

Access the Bible

Tualatin Presbyterian Church

Numbers Outline

Introduction: Numbers, the fourth book in the Pentateuch, tells the story of the two generations of Israelites wandering in the wilderness. The name numbers refers to the significance of the census in the book. Many divide the work into two main sections: Chapters 1-25 describe the old generation of rebellion; and Chapters 26-36 describe the New Generation of Hope. There is much overlap between Numbers and Exodus and Deuteronomy, each book providing us with a different perspective and interpretation of the Israelite journey to the promised land.

Section One: The Rebellious Generation

Chapter 1: The first census

Chapter 2: The description of how Israel camps

Chapter 3: Focus on the Levites and the priesthood

Chapter 4: Focus on the Kohathites in charge of the tent

Chapter 5: The leprous, the unclean, and the ritual for adultery and jealousy

Chapter 6: The Nazirite vow and the Aaronic benediction

Chapter 7: Tabernacle offerings

Chapter 8: Description of sacrifice

Chapter 9: Keeping the Passover and the cloud and fire of God's presence

Chapter 10: Traveling from Sinai

Chapter 11: Complaining about food; the tradition of the 70 elders, manna and quail

Chapter 12: Miriam and Aaron's mutiny

Chapter 13: Spying in the land- grapes, the "bad report"

Chapter 14: The people rebel; defeated by Amalekites

Chapter 15: Offerings and fringes

Chapter 16: Korah's mutiny

Chapter 17: Blossoming/budding staff of Aaron

Chapter 18: Further description of Aaron, priests, and the priestly duties

Chapter 19: Laws regarding death; the red heifer

Chapter 20: Water from the rock; Moses not allowed to enter promised land

Chapter 21: The snakes and the raising of the bronze serpent

Chapter 22: Balak hires Balaam

Chapter 23: Balaam prays for Israel

Chapter 24: Balaam continues to pray for Israel

Chapter 25: Mixing with the Moabites and the worship of Ba'al

Section Two: The Generation of Hope

Chapter 26: Second Census

Chapter 27: Inheritance law- the daughters of Zelophehad

Chapter 28: More on offerings

Chapter 29: Holy festivals

Chapter 30: Significance of vows

Chapter 31: Success over the Midianites

Chapter 32: Gad and Reuben and the sheep

Chapter 33: Traveling in stages

Chapter 34: The boundaries of the promised land

Chapter 35: Cities for the Levites and cities of refuge

Chapter 36: More on inheritance and Zelophehad; no marrying between tribes

Texts to know: The Aaronic benediction (6:22-27); the story of the bronze serpent (21:4-9); and Balaam and his donkey (22-24)