

NUMBERS

*Faithless Israel must wander in the desert for 40 years*

SETTING

In the desert on the way from Sinai to Canaan (ca. 1445-1405 BC)

KEY VERSE

*"For forty years—one year for each of the forty days you explored the land—you will suffer for your sins and know what it is like to have me against you."*

14:34

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**CONTENTS**

[Introduction 2](#_Toc126078741)

[The Book of Numbers as warning examples 3](#_Toc126078742)

[The wasteland as a picture 6](#_Toc126078743)

[Numbers 6](#_Toc126078744)

[Ch. 1-10 8](#_Toc126078745)

[Ch. 1-4 8](#_Toc126078746)

[The Law of Jealousy (5:11-31) 8](#_Toc126078747)

[The High Priest's Blessing (6:22-27) 9](#_Toc126078748)

[Timeless truths from chapters 1-10 9](#_Toc126078749)

[Ch. 11: Complaints 1 and 2 10](#_Toc126078750)

[Ch. 13-14 (Complaint number 4) 10](#_Toc126078751)

[Hebrews 3:7-19 11](#_Toc126078752)

[Ch. 15 12](#_Toc126078753)

[Ch. 16: Korah's Rebellion (Complaints number 5 and 6) 12](#_Toc126078754)

[Some thoughts on the death penalty 13](#_Toc126078755)

[Ch. 20 (year 40) 14](#_Toc126078756)

[Ch. 21: Complaint No. 8 and the bronze serpent 14](#_Toc126078757)

[Balaam (Ch. 22-24) 15](#_Toc126078758)

[Ch. 25 (The first generation's last apostasy) 16](#_Toc126078759)

[Ch. 26-36 16](#_Toc126078760)

[Ch. 31: The war against the Midianites 17](#_Toc126078761)

[Zelophehad's daughters (26:33, 27:1-11, Ch. 36) 17](#_Toc126078762)

[Jesus in Numbers 17](#_Toc126078763)

[Timeless truths and application 18](#_Toc126078764)

## Introduction

Numbers is called "Numeri" in Latin because it contains a couple of censuses and thus a lot of numbers. In Hebrew, it is called "in the desert", and that is where they were all the time. While Exodus and Leviticus together span approximately one year, Numbers spans 39 years, with a jump of 38 years not clearly explained until Deuteronomy 2:14.

In between this travel description, some new laws are introduced. The stories reveal why Israel needed these laws.

It doesn't take 40 years to go from Egypt to Israel; it takes a couple of weeks. The journey is extended by all these years when it becomes clear that the Israelites did not want to take the land but instead rebelled and planned to return to Egypt. That is why God says that they must wander in the desert until that entire generation has died out, which took approximately 40 years (14:33-34).

The events in Numbers are often used as cautionary examples elsewhere in the Bible, e.g., Psalm 95, 1 Corinthians 10, and Hebrews 3-4. It was a long period of trials that consumed everyone — even Moses. Rebellion and unbelief are frequent topics in the book. It marks the transition from the generation that came out of Egypt—which never came to a proper faith in God where they trusted him—to the new generation toward the end of the book that brings new hope.

Since Jesus in the NT is portrayed as a new Moses who comes with a greater deliverance, "wandering in the desert" can be used as an image of the Christian journey from the deliverance/baptism (which the miracle of the Red Sea pointed toward) to the final "rest" (as the conquest of the land pointed toward, cf. Heb 4).

In addition, we see Jesus in several places:

* Most clearly, we see Jesus in the brass serpent in 21:1-9. Jesus refers to this in John 3:14-15, in the context of John 3:16. He who looks at the snake should live, just as he who looks at Jesus will live.
* In John 6:48-51, Jesus says that he is the bread of life that surpasses the manna in the desert, and Paul uses manna and water as an image of the Lord's Supper in 1 Cor 10.
* Balaam prophesies in 24:17-19 about a king who will come from Jacob — first David, but also the one to whom David points: the Messiah.
* Joshua's real name was Hosea, but Moses changes his name to Joshua in 13:16. Joshua is the same name as Jesus (Yeshua). This sets the stage for the book of Joshua and the parallel between Joshua and Jesus.

*"It took God only one night to get Israel out of Egypt, but it took 40 years to get Egypt out of Israel."*

*“When the Gospels, the Apostle, or the Psalms are read, another person receives them with joy, embraces them joyfully... but if the Book of Numbers is read to him... he will judge that there is nothing in it that is useful, not something that can be a remedy for his weakness or a help for the salvation of his soul. He will constantly spit it out like heavy and burdensome food.”* Origenes (ca. 185-254 AD)

*"Now these things occurred as examples to keep us from setting our hearts on evil things as they did."* Paul (1 Corinthians 10:6)

*"These things happened to them as examples and were written down as warnings for us, on whom the culmination of the ages has come."* Paul (1 Corinthians 10:11)

## The Book of Numbers as warning examples

Psalms 78, 95, 106

*"They would not be like their ancestors — a stubborn and rebellious generation, whose hearts were not loyal to God, whose spirits were not faithful to him."* Ps 78:8

*"they did not keep God’s covenant and refused to live by his law. They forgot what he had done, the wonders he had shown them."* Ps 78:10-11

*"Do not harden your hearts as you did at Meribah, as you did that day at Massah in the wilderness, where your ancestors tested me; they tried me, though they had seen what I did. For forty years I was angry with that generation; I said, ‘They are a people whose hearts go astray, and they have not known my ways.’"* Ps 95:8-10

*"When our ancestors were in Egypt, they gave no thought to your miracles; they did not remember your many kindnesses, and they rebelled by the sea, the Red Sea."* Ps 106:7

*"But they soon forgot what he had done and did not wait for his plan to unfold."* Ps 106:13

*"they forgot the God who saved them, who had done great things in Egypt"* Ps 106:21

*"Yet the people of Israel rebelled against me in the wilderness. They did not follow my decrees but rejected my laws—by which the person who obeys them will live—and they utterly desecrated my Sabbaths."* Ezekiel 20:13

*"Now these things occurred as examples to keep us from setting our hearts on evil things 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 got up to indulge in revelry [wild party, orgy].” We should not commit sexual immorality, as some of them did—and in one day twenty-three thousand of them died. We should not test Christ, as some of them did—and were killed by snakes. And do not grumble, as some of them did—and were killed by the destroying angel. These things happened to them as examples and were written down as warnings for us, on whom the culmination of the ages has come. So, if you think you are standing firm, be careful that you don’t fall!"* 1. Cor 10:6-12

**Complaining and testing God (11:1, 11:4, 14:2, 14:36, 16:11-35, 41-49, 21:5):**

*"Now the people complained about their hardships in the hearing of the Lord, and when he heard them his anger was aroused. Then fire from the Lord burned among them and consumed some of the outskirts of the camp."* 11:1

*"The rabble with them began to crave other food, and again the Israelites started wailing and said, “If only we had meat to eat!"* 11:4

*"All the Israelites grumbled against Moses and Aaron, and the whole assembly said to them, “If only we had died in Egypt! Or in this wilderness!"*14:2

*"So the men Moses had sent to explore the land, who returned and made the whole community grumble against him by spreading a bad report about it"* 14:36

[Dathan and Abiram complain to Moses] *"Isn’t it enough that you have brought us up out of a land flowing with milk and honey to kill us in the wilderness? And now you also want to lord it over us! Moreover, you haven’t brought us into a land flowing with milk and honey or given us an inheritance of fields and vineyards."* 16:13-14a

*"The next day the whole Israelite community grumbled against Moses and Aaron. “You have* *killed the Lord’s people,” they said."* 16:41

*"they spoke against God and against Moses, and said, 'Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? There is no bread! There is no water! And we detest this miserable food!'"* 21:5

Sexual immorality (Ch. 25): *"While Israel was staying in Shittim, the men began to indulge in sexual immorality with Moabite women, 2 who invited them to the sacrifices to their gods."* 25:1-2

Hebrews: Numbers 13-14 (via Psalm 95)

*"But the men who had gone up with him said, “We can’t attack those people; they are stronger than we are.” And they spread among the Israelites a bad report about the land they had explored. They said, “The land we explored devours those living in it."* Num 13:31-32a

*"That night all the members of the community raised their voices and wept aloud. All the Israelites grumbled against Moses and Aaron, and the whole assembly said to them, “If only we had died in Egypt! Or in this wilderness! Why is the Lord bringing us to this land only to let us fall by the sword? Our wives and children will be taken as plunder. Wouldn’t it be better for us to go back to Egypt?” And they said to each other, “We should choose a leader and go back to Egypt."* Num 14:1-4

Hebrews 3-4:

*"do not harden your hearts as you did in the rebellion, during the time of testing in the wilderness"* (3:8)

*"See to it, brothers and sisters, that none of you has a sinful, unbelieving heart that turns away from the living God."* (3:12)

*... “so that none of you may be hardened by sin’s deceitfulness.”* (3:13)

*... “so that no one will perish by following their example of disobedience.”* (4:11)

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| **Israel in the desert** | **The congregation** |
| freed from Egypt by Moses | freed from sin by Jesus (Matt: the new Moses) |
| through water (1 Cor 10.2: *"baptized to Moses in the cloud and in the sea"*) | through baptism (in the name of the triune God) |
| made God's people (the old covenant) | made God's people (the new covenant) |
| received God's law | received God's law (by the Spirit) |
| on the way to the promised land | on the way to the promised land (Heb.: *"the rest"*) |

The desert walk can be seen as a picture of the entire Christian walk, from redemption to final salvation.

## The wasteland as a picture

An ambiguous image: Life-threatening and dangerous, but also security from enemies (the Israelites from Egypt, David from Saul, and Elijah from Jezebel) where God provides and reveals himself. A place where you can experience both good and bad.

Complaining, rebellion and punishment, or learning to trust God. Maturity and learning, or doom and death.

The desert walk can also be seen as a picture of periods in life characterized by spiritual dryness, loneliness, and trials.

## Numbers

The people go through a painful process of testing (Deuteronomy 8:2, 15-16) and maturation where God teaches them about the consequences of rebellion and irresponsible decisions.

*“Remember how the Lord your God led you all the way in the wilderness these forty years, to humble and test you in order to know what was in your heart, whether or not you would keep his commands.”* Deuteronomy 8:2

*"He led you through the vast and dreadful wilderness, that thirsty and waterless land, with its venomous snakes and scorpions. He brought you water out of hard rock. He gave you manna to eat in the wilderness, something your ancestors had never known, to humble and test you so that in the end it might go well with you."* Deuteronomy 8:15-16

Every time Israel rebels, God shows his justice and mercy at the same time.

The old generation has seen God's greatness and great wonders time and time again (14:22), but they have never come to a proper faith in God where they trust him (14:23).

*“not one of those who saw my glory and the signs I performed in Egypt and in the wilderness but who disobeyed me and tested me ten times — not one of them will ever see the land I promised on oath to their ancestors. No one who has treated me with contempt will ever see it.”* 14:22-23

The desert period transforms Israel from a bunch of ex-slaves into a nation ready to occupy the land they have been promised.

**Ch. 1-10 Mount Sinai (20 days). The old generation. Order and preparations.**

Ch. 1-4: Organization. 1st census.

Ch. 5-10: Purification. 1. instructions.

**Ch. 11-25 The Paran desert (38 years). The tragic transition. Disorder and**

**procrastination.**

Ch. 11-12: To Kadesh. 1st journey.

Ch. 13-14: At Kadesh. Espionage & adultery.

Ch. 15-19: In the desert for 38 years.

Ch. 20-25: To Moab. 2nd journey.

**Ch. 26-36 Moab (approx. 5 months). The new generation. Order and preparations**

Ch. 26-27: Reorganization. 2nd census.

Ch. 28-30: Promises of sacrifices and promises. 2. instructions.

Ch. 31-36: Battle and first land division. 2. instructions.

## Ch. 1-10

Chronological order:

* The sanctuary (9:15-23)
* Sacrifices (Ch. 7-8)
* Passover (9:1-14)
* Census (Ch. 1-6)
* Departure (Ch. 10)

The text is not chronological, but rather follows the camp layout:

* The tribes at the outer end (Ch. 1-2)
* The priests (Ch. 3-4, 8)
* The tabernacle at the innermost (Ch. 9)

**The point:**

The reader is led toward the tabernacle. Emphasizes the importance that God must be the center. God would not go with them in Exodus 33:3. The purpose of Numbers 1-10 is that God can walk with them.

## Ch. 1-4

An army —does not receive combat training, but is purified and sanctified, because they are going to battle against idolatry and sin, not men.

They have gone from 70 people (Exodus 1) to 600,000 men.

God's plan is moving forward, and he has kept his promises so far.

The Levites are each given a task regarding the tabernacle. Strict rules for who does what.

## The Law of Jealousy (5:11-31)

When a man suspects that his wife has been unfaithful and there are no witnesses. This law was to determine whether she was guilty or not. Similar rituals exist in other cultures.

She should answer "amen" (let it happen if I am guilty) to the punishment (unclear exactly what the punishment was, but the consequence is that she will not be able to have children).

Should drink water + sand + ink = not dangerous. It is God who reveals the truth.

Purpose:

1. Protect the woman against false accusations.
2. Protect the purity of the congregation.

Shows how seriously God takes adultery.

The story in John 8:2-12 is about adultery, where Jesus wrote in the sand. Perhaps Jesus wants to refer to this story from Numbers since both stories are about adultery and sand.

## The High Priest's Blessing (6:22-27)

The oldest preserved Bible text (the "silver scrolls" from approx. 600 BC)

Comes chronologically as the last thing before departure after they have been obedient to all that God has said.

They pray that the Lord will bless them (because of Abraham) and preserve them (in the covenant), let his face/presence (the cloud) shine on them and be gracious to them, turn his face towards them (and give attention), and give them peace (and wholeness and well-being through a right relationship with Him).

Is this the reason why Paul opens his letters with "grace and peace"?

*“So they will put my name on the Israelites, and I will bless them.”* 6:27

We see the complete fulfillment of this blessing at the end of John's Revelation:

*"They will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads."* Rev 22:4

## Timeless truths from chapters 1-10

1. God desires order (1 Cor 14:33)

*“For God is not a God of disorder but of peace—as in all the congregations of the Lord’s people.”* 1 Cor 14:33

2. He gives the church various tasks (Ch. 3-4) → spiritual gifts

## Ch. 11: Complaints 1 and 2

"The Lord said" in chapters 1-10, then the people speak in 11:1. Great contrast!

The pattern (as in Exodus 32): The people complain → The wrath of the Lord is kindled → Moses intercedes → the punishment ceases (and God is merciful).

Their complaints are “evil” (LXX: “sinful”), which angers God. But when Moses complains, God hears and answers him. What is the difference?

Difference between complaining to God (Moses) and complaining about God (the people) (v. 10)

Based on the relationship with God (or lack thereof)

Psalm 78: They sinned and did not trust him (v. 32), sought him only when he killed (v. 34), *"Yet he was merciful; he forgave their iniquities and did not destroy them. Time after time he restrained his anger and did not stir up his full wrath.”* (v. 38)

**Application:**

*"And do not grumble, as some of them did—and were killed by the destroying angel."* (1 Corinthians 10:10)

Don't spread it, but complain to God instead. Don't make others stumble. (Psalm 73:15)

*"If I had spoken out like that, I would have betrayed your children."* Psalm 73:15

## Ch. 13-14 (Complaint number 4)

* They do not believe God can keep his promises and give them the land (14:2-3)
* They plan to rebel, choose a new leader, and go back to Egypt—and they want to stone Moses, Aaron, Joshua and Caleb (14:4, 10).
* The people show a complete lack of trust in God and react out of fear instead. They despise God even though they have seen all that He has done for them (14:11, 23). They rebel against him (14:9).
* They don’t plan to enter the promised land. They are allowed to die in the desert, as they prefer (14:2, 28).
* Mercy: Forgives them (14:20) and lets them become nomads in the desert—which is still better than being slaves in Egypt.

## Hebrews 3:7-19

v. 7-11: From Psalm 95:7-11 (about Exodus 17 and especially Numbers 13-14)

*"So, as the Holy Spirit says: “Today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts as you did in the rebellion, during the time of testing in the wilderness, where your ancestors tested and tried me, though for forty years they saw what I did. That is why I was angry with that generation; I said, ‘Their hearts are always going astray, and they have not known my ways.’ So I declared on oath in my anger, ‘They shall never enter my rest.’"*

v. 8: *“harden your hearts”* = despise God and don’t believe, despite all the signs (Numbers 14:11)

*“The Lord said to Moses, “How long will these people treat me with contempt? How long will they refuse to believe in me, in spite of all the signs I have performed among them?”* Numbers 14:11

vv. 18-19: unbelief = disobedience (faith = obedience)

*“And to whom did God swear that they would never enter his rest if not to those who disobeyed? So we see that they were not able to enter, because of their unbelief.”* Heb 3:18-19

“Unbelief” in Numbers 14 is not to not believe that God exists, but not trusting God. The opposite of faith in the Bible is mistrust, often associated with fear.

It wasn't the complaint that was wrong, but that they didn't trust him. Nothing new, but it points to the day when everyone will be judged.

Joshua and Caleb will enter the land because they trusted in God. In the same way, those who trust that Jesus is the Son of God will be allowed to enter the kingdom of God.

## Ch. 15

v. 2: *"After you enter the land... "* Grace in spite of Ch. 13-14.

vv. 30-31: He who willfully breaks God's law blasphemes God, shows contempt for His word, and will be cut off from God’s people. It is probably no coincidence that this comes right after Ch. 13-14.

vv. 32-36: Example. He did this on purpose, which clearly shows that he does not care about the sign of the covenant (Exodus 31:12-17), and therefore he cannot be part of God's people. He chooses to leave God.

*“While the Israelites were in the wilderness, a man was found gathering wood on the Sabbath day. Those who found him gathering wood brought him to Moses and Aaron and the whole assembly, and they kept him in custody, because it was not clear what should be done to him. Then the Lord said to Moses, “The man must die. The whole assembly must stone him outside the camp.” So the assembly took him outside the camp and stoned him to death, as the Lord commanded Moses.”* vv. 32-36

➡ It seems natural to understand "the unpardonable sin" in the NT and Heb 6:4-8, 10:26-31 in the same way.

## Ch. 16: Korah's Rebellion (Complaints number 5 and 6)

The Levites were in charge of the Tabernacle, but only the priests (Levites of Aaron's family (16:40), only a few people) could offer sacrifices. (Confirmed in Ch. 18-19)

Korah is a Levite of the Kehat family, who was supposed to take care of "the most holy" (4:4). But he wants the priesthood as well (16:10). Argues that *"The whole community is holy"* (16:3). He thereby challenges God's arrangements (Ch. 3-4).

*“This is the work of the Kohathites at the tent of meeting: the care of the most holy things.”* Num 4:4

v. 22: Moses intercedes so that all the people do not die (mercy).

v. 30: *“the realm of the dead”* means “the grave”, not “hell”.

v. 41: The whole Israelite community complains about the punishment for the previous

complaint. They call the sinners *"the Lord's people"*. They refuse to believe in anything that God does.

v. 46: Aaron intercedes and makes atonement, standing between the dead and the living (mercy).

➡ Jesus, the perfect high priest who stands between life and death for us.

## Some thoughts on the death penalty

The wages of sin is death. All sin deserves the death penalty, and all people deserve to die – and will die (16:29).

*"If these men die a natural death and suffer the fate of all mankind, then the Lord has not sent me."* 16:29

When someone dies "before the time", it shows that God hastens the inevitable day of death (16:30).

*“But if the Lord brings about something totally new, and the earth opens its mouth and swallows them, with everything that belongs to them, and they go down alive into the realm of the dead, then you will know that these men have treated the Lord with contempt.”* 16:30

This is not necessarily the same as being lost (20:26), and the realm of the dead (*"sheol"*) is not hell. It just means their lives have ended.

*"Remove Aaron’s garments and put them on his son Eleazar, for Aaron will be gathered to his people; he will die there."* 20:26

It is even worse to deliberately break the new covenant (Heb 10:26-31)

*“If we deliberately keep on sinning after we have received the knowledge of the truth, no sacrifice for sins is left, but only a fearful expectation of judgment and of raging fire that will consume the enemies of God. Anyone who rejected the law of Moses died without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses. How much more severely do you think someone deserves to be punished who has trampled the Son of God underfoot, who has treated as an unholy thing the blood of the covenant that sanctified them, and who has insulted the Spirit of grace? For we know him who said, “It is mine to avenge; I will repay,” and again, “The Lord will judge his people.” It is a dreadful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.”* Heb 10:26-31

Paul uses the death penalty in the OT as a metaphor for expelling a sinner from the congregation (1 Cor 5:2, 13). *"Purge the evil person from among you."* (1 Cor 5:13 ESV) refers to how we must eradicate evil from our church (used nine times in Deuteronomy).

Those who despised God in the desert did not want to enter the promised land, therefore they died earlier than naturally and thus did not enter. → Those who despise God now do not want to enter God's kingdom, and therefore do not get eternal life.

People, whether in Numbers or the New Covenant, will have life only if they trust in God and his promises.

## Ch. 20 (year 40)

Back to Kadesh (Ch. 13-14). Probably skips to the 40th year and thus silently says that the 38 years were wasted.

Complaint no. 7 → Even Moses and Aaron get fed up and for the first time do not do as God has said.

Moses struck the rock (as in Exodus 17), but he was to speak to it. He also spoke as if he did it and not God.

*"for they rebelled against the Spirit of God, and rash words came from Moses’ lips."* (Psalm 106:33)

God says they did not trust in him, did not honor him as holy, and rebelled against his command (vv. 12 and 24)

## Ch. 21: Complaint No. 8 and the bronze serpent

21:4-9: Mercy in that they can live if they trust that the copper serpent will save them.

*"Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the wilderness, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, that everyone who believes may have eternal life in him. For God so loved the world... "* (Joh 3:14-16)

Whoever trusts that Jesus saves, gets to live.

## Balaam (Ch. 22-24)

Balaam: A soothsayer by profession who probably addressed various gods. Maybe he called the relevant god *"my god"* anyway? (22:18)

God initially says no, and Balaam obeys. The second time Balaam asks, God says yes with reservations. Why then does God's wrath flare up in 22:22?

Similarities with Jacob (Genesis 31-32) and Moses (Exodus 4), where God sends them along and then stops them. Each time God wanted them to go, but something had to be sorted out first.

Perhaps Balaam's motivation was the money (2 Pet 2:15, Jud 11) and not to do God's will.

Irony: *"The seer"* (24:3-4) cannot see the angel, while the donkey can.

His statements confirm the promises to Abraham:

1. 23:7-10: so many that no one can count them

2. 23:18-24: that God is with them

3. 24:3-9: that they will get the land (quotes Gen 12:3)

4. 24:15-19: A future king (David, 2 Sam 8:2) → Jesus

*"I see him, but not now; I behold him, but not near. A star will come out of Jacob; a scepter will rise out of Israel. He will crush the foreheads of Moab, the skulls of all the people of Sheth. Edom will be conquered; Seir, his enemy, will be conquered, but Israel will grow strong. A ruler will come out of Jacob and destroy the survivors of the city."* 24:15-19

*"David also defeated the Moabites. He made them lie down on the ground and measured them off with a length of cord. Every two lengths of them were put to death, and the third length was allowed to live. So the Moabites became subject to David and brought him tribute."* 2 Samuel 8:2

Main point: Nothing can change God's blessing over Israel.

## Ch. 25 (The first generation's last apostasy)

Again, a contrast between God's blessing and the people's rebellion.

vv. 1-3: When Balaam could not curse them, he suggested this to Balak and the Midianites (31:16, Rev 2:14).

 *“While Israel was staying in Shittim, the men began to indulge in sexual immorality with Moabite women, who invited them to the sacrifices to their gods. The people ate the sacrificial meal and bowed down before these gods. So Israel yoked themselves to the Baal of Peor. And the Lord’s anger burned against them.”* 25:1-3

 *"They were the ones who followed Balaam’s advice and enticed the Israelites to be unfaithful to the Lord in the Peor incident, so that a plague struck the Lord’s people."* 31:16

 *"Nevertheless, I have a few things against you: There are some among you who hold to the teaching of Balaam, who taught Balak to entice the Israelites to sin so that they ate food sacrificed to idols and committed sexual immorality."* Rev 2:14

Both idolatry and sexual immorality

Psalm 106:28 - held sacrificial meal for the dead

The man in vv. 6-9 shows great contempt for God and those who grieve over the situation. He has, by his actions and unbelief, cut himself off from God's people.

*"Then an Israelite man brought into the camp a Midianite woman right before the eyes of Moses and the whole assembly of Israel while they were weeping at the entrance to the tent of meeting. When Phinehas son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron, the priest, saw this, he left the assembly, took a spear in his hand and followed the Israelite into the tent. He drove the spear into both of them, right through the Israelite man and into the woman’s stomach. Then the plague against the Israelites was stopped; but those who died in the plague numbered 24,000."*

## Ch. 26-36

No one dies from chapter 26!

Potential crises do not turn into riots but are resolved through negotiation (27:1-11, 31:14-35, 32:1-42).

A positive part of the book that gives hope for the future

## Ch. 31: The war against the Midianites

Due to Ch. 25

The second generation makes their first mistake, but they don't seem to have bad intentions.

32,000 women are spared (v. 35).

The Midianites appear again in Judges, so either this is a "war exaggeration" or they lived in different areas.

## Zelophehad's daughters (26:33, 27:1-11, Ch. 36)

In other cultures, women could not usually inherit land and property.

God granted them this right if they had no brother and married someone from their tribe.

Important as it is mentioned three times and also closes the entire book.

## Jesus in Numbers

The copper serpent (Ch. 21) → John 3:14-15

Manna → Bread of life (John 6:48-51)

*"I am the bread of life. Your ancestors ate the manna in the wilderness, yet they died. But here is the bread that comes down from heaven, which anyone may eat and not die. I am the living bread that came down from heaven. Whoever eats this bread will live forever. This bread is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world."* John 6:48-51

Manna + water → communion (1 Cor 10)

Balaam's prophecy (24:17-19)

Hosea → Joshua (13:16)

*“These are the names of the men Moses sent to explore the land. (Moses gave Hoshea son of Nun the name Joshua.)”* 13:16

Judgment on unbelieving Israel → The Judgment

God's presence in the sanctuary → John 1:14

*"The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth."* John 1:14

The intermediary Moses who intercedes → Jesus is our advocate/advocate (1 John 2:1)

## Timeless truths and application

1. As God was with Israel in the desert, he is with you and leads you into "rest" (Heb. 4). Do you trust Him to get you there when you face hardships and demotivating difficulties? How do you react when you experience being in a "spiritual desert"?
2. Are you satisfied with the gifts you have received from God? Are you seeking something else out of selfish ambition (Phil 2:3) or pride (Chap 16)?

 *"Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves"* Phil 2:3

1. Are you dissatisfied with God? Are you complaining? Over what and to whom? How can you be grateful? (Col 3:15-16)

 *"Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful. Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom through psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts."* Col 3:15-16