

PETE BUMGARNER MINISTRIES

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NUMBERS

STUDY GUIDE



NUMBERS

- A. Numbers is the fourth book of the Pentateuch.
- B. The Jews called the book of Numbers, “In The Wilderness.”
- C. The book of Numbers is divided into thirty-six chapters.
- D. Chapter one records the numbering of the nation of Israel’s military according to their tribes.
 - 1. Only the males who were twenty years old and older were numbered. The total number of these eligible warriors was 603,550. (Numbers 1:46)
 - 2. The tribe of Levi was not numbered with the other eleven (twelve) tribes; they were numbered separately. (Numbers 1:47; Numbers 3:14-16 & 39)
- E. Chapter two reveals the order and procedure for encampment and breaking camp. (Refer to pages 14 and 15)
 - 1. The order and procedure for setting up and breaking camp reveals the systematic order of God.
 - 2. God did not and does not operate in a chaotic or haphazard manner.
 - 3. The “old” gives enlightenment to the “new.” We must study the example of the “old” and follow God’s ordained pattern.
- F. Chapters three and four record the numbering of the Levites by families and tell the specific duties of each particular family.
 - 1. Only the males who were a month old and older were numbered. The total number of these Levites was 22,000.
 - 2. Levi had three sons, Gershon, Kohath, and Merari. The families of each of these sons were given specific assignments relating to the Tabernacle.

a. **Gershonites** - “The **leader** of the fathers’ house of the Gershonites **was Eliasaph** the son of Lael. The **duties** of the children of Gershon in the tabernacle of meeting included the tabernacle, the tent with its covering, the screen for the door of the tabernacle of meeting, the screen for the door of the court, the hangings of the court which are around the tabernacle and the altar, and their cords, according to all the work relating to them.” (Numbers 3:24-26)

(1) “Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying: ‘Also take a census of the sons of Gershon, by their fathers’ house, by their families. **From thirty years old and above, even to fifty years old,** you shall number them, all who enter to perform the service, to do the work in the tabernacle of meeting. This is the service of the families of the Gershonites, in serving and carrying: They shall carry the curtains of the tabernacle and the tabernacle of meeting with its covering, the covering of badger skins that is on it, the screen for the door of the tabernacle of meeting, the screen for the door of the gate of the court, the hangings of the court which are around the tabernacle and altar, and their cords, all the furnishings for their service and all that is made for these things: so shall they serve. **Aaron and his sons shall assign all the service of the sons of the Gershonites,** all their tasks and all their service. And you shall appoint to them all their tasks as their duty. This is the service of the families of the sons of Gershon in the tabernacle of meeting.’” (Numbers 4:21-28)

(2) “And their duties shall be **under the authority of Ithamar** the son of Aaron the priest.” (Numbers 4:28)

b. **Kohathites** - “The **leader** of the fathers’ house of the families of the Kohathites **was Elizaphan** the son of Uzziel. Their **duty** included the ark, the table, the lampstand, the altars, the utensils of the sanctuary with which they ministered, the screen, and all the work relating to them. And **Eleazar the son of Aaron the priest was to be chief over the leaders of the Levites, with oversight of those who kept charge of the sanctuary.**” (Numbers 3:27-32)

(1) **Aaron and his sons** - “Then the Lord spoke to Moses and Aaron, saying: ‘Take a census of the sons of Kohath from among the children of Levi, by their families, by their fathers’ house, from **thirty years old and above, even to fifty years old**, all who enter the service to do the work in the tabernacle of meeting. This is **the service of the sons of Kohath** in the tabernacle of meeting, relating to the most holy things: When the camp prepares to journey, Aaron and his sons shall come, and they shall take down the covering veil and cover the ark of the Testimony with it. Then they shall put on it a covering of badger skins, and spread over that a cloth entirely of blue; and they shall insert its poles. On the table of showbread they shall spread a blue cloth, and put on it the dishes, the pans, the bowls, and the pitchers for pouring; and the showbread shall be on it. They shall spread over them a scarlet cloth, and cover the same with a covering of badger skins; and they shall insert its poles. And they shall take a blue cloth and cover the lampstand of the light, with its lamps, its wick-trimmers, its trays, and all its oil vessels, with which they service it. Then they shall put it with all its utensils in a covering of badger skins, and put it on a carrying beam. Over the golden altar they shall spread a blue cloth, and cover it with a covering of badger skins; and they shall insert its poles.

Then they shall take all the utensils of service with which they minister in the sanctuary, put them in a blue cloth, cover them with a covering of badger skins, and put them on a carrying beam. Also they shall take away the ashes from the altar, and spread a purple cloth over it. They shall put on it all its implements with which they minister there--the firepans, the forks, the shovels, the basins, and all the utensils of the altar--and they shall spread on it a covering of badger skins, and insert its poles.” (Numbers 4:1-14)

- (2) **Remaining Kohathites** - “And when Aaron and his sons have finished covering the sanctuary and all the furnishings of the sanctuary, when the camp is set to go, then the sons of Kohath shall come to carry them; but **they shall not touch any holy thing, lest they die**. These are the things in the tabernacle of meeting which the sons of Kohath are to carry.” (Numbers 4:15)
 - (3) **Eleazar** - “The appointed **duty of Eleazar** the son of Aaron the priest is the oil for the light, the sweet incense, the daily grain offering, the anointing oil, the oversight of all the tabernacle, of all that is in it, with the sanctuary and its furnishings.” (Numbers 4:16)
 - (4) “Then the Lord spoke to Moses and Aaron, saying: ‘Do not cut off the tribe of the families of the Kohathites from among the Levites; but do this in regard to them, that they may live and not die when they approach the most holy things: Aaron and his sons shall go in and **appoint each of them to his service and his task**. But they shall not go in to watch while the holy things are being covered, lest they die.’” (Numbers 4:20)
- c. **Merarites** - “The **leader** of the fathers’ house of the families of Merari was Zuriel the son of Abihail.

And the appointed **duty** of the children of Merari included the boards of the tabernacle, its bars, its pillars, its sockets, its utensils, all the work relating to them, and the pillars of the court all around, with their sockets, their pegs, and their cords.” (Numbers 3:35-37)

(1) “As for the sons of Merari, you shall number them by their families and by their fathers’ house. From **thirty years old and above, even to fifty years old**, you shall number them, everyone who enters the service to do the work of the tabernacle of meeting. And this is what they must carry as all their service for the tabernacle of meeting: the boards of the tabernacle, its bars, its pillars, its sockets, and the pillars around the court with their sockets, pegs, and cords, with all their furnishings and all their service; and you shall **assign to each man by name the items he must carry.**” (Numbers 4:29-32)

(2) “This is the service of the families of the sons of Merari, as all their service for the tabernacle of meeting, **under the authority of Ithamar** the son of Aaron the priest.” (Numbers 4:33)

- d. Job descriptions are an asset, not a liability; otherwise, God would not have given specific job descriptions to the tribe of Levi.
- e. Job assignments must be given according to anointings. The anointing of an individual enables him to successfully carry out his job assignments with God’s blessing and support.
- f. When job descriptions are violated, problems are inevitable.
- g. Job descriptions are a written means of communication; this communication eliminates many questions and reveals specific expectations. They also eliminate many potential problems.

3. The male Levites between the ages of thirty and fifty were eight thousand five hundred and eighty. (Numbers 4:47-48)
 - a. These men were actively involved in the manual labor of all that pertained to the tabernacle.
 - b. These twenty years of service required maturity and strength.
 - c. After fifty years of age, one was not allowed to perform tasks that involved manual labor; however, he was still active as a watchman, protecting the sacred things of the tabernacle.
 - (1) It appears that these men were responsible for instructing and superintending. They acted as watchman.
 - (2) This mandate seems to suggest that the young are more fit for manual labor and the old are more fit for trust.
- G. Chapter five gives instructions concerning uncleanness, restitution for sin, and jealousy.
- H. Chapter six gives instructions concerning the Nazarite vow and the blessing that God instructed Moses to command Aaron to speak over the children of Israel.
- I. Chapter seven tells of the offerings given by the leaders of Israel.
 1. Six covered carts and twelve oxen were given to the Levites to be used in transporting the Tabernacle.
 - a. Two carts and four oxen were given to the Gershonites, and the remaining four carts and eight oxen were given to the Merarites.
 - b. The Kohathites were excluded because the holy things were to be carried on their shoulders.
 - (1) The holy things of God are still carried on the shoulders of men.

(2) Programs and religious liturgies are vehicles of men, not methods of God. We must follow the ways of God, not the methods of men. (I Samuel 6:1-9; II Samuel 6:1-17)

2. The leaders also gave a dedication offering. The offerings of each of the twelve leaders were the same: one silver platter, that weighed one hundred and thirty shekels full of fine flour mixed with oil; one silver bowl that weighed seventy shekels full of fine flour mixed with oil; one gold pan that weighed ten shekels full of incense; one young bull; one ram; one male lamb in its first year, each to be offered as a burnt offering; one kid of the goats to be offered as a sin offering; two oxen; five rams, five male goats; and five male lambs in their first year, each to be offered as a peace offering. (Numbers 7:10-88)

J. Chapter eight records the consecration of the Levites.

K. Chapter nine refers to the Passover celebration and the significance of the cloud over the tabernacle.

1. The cloud directed the movement and encampment of the Israelites. (Numbers 9:15-23)

2. The cloud is a type of the Holy Spirit, Who leads and directs the believers.

L. Chapter ten tells of the silver trumpets, Israel's departure from Sinai, and the order in which they marched.

1. The silver trumpets were made by the direction of God for these purposes: calling the leaders or congregation to assemble; directing the movement of the camps; sounding the alarm for war; **announcing the appointed feasts**; announcing the beginning of each month; and blowing over the burnt offerings and sacrifices of peace offerings. (Numbers 10:1-10)

2. Only the priests, the sons of Aaron, were allowed to blow the trumpets. (Numbers 10:8)

3. The sounding of the trumpets signifies the theocracy of God as He speaks and directs through His appointed leadership.

4. The systematic order of Israel's march speaks of moving in God's way at God's time. (Refer to page 14)
 5. Moses made a declaration each time the ark went forward and rested. (Numbers 10:35-36)
- M. Chapters eleven and twelve record Israel's complaints, Moses' burden, Aaron's and Miriam's criticism of Moses, God's intervention, and Moses' reaction to their criticism.
1. God responded to Israel's complaining by killing some of the people in the outskirts of the camp with lightning. (Numbers 11:1-3)
 2. Israel's complaints began to overwhelm Moses, and God anointed seventy elders to assist Moses. (Numbers 11:14-29)
 3. God responded to Israel's complaints by giving them their desire, which proved to be to their own detriment.
 4. When God's ordained leadership is brought into question, God intervenes. (Numbers 12)
 5. Although judgment may not be immediate, disrespect for God-ordained leadership will be judged.
- N. Chapters thirteen and fourteen reveal Israel's opportunity to enter the Promised Land, their refusal and rebellion, and God's punishment of their rebellion.
1. The twelve spies were not sent to determine whether Israel should enter into the Promised Land; they were sent to confirm the goodness of the land and to give an intelligence report concerning the enemy.
 2. Sending spies into the land did not originate with God; it originated with the people of Israel. (Deuteronomy 1:21-23)
 3. Bad leadership influences people to make bad decisions; conversely, good leadership can influence people to make good decisions.

4. Our confessions can work for or against us. Israel confessed her failure; consequently, she failed.
 5. God gave Israel her request by allowing all the men of war, except Joshua and Caleb, to die in the wilderness.
- O. Chapter fifteen gives instructions concerning offerings for thanksgiving and unintentional sins.
- P. Chapters sixteen and seventeen record Korah's rebellion, God's judgment upon Korah, the people's reaction to God's judgment, God's judgment upon the people as a result of their reaction, and God's confirmation of Moses and Aaron.
1. Korah challenged God's appointed leadership and incurred the judgment and punishment of God. (Numbers 16:1-40)
 2. The example of Korah illustrates the importance of being content in the position and anointing ordained by God.
 3. Usurping authority and promoting self are never accepted or condoned by God.
 4. The congregation's disapproval of God's actions against Korah and his followers cost 14,700 people their lives. (Numbers 16:41-49)
 5. Aaron's rod that budded and brought forth almonds signifies that God confirms His leadership with the fruit of their anointing. (Numbers 17:1-10)
- Q. Chapter eighteen reiterates the importance and maintenance of the priests and those who are assigned to help the priests.
- R. Chapter nineteen describes the red heifer purification ceremony.
1. The sacrifice of the red heifer produced ashes used in the water of ceremonial purification.
 2. The red heifer pointed to Jesus, Who cleanses us from all unrighteousness.

- S. Chapter twenty records the death of Miriam, the sin of Moses and Aaron, and the death of Aaron.
1. The frustration of Moses and Aaron resulted in disobedience; they struck the rock which symbolized Jesus.
 - a. Jesus was to be smitten only once; the disobedience of Moses and Aaron resulted in a type being marred.
 - b. It was necessary that Jesus be smitten once to provide redemption, but following redemption, every need of man can be obtained by speaking.
 2. When God-ordained leadership disobeys God, it is not without consequence.
 3. It is imperative that anointed leadership never take credit for the exploits accomplished through them.
- T. Chapter twenty-one tells of Israel's complaint, God's judgment, and the journeys and conquests of Israel.
1. The people of Israel complained about their lack of food and water.
 2. They expressed their disgust with God's provision of manna.
 3. God sent poisonous snakes into the camp of Israel, and many people died from the snakebites. (I Corinthians 10:9)
 4. The Israelites repented for their sin against God.
 5. God instructed Moses to make a bronze serpent and to set it on a pole so that those who were bitten could look at the bronze serpent and be healed and live.
 6. The bronze serpent on the pole is a type and shadow of Jesus on the cross. Healing and eternal life are available to all who will look unto Jesus and receive Him as their Savior. (John 3:14-15)

7. The well that God caused to spring up at Beer is a type of Jesus, Who quenches our spiritual thirst.
- U. Chapters twenty-two through twenty-four record the incident with Balak, Balaam, and Israel.
 1. We must learn from Balaam's example and never attempt to change the will of God to satisfy our personal desires.
 2. We must never attempt to curse what God has blessed.
 3. The "Star" that shall come out of Jacob and the "Scepter" that shall rise out of Israel point to Jesus Christ.
 - V. Chapter twenty-five reveals Israel's sin with the Moabites and Phinehas' zeal for the Lord that established his priesthood.
 - W. Chapter twenty-six records the second military census of the nation of Israel.
 - X. Chapter twenty-seven gives instruction concerning the inheritance of Zelophehad's daughters and tells of Joshua's appointment as Moses' successor.
 1. Joshua was selected by God; he was not elected by the people.
 2. Leadership positions must be filled by God, not men.
 - Y. Chapters twenty-eight and twenty-nine deal with offerings and the seven required feasts of the Lord.
 - Z. Chapter thirty records the laws concerning vows.
 - AA. Chapter thirty-one tells of the destruction of the Midianites and the spoil taken by Israel.
 1. Because of Moab's ungodly influence over Israel, God ordered the destruction of the Midianites.
 2. Balaam, who had given counsel against the Israelites, was killed at this time.

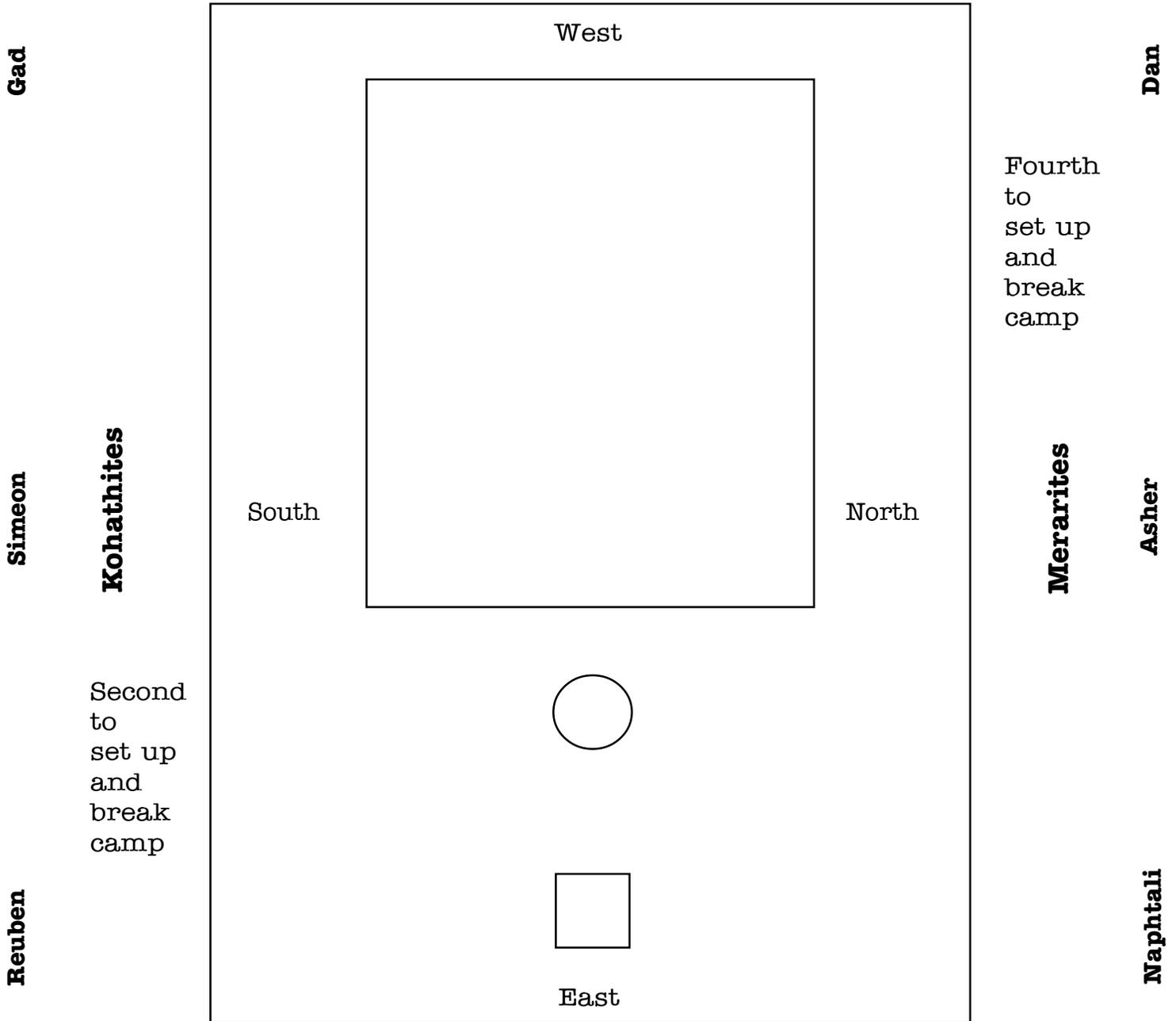
3. The counsel of Balaam related to inter-racial marriages.
 - a. Difference in race was not the reason for disallowing these marriages; they were disallowed because the other races served foreign gods. The purpose for this instruction was to keep Israel true to her God. (Deuteronomy 7:1-4; I Kings 11:1-3)
 - b. We must never become yoked to someone who does not serve our God. (II Corinthians 6:14-16)
- BB. Chapter thirty-two contains instructions to Reuben, Gad, and the half tribe of Manasseh concerning their inheritance and their responsibilities.
- CC. Chapter thirty-three gives an overview of Israel's journeys, a command to drive out **all** the inhabitants of the land, and the consequence of not driving out all the inhabitants of the land.
- DD. Chapters thirty-four and thirty-five describe the division of the Promised Land to the tribes of Israel and the designated cities of refuge.
- EE. Chapter thirty-six describes the concern over the inheritance of Zelophehad's daughters and the solution.
- FF. The Christ of Numbers is the serpent lifted up in the wilderness for the provision of healing and life. He is also the "Star" Who came out of Jacob and the "Scepter" Who rose out of Israel.

TABERNACLE ENCAMPMENT

Third to set up and break camp

Ephraim Manasseh Benjamin

Gershonites



Moses Aaron Aaron's Sons

Judah Issachar Zebulun

First to set up and break camp

ORDER OF MARCH

Numbers 10:13-28

Tribe of Judah

Tribe of Issachar

Tribe of Zebulun

Levite family of Gershon (Gershonites)

Levite family of Merari (Merarites)

Tribe of Reuben

Tribe of Simeon

Tribe of Gad

Levite family of Kohath (Kohathites)

Tribe of Ephraim

Tribe of Manasseh

Tribe of Benjamin

Tribe of Dan

Tribe of Asher

Tribe of Naphtali

Whenever the camp was broken, Aaron and his sons were responsible for covering all the holy objects of the Tabernacle before the Merarites and Kohathites proceeded with their assigned duties.

The order of march was laid out in such a way that the Tabernacle was already set up when the Kohathites arrived with the holy objects of the Tabernacle.