

Week 8 – The Book of Numbers

Introduction

There are three distinct stages in the life of Israel¹:

Stage	Reference	Israel	Location
1	Nu 1:1-10:10	The ideal	Camped at Sinai
2	Nu 10:11-22:1	Rejecting God	Wandering through the desert (Kadesh)
3	Nu 22:2-36:13	The new generation	On the verge of entering the promised land – in the plains of Moab

Numbers at a glance

Num 1-4
- the ideal



Research:

What was the role of the Levites in Chapter 3 – what is different for them from the other tribes?

¹ It should be noted that there is little consensus on the structure of Numbers.

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Num 5:1-10:10
- purity

Num 10:11-
22:1
- God's grace
in the desert

Num 22:2-
36:13
- From Old to
New (towards
Canaan)

Research:

What are some of the reasons for the failure of almost all of the Exodus Israelites in reaching the final destination?

Reflection:

What comparisons and warnings can be drawn for Christians as they move today toward their heavenly rest (c.f. Heb 3-4, 11-12)?

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Theological Themes of Numbers

- 1) Yahweh's Presence
- 2) Yahweh's Providence
- 3) Yahweh's Patience
- 4) Yahweh' Rule

Conclusion

HOLY		PROFANE
Yahweh	VS.	
Old Israel		
Moses		
Israel's obedience		
Promised Land		
Joshua/Caleb		

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For next Week:

- Read Unit 9.
- Read Deuteronomy 1-11.

Final Refection:

What is the purpose of the Book of Numbers?

Handout – ***Exam Pointers***²:

It is now only two units away from the exam. Now is the time (if you have not already started) that you should be trying to bring your notes in order. This will help you as you move through the pressured time of revision and memorization.

References (for possible further reading)

Dumbrell, W.J. *The Faith of Israel – A Theological Survey of the Old Testament*. Grand Rapids, Michigan; Baker Academic, 2nd Ed 2002, pp 50-56.
(this is a hard read –read if you feel you are managing the text well)

LaSor, W.S., Hubbard, D.A., Bush, F.W., *Old Testament Survey*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmanns, 2nd Ed. 1996, pp 99-110.
(a good read if interested in the authorship of Numbers and the purpose of the Census figures)

² See 'PTC Exam Pointers'