

Purpose

To tell how Israel prepared to enter the Promised Land, how they sinned and were punished, and how they prepared to try again

Meaning of Numbers

Referring to the census

Penman

Moses

Date Written

1450-1410 BC

Setting

The vast desert of the Sinai region, as well as lands east and south of Canaan

Key People

Moses, Aaron, Miriam, Joshua, Caleb, Eleazar, Korah, and Balaam

Key Places

Mt. Sinai (Horeb), Promised Land (Canaan), Kadesh, Mt. Hor, and the Plains of Moab

Key Verses

“Not one of these people will enter that land. They have seen My glorious presence and the miraculous signs I performed in Egypt and in the wilderness, but they tested me by refusing to listen.”

Numbers 14:22, 23

An Overview (36 Chapters)

- Preparing for the Journey, *1:1-10:10*
- First Approach to Canaan, *10:11-14:45*
- Wandering in the Desert, *15:1-21:35*
- Second Approach to Canaan, *22:1-36:13*

Major Themes

- *Census*: Moses counted the Israelites twice. The first census organized the people into marching units, to better defend themselves. The second census prepared them to conquer the country east of the Jordan River.
- *Rebellion*: Rebellion against God is always a serious matter. Rebellion does not usually begin with all-out warfare but in subtle ways, with griping or complaining.
- *Wandering*: Because they rebelled, the Israelites were forced to wander in the desert for 40 years. Their wandering was to demonstrate how seriously God considers flagrant disobedience of His commands.