbers 19:1-2](#)
 - A. A whole generation would die — over forty a day for 38 years
- II. Preparing the ashes — [Numbers 19:2-10](#)
 - A. Killed outside the camp; blood sprinkled seven times — [Numbers 19:3-4](#)
 - B. Burned whole with cedar, hyssop, and scarlet ([Leviticus 14](#)) — [Numbers 19:5-6](#)
 - C. Ashes stored outside the camp — [Numbers 19:9](#)
- III. Using the water of separation — [Numbers 19:11-19](#)
 - A. Sprinkled on the third and seventh days — [Numbers 19:12, 19](#)
 - B. Refusing it brought certain punishment — [Numbers 19:20](#)

IV. The heifer as a picture of Christ

- A. Williams: spotless, never yoked, clothed in red earth of manhood
- B. Do not press the type too far

V. Something better than the heifer

- A. Its ashes cleansed only outwardly; Christ's blood cleanses the conscience ([Hebrews 9:13-14](#))
- B. God's provision for unavoidable contact with death around us

CROSS REFERENCES

[Leviticus 14](#) [Numbers 31](#) [Hebrews 9:13-14](#)

LESSONS

- Christ's blood does what no ritual could: it cleanses the conscience from dead works.

ALSO DISCUSSED IN THE LIBRARY

- *The Messianic Psalms* (T. Ernest Wilson)
- *Addresses* (Alfred Mace)
- *Dr. Ironside's Bible* (H. A. Ironside)

[Read MacDonald on Chapter 19](#) →

20 • Moses Strikes the Rock; Aaron Dies

[Numbers 20](#)

Back at Kadesh after 38 lost years, Moses sins at Meribah, Edom refuses passage, and Aaron dies on Mount Hor.

I. Back where they started — [Numbers 20:1](#)

- A. Forty years from Egypt, no closer to Canaan — [Numbers 20:1](#)
- B. Miriam dies; a generation has perished in silence — [Numbers 20:1](#)

II. A new generation complains like the old — [Numbers 20:2-5](#)

III. The sin at Meribah — [Numbers 20:6-13](#)

- A. Told to speak to the rock with Aaron's rod — [Numbers 20:8-9](#)
- B. Moses speaks rashly and strikes it twice — [Numbers 20:10-11](#)
- C. Christ, the rock, was to be smitten only once ([Exodus 17:1-7](#))
- D. Moses and Aaron barred from the land — [Numbers 20:12](#)

IV. Right things done the wrong way

- A. Morgan: Moses misrepresented God's tone and temper to the people

V. Edom refuses passage — [Numbers 20:14-21](#)

VI. Aaron dies on Mount Hor — [Numbers 20:22-29](#)

- A. Eleazar receives his garments — [Numbers 20:26-28](#)
- B. Gathered to his people in honor, not cut off — [Numbers 20:24](#)

CROSS REFERENCES

[Exodus 17:1-7](#) [Numbers 17:10](#)

LESSONS

- Unbelief bears bitter, silent fruit for a whole generation.
- We must not only deliver the Lord's message but speak it in His tone and spirit.

RELATED READING

- *Egypt-Canaan* (Dan Snaddon) — Snaddon contrasts the rock smitten once
- “Dangers in Leadership” (Steve Hulshizer, [plymouthbrethren.org](#)) — Hulshizer on Moses' frustration at the rock

ALSO DISCUSSED IN THE LIBRARY

- *Addresses on the Gospel of John* (H. A. Ironside)
- *Commentary on Matthew* (H. A. Ironside)
- *Articles by Steve Hulshizer* (Steve Hulshizer)

Read MacDonald on Chapter 20 →

21 • The Brazen Serpent and Victories East of Jordan

Numbers 21

Israel is healed by looking at the bronze serpent and defeats Arad, Sihon, and Og on the way to Moab.

- I. Victory over Arad at Hormah — [Numbers 21:1-3](#)
- II. Fiery serpents and the serpent of brass — [Numbers 21:4-9](#)
 - A. Whoever looked lived — [Numbers 21:8-9](#)
 - B. Jesus used it to teach Nicodemus about the cross ([John 3:14-16](#))
 - C. Later idolized and destroyed by Hezekiah ([2 Kings 18:4](#))
- III. The journey toward Moab — [Numbers 21:10-20](#)
 - A. Red Sea here is the Gulf of Aqaba — [Numbers 21:4](#)
 - B. The lost book of the wars of the Lord — [Numbers 21:14](#)
 - C. Water provided at Beer — [Numbers 21:16-18](#)
- IV. Sihon defeated — [Numbers 21:21-31](#)
 - A. Hardened like Pharaoh ([Deuteronomy 2:30](#)); Amorite iniquity was full ([Genesis 15:16](#))
 - B. The Heshbon song shows the land was no longer Moab's ([Deuteronomy 2:9](#)) — [Numbers 21:27-30](#)
- V. Og of Bashan conquered — [Numbers 21:33-35](#)

CROSS REFERENCES

[John 3:1-16](#) [2 Kings 18:4](#) [Deuteronomy 2:30](#) [Genesis 15:16](#) [Deuteronomy 2:9](#)

LESSONS

- Sinners who look to the lifted-up Christ by faith receive everlasting life.

ALSO DISCUSSED IN THE LIBRARY

- *Through the Scriptures: Sunday School Lesson Outlines* (Alfred P. Gibbs)
- *Worship and Remembrance, Volume 4* (Daniel Smith)
- *Current Issues* (Dan Snaddon)

Read MacDonald on Chapter 21 →

22 • Balak Hires Balaam

Numbers 22

Terrified Moab hires Balaam to curse Israel, and the Angel of the Lord meets the greedy prophet on the road.

- I. Israel camps on the Plains of Moab — [Numbers 22:1-4](#)
 - A. Taken from Moab by the Amorites ([Numbers 21:26](#))
- II. Balak's first appeal refused — [Numbers 22:5-14](#)
 - A. Balak means "waster"; Balaam, "swallower" or "confuser" of the people
 - B. God says the people are blessed — [Numbers 22:12](#)

- III. Balaam's second request reveals his heart — [Numbers 22:15-21](#)
 - A. He knew God's will but hoped it would change — [Numbers 22:18-19](#)
 - B. He loved "the wages of unrighteousness" (2 Peter 2:15-16)
 - C. A type of the hireling prophet
- IV. The Angel of the Lord and the donkey — [Numbers 22:22-35](#)
 - A. The Angel was Christ before His incarnation — [Numbers 22:22](#)
 - B. Three times the animal turns aside and is beaten — [Numbers 22:23-27](#)
 - C. The donkey speaks; Balaam sees the drawn sword — [Numbers 22:28-31](#)
- V. Balaam overlooks Israel's camp — [Numbers 22:36-41](#)
 - A. Moses later viewed the land from Pisgah ([Deuteronomy 34:1, 5](#))

CROSS REFERENCES

[Numbers 21:26](#) [2 Peter 2:15-16](#) [Deuteronomy 34:1, 5](#)

LESSONS

- Even a donkey knew when to stop, but the stubborn, money-loving prophet did not.

ALSO DISCUSSED IN THE LIBRARY

- *Through the Scriptures: Sunday School Lesson Outlines* (Alfred P. Gibbs)
- *The Seven Churches of Asia Minor (Revelation 1-3)* (Gordon Franz)
- *The Book of Jude* (John Walden)

[Read MacDonald on Chapter 22](#) →

23 • Balaam's First Two Oracles

[Numbers 23](#)

From two vantage points Balaam can only bless Israel, describing her separation, her standing before God, and her strength.

- I. First oracle: a people apart — [Numbers 23:1-12](#)
 - A. He cannot curse whom God has not cursed — [Numbers 23:8](#)
 - B. Separated from the nations, numberless, righteous — [Numbers 23:9-10](#)
- II. A new viewpoint does not change God — [Numbers 23:13-17](#)
- III. Second oracle: God's blessing stands — [Numbers 23:18-24](#)
 - A. God does not change His word — [Numbers 23:19-20](#)
 - B. No iniquity seen: Israel's position, not practice — [Numbers 23:21](#)
 - C. Believers likewise stand accepted in Christ
 - D. "What hath God wrought!" — [Numbers 23:23](#)
- IV. Balak tries again from Peor — [Numbers 23:25-30](#)

LESSONS

- Believers today stand before God clothed in all the perfections of His beloved Son.

ALSO DISCUSSED IN THE LIBRARY

- *Articles by S. Lewis Johnson* (S. Lewis Johnson)
- *Lectures on First Corinthians* (H. A. Ironside)
- *Truths to Live By: One Day at a Time* (William MacDonald)

[Read MacDonald on Chapter 23](#) →

24 • Balaam's Final Oracles and the Star from Jacob

Numbers 24

Moved by the Spirit, Balaam praises Israel's beauty and foretells a ruler who will crush her enemies.

- I. Third oracle: Israel's beauty and power — [Numbers 24:1-9](#)
 - A. The Spirit came on him; he no longer sought curses — [Numbers 24:1-2](#)
 - B. Fruitful, prosperous, a lion no one dares rouse — [Numbers 24:5-9](#)
 - C. Echoes God's promise to Abraham ([Genesis 12:3](#)) — [Numbers 24:9](#)
- II. Balak's anger; Balaam's reply — [Numbers 24:10-14](#)
- III. Fourth oracle: a Star and Scepter out of Israel — [Numbers 24:15-19](#)
 - A. This King will subdue Moab and Edom — [Numbers 24:17-18](#)
 - B. Partly fulfilled in David; fully at Christ's second coming
- IV. Doom on surrounding nations — [Numbers 24:20-24](#)
 - A. Amalek, the Kenites, Asshur, Eber — [Numbers 24:20-24](#)
 - B. Chittim likely pictures Greece under Alexander — [Numbers 24:24](#)
- V. Balaam leaves, having prepared the trap of chapter 25 — [Numbers 24:25](#)

CROSS REFERENCES

[Genesis 12:3](#)

ALSO DISCUSSED IN THE LIBRARY

- *Through the Scriptures: Sunday School Lesson Outlines* (Alfred P. Gibbs)
- *Confirming Accuracy* (Jean Gibson)
- *Romans: Verse by Verse* (William R. Newell)

[Read MacDonald on Chapter 24](#) →

25 • Sin at Baal-Peor and the Zeal of Phinehas

Numbers 25

Unable to curse Israel, Balaam leads them into immorality and idolatry with Moab, and Phinehas' zeal stops the plague.

- I. Balaam's hidden hand — [Numbers 25:1-3](#)
 - A. His counsel lay behind it ([Numbers 31:16](#); [Revelation 2:14](#))
 - B. A wicked apostate who loved gain ([2 Peter 2:15-16](#))
 - C. Satan often wins indirectly where direct attack fails
- II. Judgment ordered on the guilty — [Numbers 25:4-5](#)
- III. Phinehas acts — [Numbers 25:6-9](#)
 - A. He kills Zimri and the Midianite woman — [Numbers 25:7-8](#)
 - B. Plague stopped after 24,000 die (compare [1 Corinthians 10:8](#)) — [Numbers 25:9](#)
- IV. A lasting priesthood for Phinehas — [Numbers 25:10-15](#)
 - A. Rank did not stop his zeal for God — [Numbers 25:14-15](#)
- V. War against Midian commanded — [Numbers 25:16-18](#)
 - A. Carried out in [Numbers 31](#)

CROSS REFERENCES

[Numbers 31:16](#) [2 Peter 2:15-16](#) [Revelation 2:14](#) [1 Corinthians 10:8](#)

LESSONS

- When Satan cannot succeed by direct attack, he often succeeds by corruption.

ALSO DISCUSSED IN THE LIBRARY

- *The Seven Churches of Asia Minor (Revelation 1–3)* (Gordon Franz)
- *The Book of Genesis* (James Gunn)
- *The Messianic Psalms* (T. Ernest Wilson)

Read MacDonald on Chapter 25 →

26 · The Second Census

Numbers 26

On the edge of Canaan the new generation is counted for war and for dividing the inheritance.

- I. Purpose: war and inheritance – [Numbers 26:1–4](#)
- II. Totals: 601,730, down 1,820 – [Numbers 26:5–51](#)
 - A. Simeon shrank by nearly 37,000, perhaps because of Peor – [Numbers 26:12–14](#)
 - B. Korah's sons did not die – [Numbers 26:11](#)
- III. How the land would be divided – [Numbers 26:52–56](#)
 - A. Size by tribe's numbers; location by lot
- IV. Levites numbered separately: 23,000 – [Numbers 26:57–62](#)
- V. Only Joshua and Caleb remain from the first count – [Numbers 26:63–65](#)

ALSO DISCUSSED IN THE LIBRARY

- *The Pilgrim's Progress* (John Bunyan)
- *Typical Foreshadowings in Genesis* (William Lincoln)
- *The Life and Times of Samuel the Prophet* (Christopher Knapp)

Read MacDonald on Chapter 26 →

27 · Zelophehad's Daughters and Joshua's Appointment

Numbers 27

God grants inheritance rights to daughters and names Joshua to succeed Moses.

- I. The daughters of Zelophehad – [Numbers 27:1–11](#)
 - A. Their father died, but not with Korah – [Numbers 27:3](#)
 - B. Order of inheritance keeps land within a family – [Numbers 27:8–11](#)
- II. Moses told he will soon die – [Numbers 27:12–14](#)
 - A. The Abarim range, of which Nebo is part – [Numbers 27:12](#)
- III. Joshua named successor – [Numbers 27:15–23](#)
 - A. Moses unselfishly cares for the people's future – [Numbers 27:16–17](#)
 - B. His servant, not his son ([Exodus 24:13](#))

CROSS REFERENCES

[Exodus 24:13](#)

ALSO DISCUSSED IN THE LIBRARY

- *Through the Scriptures: Sunday School Lesson Outlines* (Alfred P. Gibbs)
- *The Tabernacle* (Dan Snaddon)
- *The Book of Joshua* (Dan Snaddon)

Read MacDonald on Chapter 27 →

28, 29 • Offerings and Feasts for Life in the Land

Numbers 28-29

Chapters 28 and 29 remind Israel of the regular offerings and feasts to be kept in the land.

- I. A calendar of worship for the land — [Numbers 28-29](#)
 - A. Daily, weekly, and monthly offerings — [Numbers 28:1-15](#)
 - B. The yearly feasts of Jehovah — [Numbers 28:16-29:39](#)

ALSO DISCUSSED IN THE LIBRARY

- *Through the Scriptures: Sunday School Lesson Outlines* (Alfred P. Gibbs)
- *The Seven Churches of Asia Minor (Revelation 1-3)* (Gordon Franz)
- *Simple Papers on the Church of God* (C. E. Stuart)

Read MacDonald on Chapter 28, 29 →

The Continual Morning and Evening Offering

Numbers 28:3-8

A lamb was offered every morning and evening with meal and drink offerings, an endless round that never removed sin.

- I. A year-old lamb each morning and evening — [Numbers 28:3-4](#)
 - A. With fine flour, oil, and wine — [Numbers 28:5-7](#)
 - B. Incense before the morning and after the evening offering
- II. A treadmill of sacrifice — [Numbers 28:3-8](#)
 - A. It went on as long as the temple stood
 - B. It still left people conscious of sin and far from God

LESSONS

- No round of ritual can clear the conscience or bring a sinner near to God.

ALSO DISCUSSED IN THE LIBRARY

- *Through the Scriptures: Sunday School Lesson Outlines* (Alfred P. Gibbs)
- *The Seven Churches of Asia Minor (Revelation 1-3)* (Gordon Franz)
- *Simple Papers on the Church of God* (C. E. Stuart)

Read MacDonald on Daily offerings →

The Sabbath Offering

Numbers 28:9-10

Each sabbath brought an added burnt offering with its meal and drink offerings.

- I. Burnt offering each sabbath, with meal and drink offerings — [Numbers 28:9-10](#)

ALSO DISCUSSED IN THE LIBRARY

- *Through the Scriptures: Sunday School Lesson Outlines* (Alfred P. Gibbs)
- *The Seven Churches of Asia Minor (Revelation 1-3)* (Gordon Franz)
- *Simple Papers on the Church of God* (C. E. Stuart)

Read MacDonald on Weekly offerings →

The New Moon Offerings

[Numbers 28:11–15](#)

The first day of each month brought burnt offerings with meal and drink offerings, plus a sin offering.

I. Burnt offering with meal and drink offerings – [Numbers 28:11–14](#)

II. A sin offering – [Numbers 28:15](#)

ALSO DISCUSSED IN THE LIBRARY

- *Through the Scriptures: Sunday School Lesson Outlines* (Alfred P. Gibbs)
- *The Seven Churches of Asia Minor (Revelation 1–3)* (Gordon Franz)
- *Simple Papers on the Church of God* (C. E. Stuart)

[Read MacDonald on Monthly offerings](#) →

The Yearly Feasts of the Lord

[Numbers 28:16–29:39](#)

MacDonald lists the yearly feasts from Passover to Tabernacles with their dates and passages.

I. Spring feasts – [Numbers 28:16–31](#)

A. Passover – fourteenth of the first month – [Numbers 28:16](#)

B. Unleavened Bread – fifteenth to twenty-first – [Numbers 28:17–25](#)

C. Feast of Weeks – [Numbers 28:26–31](#)

D. "Day of the firstfruits" is not the Feast of Firstfruits ([Leviticus 23:9–14](#)) – [Numbers 28:26](#)

II. Autumn feasts of the seventh month – [Numbers 29:1–39](#)

A. Trumpets – first day – [Numbers 29:1–6](#)

B. Day of Atonement – tenth day – [Numbers 29:7–11](#)

C. Tabernacles – fifteenth to twenty-first, plus an eighth-day sabbath – [Numbers 29:12–39](#)

CROSS REFERENCES

[Leviticus 23:9–14](#)

ALSO DISCUSSED IN THE LIBRARY

- *Through the Scriptures: Sunday School Lesson Outlines* (Alfred P. Gibbs)
- *The Seven Churches of Asia Minor (Revelation 1–3)* (Gordon Franz)
- *Simple Papers on the Church of God* (C. E. Stuart)

[Read MacDonald on Feasts of Jehovah](#) →

30 • The Law of Vows

[Numbers 30](#)

Vows to the Lord must be kept, though a father or husband could cancel a woman's vow on the day he heard it.

I. A man's vow must be kept – [Numbers 30:2](#)

II. A young woman under her father – [Numbers 30:3–5](#)

A. He may forbid it the day he hears; silence confirms it

III. Vows made before marriage – [Numbers 30:6–8](#)

A. The husband may cancel on the day he first hears

IV. Widows and divorced women are bound – [Numbers 30:9](#)

V. A wife's vows and the husband's headship — [Numbers 30:10–15](#)

A. Late cancellation makes him bear her iniquity — [Numbers 30:15](#)

ALSO DISCUSSED IN THE LIBRARY

- *Truths to Live By: One Day at a Time* (William MacDonald)
- *I Will Build My Church* (James Gunn)

[Read MacDonald on Chapter 30](#) →

31 • Vengeance on Midian

[Numbers 31](#)

Israel executes God's judgment on Midian for Baal-Peor, purifies itself, and shares the spoil with thanksgiving.

I. War against Midian — [Numbers 31:1–12](#)

A. Twelve thousand men, with Phinehas going to battle — [Numbers 31:5–6](#)

B. Balaam killed among them — [Numbers 31:8](#)

C. "All the males" of that area only; Midian returned in [Judges 6](#) — [Numbers 31:7](#)

II. Moses angry that the corrupting women were spared — [Numbers 31:13–18](#)

A. A righteous judgment to keep Israel from further corruption

III. Purifying warriors, captives, and spoil — [Numbers 31:19–24](#)

A. Seven days' cleansing; spoil cleansed by fire or water — [Numbers 31:19–24](#)

IV. Dividing the spoil — [Numbers 31:25–47](#)

V. A thank offering: not one soldier lost — [Numbers 31:48–54](#)

CROSS REFERENCES

[Numbers 25:15](#) [Judges 6](#)

ALSO DISCUSSED IN THE LIBRARY

- *The Seven Churches of Asia Minor (Revelation 1–3)* (Gordon Franz)
- *Proverbs* (H. A. Ironside)
- *Through the Scriptures: Sunday School Lesson Outlines* (Alfred P. Gibbs)

[Read MacDonald on Chapter 31](#) →

32 • Reuben and Gad Settle East of Jordan

[Numbers 32](#)

Reuben and Gad ask for the pasture east of the Jordan and receive it after promising to fight for the rest of the land.

I. The request for rich pastureland — [Numbers 32:1–5](#)

II. Moses fears a repeat of Kadesh — [Numbers 32:6–15](#)

III. Their pledge to fight and Moses' consent — [Numbers 32:16–33](#)

A. Half-Manasseh joins them — [Numbers 32:33](#)

IV. Was it a wise choice?

A. Fertile but exposed, without the Jordan's protection

B. First to be conquered and taken captive later

C. Yet God had given that land to be possessed ([Deuteronomy 2:24, 31](#); [Deuteronomy 3:2](#))

CROSS REFERENCES

[Deuteronomy 2:24, 31](#) [Deuteronomy 3:2](#)

LESSONS

- Choosing by what looks rich can leave us exposed to the enemy.

RELATED READING

- [“The Two Tribes and a Half”](#) (John Gifford Bellett, plymouthbrethren.org) — Bellett on the two tribes and a half

ALSO DISCUSSED IN THE LIBRARY

- *Men of the Mountains & Valleys* (T. Ernest Wilson)
- *The Book of Joshua* (Dan Snaddon)
- *Bible Commentary on Joshua* (H. L. Rossier)

[Read MacDonald on Chapter 32](#) →

33 · Review of the Journeys and Command to Clear the Land

[Numbers 33](#)

Moses records Israel's stages from Egypt to Moab, and God orders the complete removal of Canaan's people and idols.

- I. The journeys summarized — [Numbers 33:1–49](#)
 - A. Egypt to Sinai — [Numbers 33:5–15](#)
 - B. Sinai to Kadesh-barnea — [Numbers 33:16–36](#)
 - C. Kadesh-barnea to Mount Hor — [Numbers 33:37–40](#)
 - D. Mount Hor to the Plains of Moab — [Numbers 33:41–49](#)
 - E. Not a complete list; compare chapter 21
- II. Drive out the Canaanites completely — [Numbers 33:50–56](#)
 - A. Their corruption had run for over 400 years — [Numbers 33:52](#)
 - B. Destroy every trace of idolatry or be infected by it — [Numbers 33:52, 55](#)

LESSONS

- Sin left unjudged will spread its corruption to God's people.

[Read MacDonald on Chapter 33](#) →

34 · The Borders of the Promised Land

[Numbers 34](#)

God marks out the boundaries of Canaan for the nine and a half tribes and names the men who would divide it.

- I. The four borders — [Numbers 34:1–12](#)
 - A. South: Dead Sea to the Brook of Egypt and the sea — [Numbers 34:3–5](#)
 - B. West: the Mediterranean — [Numbers 34:6](#)
 - C. North: to a different Mount Hor, Hamath, and Hazar-enan — [Numbers 34:7–9](#)
 - D. East: down past Chinnereth and the Jordan to the Dead Sea — [Numbers 34:10–12](#)
- II. For the nine and a half tribes — [Numbers 34:13–15](#)
- III. The men appointed to divide the land — [Numbers 34:16–29](#)

ALSO DISCUSSED IN THE LIBRARY

- *Accents from Abroad* (W. Ross Rainey)
- *Coming World Crises* (James Gunn)

35 • Levite Cities and Cities of Refuge

Numbers 35

The Levites receive 48 cities, six of them refuges for manslayers, which picture both Christ's death and Israel's future restoration.

- I. Forty-eight cities for the Levites — [Numbers 35:1-8](#)
 - A. Each surrounded by pastureland — [Numbers 35:4-5](#)
 - B. Given in proportion to each tribe's territory — [Numbers 35:8](#)
- II. Six cities of refuge, three on each side of Jordan — [Numbers 35:6, 9-15](#)
 - A. Safety from the avenger until trial — [Numbers 35:12](#)
- III. Murder versus manslaughter — [Numbers 35:16-24](#)
 - A. No refuge for the murderer — [Numbers 35:16-21](#)
 - B. The congregation judges the case — [Numbers 35:22-24](#)
- IV. Freedom at the high priest's death — [Numbers 35:25-28](#)
 - A. Christ's death frees us from the Law's condemnation
 - B. The rabbis say the roads were kept clear and marked "Refuge"
- V. Israel as the manslayer
 - A. They killed Messiah in ignorance ([Acts 3:17](#); [Luke 23:34](#))
 - B. In exile until the High Priest comes to reign
- VI. Blood defiles the land — [Numbers 35:30-34](#)
 - A. Only the murderer's death could cleanse it — [Numbers 35:33](#)

CROSS REFERENCES

[Acts 3:17](#) [Luke 23:34](#)

LESSONS

- Our Great High Priest's death sets us free from the Law's condemning demands.

RELATED READING

- [“The Cities of Refuge \(Numbers 35\)”](#) (Mark Kolchin, [plymouthbrethren.org](#)) — Kolchin on the cities of refuge

ALSO DISCUSSED IN THE LIBRARY

- *Through the Scriptures: Sunday School Lesson Outlines* (Alfred P. Gibbs)
- *Bible Commentary on Joshua* (H. L. Rossier)
- *Articles by S. Lewis Johnson* (S. Lewis Johnson)

Read MacDonald on Chapter 35 →

36 • Keeping Inheritances Within the Tribe

Numbers 36

Heiresses must marry within their tribe so land does not pass to another, and MacDonald closes with lessons from the whole book.

- I. The concern of Manasseh's leaders — [Numbers 36:1-4](#)
 - A. Follows [Numbers 27:1-11](#); Jubilee would make transfers final — [Numbers 36:4](#)
- II. The rule: heiresses marry within their tribe — [Numbers 36:5-9](#)
- III. Zelophehad's daughters obey — [Numbers 36:10-13](#)

IV. Three themes of the book

- A. The persistent wickedness of the human heart
- B. God's holiness tempered by mercy
- C. Moses as mediator, now replaced by Christ his antitype

V. Written for our learning ([1 Corinthians 10:11](#))

CROSS REFERENCES

[Numbers 27:1-11](#) [1 Corinthians 10:11](#)

LESSONS

- In Christ we have strength to avoid Israel's sins and the displeasure they brought.

ALSO DISCUSSED IN THE LIBRARY

- *Our Lord Jesus Christ, "A Plant of Renown"* (Leonard Sheldrake)
- *Through the Scriptures: Sunday School Lesson Outlines* (Alfred P. Gibbs)

Read MacDonald on Chapter 36 →

Further reading on Numbers

In the Faithful Men Library

- *Separation and Service: Thoughts on Numbers 6 and 7* (Hudson Taylor)
- *Egypt-Canaan* (Dan Snaddon)

On plymouthbrethren.org

- “The Cities of Refuge (Numbers 35)” (Mark Kolchin, plymouthbrethren.org)
- “Dangers in Leadership” (Steve Hulshizer, plymouthbrethren.org)
- “The Rebellion of Korah (Numbers 16)” (Mark Kolchin, plymouthbrethren.org)
- “The Two Tribes and a Half” (John Gifford Bellett, plymouthbrethren.org)
- “The Claims of God's Sovereignty and Holiness” (John Gifford Bellett, plymouthbrethren.org)

Every library book that cites Numbers: [Scripture index — Numbers](#)

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