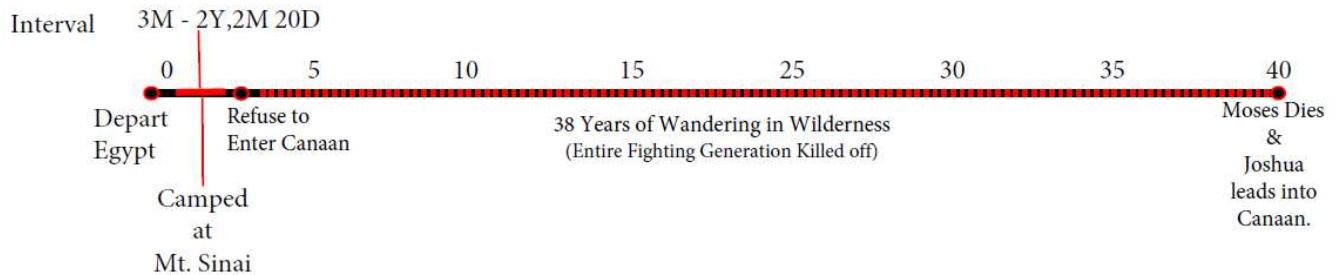


## Forty Years in the Wilderness



## 4. Numbers

1) Who is the writer: Moses (See Ezra 6:18 *And they set the priests in their divisions, and the Levites in their courses, for the service of God, which is at Jerusalem; as it is written in the book of Moses.*)

2) Who are the principal figures?

- a) Moses; his brother Aaron -the High Priest; and their sister Miriam
- b) Twelve Spies (notably – Caleb and Joshua (Oshea))
- c) Korah, Dathan and Abiram (Rebellious Israelites)
- d) Balak (King of Moab) and Balaam (the soothsayer)

3) What is the Theme? The Journeying of Israel in the Wilderness.

4) What are the significant events?

Chapter 1. In the 2<sup>nd</sup> Month, of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Year after leaving Egypt, Moses was instructed to take a census by counting all males, who were over 20 years old and able to go to war. Result: 603,550 men (excluding the Levites).

Chapter 2. The 12 Tribes are assigned specific locations to pitch their tents along with assigned marching order. The Tabernacle was to remain in the middle of the nation both while traveling and while the camp was pitched. Levites camping sites were to encircle the tabernacle.

Chapter 3. Levites are given in place of first born as holy unto the Lord. Moses takes a census of the Levites counting all males over 1 month old: There were 22,000. The Levites fall into four groups/families and their respective camp sites are assigned around the Tabernacle:

- (a) Priests: Aaron and his descendants camping on the Eastside,
- (b) Kohath's descendants to the South,
- (c) Gershon's descendants to the West, and
- (d) Merari's descendants on the North side of the Tabernacle.

Chapter 4. Respective jobs and services to be performed by Levites.

- (a) Serving age is limited to 30-50 years old.
- (b) Kohathites are to bear the 'holy things' (Ark, Alters, Tables, and other items used in the services by the priests) *by hand*. (See 2 Samuel 6:2-8- King David tries to carry the ark on cart)
- (c) Gershonites bear all the hangings and curtains of the Tabernacle using wagons.
- (d) Merarites bear the boards, bars, pillars, and sockets of the Tabernacle using wagons.
- (e) A total of 8,580 are numbered to perform the service.

Chapter 5. Commandment to remove unclean persons from the Camp. Cursed Water Fidelity test (God provides a method for proving the fidelity or non-fidelity of a wife to a jealous husband)

Chapter 6. Law of the Nazarites-A voluntarily, temporary period of separation and abstinence from certain items most notably anything coming from grapes and hair is not to be cut. God gives priests their blessing for the people. (See Judges 13- Samson & 1 Samuel 1:11- Hannah's vow)

Chapter 7. The leaders of each tribe, described as Princes, give mirroring offerings as gifts at the dedication of the Altar. Moses hears the voice of God speaking from the mercy seat above the

ark. (The prince of Judah, Nason, is the grandfather of Boaz and is in the blood line of King David and Jesus. See Ruth 4:20-21 and Matthew 1:4-6 (Greek spelling is Naason))

- Chapter 8. The Levites are consecrated as living offerings unto the Lord. (See similar concept in New Testament in Romans 12:1). Hands were 'laid' on them to separate them from the people.
- Chapter 9. Additional instructions on how to keep the Passover, including providing a backup date for those too far away or unclean. The Camp's movements controlled by the presence (STOP) or the lifting up (GO) of a cloud that covered tabernacle during the day and was visible like a fire at night.
- Chapter 10. Silver trumpets were made to communicate and were to be blown by the priests when going to war, over certain sacrifices, to call to the people to attendance and to start marching. Israel finally leaves Mt. Sinai in correct marching order.
- Chapter 11. Complaining, Lusting, Weeping and Consequences.
- (a) The company complains about something and God burns those in the uttermost (back) part of the camp with his fire.
  - (b) The mixed multitude fell to lusting and company weeps for meat/flesh to eat.
  - (c) Moses complains of the burden of caring for the whole people and God takes of the spirit that is upon Moses and puts some of it upon seventy elders, who are to help him.
  - (d) God sends quails... so many that they encircle the camp a day's journey in all directions and were about three feet deep, but he also sends a plague killing those that lusted.
- Chapter 12. Miriam and Aaron rebel against Moses. Lord comes down in a pillar of a cloud and explains that all other prophets will be spoken to in a dream or visions, but Moses is special in that God speaks to him mouth to mouth. Miriam is given leprosy for a week.
- Chapter 13. 12 Spies are sent in to Canaan to search out the land. All (except Caleb and Joshua) bring back an evil report because they feared the current inhabitants some of whom were literally giants (sons of Anak- the Anakims).
- Chapter 14. The people want a captain to lead them back to Egypt saying it would have been better for God to have let them die either in Egypt or in the wilderness than to die trying to conquer Canaan. God threatens to kill everyone and start a new nation from Moses, but Moses pleads for God spare them. God grants their request to die in the wilderness and the entire generation (20 years old and up) were decreed to die before Israel could enter Canaan. The 10 spies who brought an evil report were killed by a plague. The people tried to go into the land anyway, but were soundly beaten.
- Chapter 15. Rules for Meat (Food/Grain) offerings and Drink offerings, the amounts varied based on the size of the animal being offered. Instructed to put a fringe on their garments to remind them of the Lord's commandments and to do them.
- Chapter 16. Rebellion of Korah (a Levite), Dathan and Abiram (both of Reuben) and 250 famous leaders/princes of Israel. They challenging Moses's and Aaron's roles as leaders. The Earth opens and swallows up ring leaders and their families, and then fire of the Lord destroys the 250 princes. The people blame Moses for these deaths, so God sends a plague that destroys another 14,000.
- Chapter 17. God gives a sign that Aaron was chosen by God to be his priest. Each tribe takes one wood stick/rod and places in the tabernacle. Overnight, Aaron's rod buds, blossoms flowers, and grows almonds, as plain evidence that God has chosen him. The rod was to remain in the tabernacle as token against those rebels.
- Chapter 18. Priest's job duties, Levites are gift unto the priests. Description of portions unto priests and Levites. The tithe (one tenth portion) given to Levite and 1/10 of tithe given to Priests- this is their portion instead of getting a portion of the land of Canaan.
- Chapter 19. Waters of Separation- used for cleansing made of ashes of a red heifer. Cedar, Hyssop & Scarlet cast into the fire while the heifer burns. The ashes were mixed in water and sprinkled on the unclean on the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> day.
- Chapter 20. Exodus Leaders Fall
- (a) Miriam dies.
  - (b) Moses sins by striking rock to bring forth water instead of speaking to it as God commanded. God's punishment was that he would not be permitted to enter into Canaan.
  - (c) King of Edom (Esau's descendants) refuses to allow Israel to pass through their land.

- (d) Aaron dies and his son, Eleazar, is the new high priest.
- Chapter 21. First lands Conquered
- Israel fights the Canaanite King Arad, while journeying around Edom.
  - Company murmurs against God about food and water and God sends the fiery serpents. Moses instructed to make serpent of Brass- those bitten shall look upon it and live.
  - Israel requests passage through Ammorites' land, but they elect fight instead. King Shion and King Og are both defeated and Israel takes their land on the east side of Jordan.
- Chapter 22. Balaam is hired to curse Israel by King Balak of Moab. Balaam gives lip service to not desiring the rewards offered by Balak. Balaam's ass saves his life by avoiding the angel that was sent to smite Balaam. God gives the ass the power of speech.
- Chapter 23. Balaam is unable to curse Israel and instead blesses them twice times.
- Chapter 24. Seeing that the Lord was pleased to bless Israel, Balaam doesn't seek for enchantments as he did before, but God sends him a vision anyway. Balaam blesses Israel a third time and prophesied that *a star would arise out of Jacob and a sceptre out of Israel*. King Balak is quite displeased.
- Chapter 25. Moabites lead Israel to Idolatry
- Children of Israel join with Moabites (Descendants of Lot's incestuous relationship with his daughter) and Midianites (Because of Balaam's advice- see Chapter 31) and engage in idol worship of baal-peor.
  - 24,000 are killed in a plague.
  - Phinehas, son of Eleazar, seeing an Israelite bringing Midianite woman unto his brethren takes a javelin and impales them both, which stops the plague.
- Chapter 26. A second census is taken of the next generation after the first has all died off. Families within each tribe are set out by the names of Israel's grandchildren. Land is to be divided by lot and in proportion to the size of the tribe.
- Chapter 27. Law of inheritance if a man dies with no male heirs. Moses requests a successor so the children of Israel *be not as sheep which have no shepherd*. The Lord takes of the spirit that was upon Moses and puts it upon Joshua, son of Nun.
- Chapter 28. Daily, weekly, monthly sacrifices and annual feasts and respective sacrifices.
- Chapter 29. Additional Annual feasts and respective schedule and sacrifices.
- Chapter 30. Vows are not to be broken. A woman's vow may only be annulled by her father, if she is still at home, or by her husband at the time, he first hears of it; otherwise it shall stand.
- Chapter 31. Vengeance is taken against the Midianites for causing them to go a whoring after strange gods (Baal-Peor). Balaam the soothsayer is slain. Israel fails to follow orders to exterminate the population, but instead, saved the women, children and cattle alive as captives. They are instructed to kill all the male children and non-virgin women. Spoils are split half for those that went to battle and half for the rest of the Company. A levy is taken for the Levites. 1/500 of the army's half and 1/50 of the Company's half.
- Chapter 32. Reubenites, Gadites and 1/2 of Tribe of Manasseh request an inheritance on the east or far side of Jordan (known as Gilead). They must first swear to send their men to fight with the other tribes to take the rest of the land and they are given liberty to build cities for their families.
- Chapter 33. A record of the point to point journeys from Egypt until the entering into Canaan near Jericho. Clear instructions to drive out all the inhabitants of the land and any that remain shall be thorns that vex them. The land is to be divided by lot.
- Chapter 34. Metes and bounds description of the borders of the promised land using landmarks. Twelve men chosen by God to divide the land.
- Chapter 35. A total of 48 Cities are to be given to the Levites, six of which are cities of refuge. Laws for manslayers who accidentally (non-maliciously) kill another person. Flee to a city of refuge and there remain until the death of the high priest.
- Chapter 36. Inheritance of Daughters. Method for keeping all land within the designated tribe so it is not passed among the tribes. If no male heir, the daughters will inherit, but they must marry within their father's tribe.
- 5) When did the events occur? From the second month of the second year since leaving Egypt to the 40<sup>th</sup> year of their wandering in the wilderness before they cross the River Jordan.

6) How does this book point to Jesus?

(a) Messianic Prophecy of Balaam. *I shall see him, but not now: I shall behold him, but not nigh: there shall come a Star out of Jacob, and a Sceptre shall rise out of Israel, and shall smite the corners of Moab, and destroy all the children of Sheth.* Numbers 24:17

(b) Brazen Serpent pointing to the crucifixion of Jesus- *And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life.* John 3:14-15

(c) Waters of Separation- used for cleansing made of ashes of a red heifer. Cedar, Hyssop & Scarlet cast into the fire while the heifer burns. The ashes were mixed in water and sprinkled on the unclean on the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> day. These elements appear in the crucifixion of Jesus as he wore a scarlet/purple robe when mocked by Pilate's men (Matthew 27:28), the sponge of vinegar was put open a reed of hyssop (John 19:29), he arose from the grave on the third day, and cleansed us from our sins (Psalm 51:7). His father's house, the temple, was built of cedar, which was a costly and enduring wood.