

The Book of Numbers

An Introduction to the Book of Numbers

I. Title

- A. The word 'Numbers' refers to the two numberings of the children of Israel recorded in this book.
 - 1. The first was at Sinai (chapter 1).
 - 2. The second was in the plains of Moab (chapter 26).
- B. The Hebrew name for the book was *Be-midbar*, meaning, "In the wilderness."
- C. This is the first word of the book; yet, it sums up the contents as well.

II. Author

- A. The book of Numbers was written by Moses (1:1; etc.).
- B. It fits in as part of the Pentateuch, vital to its proper understanding.

III. Date

- A. The contents of the book cover the children of Israel leaving Sinai and coming to the borders of the Promised Land.
- B. Thus, it was probably written along the journey or at its end before the death of Moses.
- C. This puts the date from approximately 1490 – 1450 BC.

IV. Purpose

- A. The book of Genesis detailed the fall of man and the beginning of God's plan of redemption.
- B. The book of Exodus showed the deliverance of Israel from Egypt and the giving of the Law of Moses.
- C. Exodus ended with the construction of the Tabernacle – providing a means of forgiveness, fellowship, and worship.
- D. The book of Leviticus detailed the things necessary for Israel to approach and remain in fellowship with God.
 - 1. Place – *The Tabernacle*
 - 2. Priesthood – *The Levites*
 - 3. Sacrifice – *The Five Offerings*
 - 4. Holiness – *The Law*
- E. The book of Numbers emphasizes service – faithful obedience to God throughout life.

V. Brief Outline

- A. Leaving Sinai (1:1 – 10:10)
- B. From Sinai to Moab (10:11 – 21:35)
- C. Events and Instructions at Moab (22 – 36)

