

# Making Promises

---

## Part 3: The Wilderness

### Review

- Mt. Sinai has been the base of operations for the children of Israel. God's presence had dwelt on top of the mount, with only Moses invited in.
- Now, the tabernacle is where God's presence will be in the midst of his people, like a portable Sinai. The book of Exodus closes with a finished tabernacle, but Moses unable to enter into the presence of God.
- The book of Leviticus is written to help the children of Israel understand the importance of God's holiness.
- The book reveals a law governing all aspects of Hebrew life: Civil life, Ceremonial life, and the moral underpinnings of life.

### Numbers

- What we call "the book of Numbers," because of the two censuses taken in the book, the Hebrews refer to as "**In The Wilderness**," since the overriding concern is the events that forestalled entrance into the promised land.
- The book of Numbers is divided into three large sections based on the location of the Hebrew camp: **Sinai**, **Paran**, and the **Plains of Moab**, with two travel sections in between.

### Sinai (1-10a)

- The census is to be taken by Moses and Aaron of all of the fighting men of Israel, men **twenty years old and up** (**Num. 1:1-3**).
  - One man from each tribe was to assist in the census, with the tribe of **Levi** exempted (**Num. 1:4-16, 47-49; 3:44-45**).
- The camp around the tabernacle was to be arranged so that the **Levites** were encircled around the tabernacle, and the tribes would be encamped according to the cardinal directions, with **Judah** as the leader facing **east** (**Num. 2:1-9**).

### Travel Log 1 (10b-12)

- The presence of God, symbolized by a **cloud** during the day and a **pillar of fire** by night (**Num. 9:15-23**).
- Along the way, the people resumed complaining and the Lord **killed** some of them (**Num. 11:1-3**). The people then began to reminisce about their time in

Egypt and look disparagingly at what they have now with the Lord as their guide (**Num. 11:4-6**). As punishment the Lord gave them quail to eat, and he struck them with a **plague** which killed many more (**Num. 11:31-35**).

- Miriam and Aaron also began to grumble against Moses because of his **Cushite (Ethiopian) wife**. As a result of their complaining, God struck Miriam with leprosy, and she remained outside the camp for 7 days (**Num. 12:1-10, 15**).

## Paran (13-19)

- While in Paran (also Kadesh Barnea) (**Num. 12:16**), the Lord told Moses to send out **spies** into the land of Canaan (**Num. 13:1-2**).
- When the scouts returned after 40 days to Kadesh Barnea, the majority report was that Canaan was populated by **giants** who lived in cities with impregnable walls (**Num. 13:25-29**).
- Although **Joshua** and **Caleb** argued otherwise (**Num. 13:30**), the people believed the worst (**Num. 13:31-33**) and decided to reject Moses's leadership. As a result, Yahweh condemned this generation of adults to an aimless wandering in the deserts of the upper Sinai for **40 years**.
- While at Paran, some **Levites** gathered other men to complain against Moses and Aaron (**Num. 16:1-3**). In defense of his leaders, the Lord opened up the earth and swallowed them and their households (**Num. 16:31-35**). The next day, the people complained (**Num. 16:41-44**).

## Travel Log 2 (20-21)

- The people complain yet again about a lack of water. God tells Moses to **speak to the rock** and give water to the people to drink (**Num. 20:2-9**). Moses strikes the rock, and for his disobedience, suffers the same fate as the wilderness generation (**Num. 20:10-12**).
- The people continue to complain, so the Lord sends **fiery serpents** to attack them (**Num. 21:4-6**). At the pleading of Moses, God tells him to make a bronze serpent and put it on a pole so that everyone that sees it is healed (**Num. 21:7-9**).

## Plains of Moab (22-36)

- When Balak the king of Moab saw that Israel was in firm control of the area north of his kingdom, he enlisted the services of a diviner named **Balaam** to curse Israel. Instead, he blesses Israel with a prophecy of the fulfillment of the Abrahamic covenant (**Num. 24:9**), and ultimately the promise of Christ (**Num. 24:17**).

### Part 3: The Wilderness

<p><b>Num. 1:1-3</b></p>	<p>1 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, saying, 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.</p>
<p><b>Num. 1:4-16</b></p>	<p>4 And there shall be with you a man from each tribe, each man being the head of the house of his fathers. 5 And these are the names of the men who shall assist you. From Reuben, Elizur the son of Shedeur; 6 from Simeon, Shelumiel the son of Zurishaddai; 7 from Judah, Nahshon the son of Amminadab; 8 from Issachar, Nethanel the son of Zuar; 9 from Zebulun, Eliab the son of Helon; 10 from the sons of Joseph, from Ephraim, Elishama the son of Ammihud, and from Manasseh, Gamaliel the son of Pedahzur; 11 from Benjamin, Abidan the son of Gideoni; 12 from Dan, Ahiezer the son of Ammishaddai; 13 from Asher, Pagiel the son of Ochran; 14 from Gad, Eliasaph the son of Deuel; 15 from Naphtali, Ahira the son of Enan." 16 These were the ones chosen from the congregation, the chiefs of their ancestral tribes, the heads of the clans of Israel.</p>
<p><b>Num. 1:47-49</b></p>	<p>47 But the Levites were not listed along with them by their ancestral tribe. 48 For the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, 49 "Only the tribe of Levi you shall not list, and you shall not take a census of them among the people of Israel.</p>
<p><b>Num. 3:44-45</b></p>	<p>44 And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, 45 "Take the Levites instead of all the firstborn among the people of Israel, and the cattle of the Levites instead of their cattle. The Levites shall be mine: I am the Lord.</p>
<p><b>Num. 2:1-9</b></p>	<p>1 The Lord spoke to Moses and Aaron, saying, 2 "The people of Israel shall camp each by his own standard, with the banners of their fathers' houses. They shall camp facing the tent of meeting on every side. 3 Those to camp on the east side toward the sunrise shall be of the standard of the camp of Judah by their companies, the chief of the people of Judah being Nahshon the son of Amminadab, 4 his company as listed being 74,600. 5 Those to camp next to him shall be the tribe of Issachar, the chief of the people of Issachar being Nethanel the son of Zuar, 6 his company as listed being 54,400. 7 Then the tribe of Zebulun, the chief of the people of Zebulun being Eliab the son of Helon, 8 his company as listed being 57,400. 9 All those listed of the camp of Judah, by their companies, were 186,400. They shall set out first on the march.</p>
<p><b>Num. 9:15-23</b></p>	<p>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. 18 At the command of the Lord the people of Israel set out, and at the command of the Lord they camped. As long as the cloud rested over the tabernacle, they remained in camp. 19 Even when the cloud continued over the tabernacle many days, the people of Israel kept the charge of the Lord and did not set out. 20 Sometimes the cloud was a few days over the tabernacle, and according to the command of the Lord they remained in camp; then according to the command of the Lord they set out. 21 And sometimes the cloud remained from evening until morning. And when the cloud lifted in the morning, they set out, or if it continued for a day and a night, when the cloud lifted they set out. 22 Whether it was two days, or a month, or a longer time, that the cloud continued over the tabernacle, abiding there, the people of Israel remained in camp and did not set out, but when it lifted they set out. 23 At the command of the Lord they camped, and at the command of the Lord they set out. They kept the charge of the Lord, at the command of the Lord by Moses.</p>
<p><b>Num. 11:1-3</b></p>	<p>1 And the people complained in the hearing of the Lord about their misfortunes, and when the Lord heard it, his anger was kindled, and the fire of the Lord burned among them and consumed some outlying parts of the camp. 2 Then the people cried out to Moses, and Moses prayed to the Lord, and the fire died down. 3 So the name of that place was called Taberah, because the fire of the Lord burned among them.</p>
<p><b>Num. 11:4-6</b></p>	<p>4 Now the rabble that was among them had a strong craving. And the people of Israel also wept again and said, "Oh that we had meat to eat! 5 We remember the fish we ate in Egypt that cost nothing, the cucumbers, the melons, the leeks, the onions, and the garlic. 6 But now our strength is dried up, and there is nothing at all but this manna to look at."</p>

<p><b>Num.</b> <b>11:31</b> <b>-35</b></p>	<p>31 Then a wind from the Lord sprang up, and it brought quail from the sea and let them fall beside the camp, about a day's journey on this side and a day's journey on the other side, around the camp, and about two cubits above the ground. 32 And the people rose all that day and all night and all the next day, and gathered the quail. Those who gathered least gathered ten homers. And they spread them out for themselves all around the camp. 33 While the meat was yet between their teeth, before it was consumed, the anger of the Lord was kindled against the people, and the Lord struck down the people with a very great plague. 34 Therefore the name of that place was called Kibroth-hattaavah, because there they buried the people who had the craving. 35 From Kibroth-hattaavah the people journeyed to Hazeroth, and they remained at Hazeroth.</p>
<p><b>Num.</b> <b>12:1-</b> <b>10</b></p>	<p>1 Miriam and Aaron spoke against Moses because of the Cushite woman whom he had married, for he had married a Cushite woman. 2 And they said, "Has the Lord indeed spoken only through Moses? Has he not spoken through us also?" And the Lord heard it. 3 Now the man Moses was very meek, more than all people who were on the face of the earth. 4 And suddenly the Lord said to Moses and to Aaron and Miriam, "Come out, you three, to the tent of meeting." And the three of them came out. 5 And the Lord came down in a pillar of cloud and stood at the entrance of the tent and called Aaron and Miriam, and they both came forward. 6 And he said, "Hear my words: If there is a prophet among you, I the Lord make myself known to him in a vision; I speak with him in a dream. 7 Not so with my servant Moses. He is faithful in all my house. 8 With him I speak mouth to mouth, clearly, and not in riddles, and he beholds the form of the Lord. Why then were you not afraid to speak against my servant Moses?" 9 And the anger of the Lord was kindled against them, and he departed. 10 When the cloud removed from over the tent, behold, Miriam was leprous, like snow. And Aaron turned toward Miriam, and behold, she was leprous.</p>
<p><b>Num.</b> <b>12:15</b></p>	<p>So Miriam was shut outside the camp seven days, and the people did not set out on the march till Miriam was brought in again.</p>
<p><b>Num.</b> <b>12:16</b></p>	<p>After that the people set out from Hazeroth, and camped in the wilderness of Paran.</p>
<p><b>Num.</b> <b>13:1-</b> <b>2</b></p>	<p>1 The Lord spoke to Moses, saying, 2 "Send men to spy out the land of Canaan, which I am giving to the people of Israel. From each tribe of their fathers you shall send a man, every one a chief among them."</p>
<p><b>Num.</b> <b>13:25</b> <b>-29</b></p>	<p>25 At the end of forty days they returned from spying out the land. 26 And they came to Moses and Aaron and to all the congregation of the people of Israel in the wilderness of Paran, at Kadesh. They brought back word to them and to all the congregation, and showed them the fruit of the land. 27 And they told him, "We came to the land to which you sent us. It flows with milk and honey, and this is its fruit. 28 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. 29 The Amalekites dwell in the land of the Negeb. The Hittites, the Jebusites, and the Amorites dwell in the hill country. And the Canaanites dwell by the sea, and along the Jordan."</p>
<p><b>Num.</b> <b>13:30</b></p>	<p>But 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."</p>
<p><b>Num.</b> <b>13:31</b> <b>-33</b></p>	<p>31 Then the men who had gone up with him said, "We are not able to go up against the people, for they are stronger than we are." 32 So they brought to the people of Israel a bad report of the land that they had spied out, saying, "The land, through which we have gone to spy it out, is a land that devours its inhabitants, and all the people that we saw in it are of great height. 33 And there we saw the Nephilim (the sons of Anak, who come from the Nephilim), and we seemed to ourselves like grasshoppers, and so we seemed to them."</p>
<p><b>Num.</b> <b>16:1-</b> <b>3</b></p>	<p>1 Now Korah the son of Izhar, son of Kohath, son of Levi, and Dathan and Abiram the sons of Eliab, and On the son of Peleth, sons of Reuben, took men. 2 And they rose up before Moses, with a number of the people of Israel, 250 chiefs of the congregation, chosen from the assembly, well-known men. 3 They assembled themselves together against Moses and against Aaron and said to them, "You have gone too far! For all in the congregation are holy, every one of them, and the Lord is among them. Why then do you exalt yourselves above the assembly of the Lord?"</p>
<p><b>Num.</b> <b>16:31</b> <b>-35</b></p>	<p>31 And as soon as he had finished speaking all these words, the ground under them split apart. 32 And the earth opened its mouth and swallowed them up, with their households and all the people who belonged to Korah and all their goods. 33 So they and all that belonged to them went down alive into Sheol, and the earth closed over them, and they perished from the midst of the assembly. 34 And all Israel who were around them fled at their cry, for they said, "Lest the earth swallow us up!" 35 And fire came out from the Lord and consumed the 250 men offering the incense.</p>

<p><b>Num. 16:41 -44</b></p>	<p>41 But on the next day all the congregation of the people of Israel grumbled against Moses and against Aaron, saying, "You have killed the people of the Lord." 42 And when the congregation had assembled against Moses and against Aaron, they turned toward the tent of meeting. And behold, the cloud covered it, and the glory of the Lord appeared. 43 And Moses and Aaron came to the front of the tent of meeting, 44 and the Lord spoke to Moses, saying,</p>
<p><b>Num. 20:2- 9</b></p>	<p>2 Now there was no water for the congregation. And they assembled themselves together against Moses and against Aaron. 3 And the people quarreled with Moses and said, "Would that we had perished when our brothers perished before the Lord! 4 Why have you brought the assembly of the Lord into this wilderness, that we should die here, both we and our cattle? 5 And why have you made us come up out of Egypt to bring us to this evil place? It is no place for grain or figs or 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 of the tent of meeting and fell on their faces. And the glory of the Lord appeared to them, 7 and the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, 8 "Take the staff, and assemble the congregation, you and Aaron your brother, and tell the rock before their eyes to yield its water. So you shall bring water out of the rock for them and give drink to the congregation and their cattle." 9 And Moses took the staff from before the Lord, as he commanded him.</p>
<p><b>Num. 20:10 -12</b></p>	<p>10 Then Moses and Aaron gathered the assembly together before the rock, and he said to them, "Hear now, you rebels: shall we bring water for you out of this rock?" 11 And Moses lifted up his hand and struck the rock with his staff twice, and water came out abundantly, and the congregation drank, and their livestock. 12 And the Lord said to Moses and Aaron, "Because you did not believe in me, to uphold me as holy in the eyes of the people of Israel, therefore you shall not bring this assembly into the land that I have given them."</p>
<p><b>Num. 21:4- 6</b></p>	<p>4 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. 5 And the people spoke against God and against Moses, "Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? For there is no food and no water, and we loathe this worthless food." 6 Then the Lord sent fiery serpents among the people, and they bit the people, so that many people of Israel died.</p>
<p><b>Num. 21:7- 9</b></p>	<p>7 And the people came to Moses and said, "We have sinned, for we have spoken against the Lord and against you. Pray to the Lord, that he take away the serpents from us." So Moses prayed for the people. 8 And the Lord said to Moses, "Make a fiery serpent and set it on a pole, and everyone who is bitten, when he sees it, shall live." 9 So Moses made a bronze serpent and set it on a pole. And if a serpent bit anyone, he would look at the bronze serpent and live.</p>
<p><b>Num. 24:9</b></p>	<p>He crouched, he lay down like a lion and like a lioness; who will rouse him up? Blessed are those who bless you, and cursed are those who curse you."</p>
<p><b>Num. 24:17</b></p>	<p>I see him, but not now; I behold him, but not near: a star shall come out of Jacob, and a scepter shall rise out of Israel; it shall crush the forehead of Moab and break down all the sons of Sheth.</p>