

Numbers
Leader Guide
(NASB and ESV)

TRUSTING GOD
IN THE WILDERNESS

Numbers Leader Guide (NASB and ESV)

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USING LEADER GUIDES

Leader Guides are intended for you, the leader, to guide your Precept Upon Precept® and In & Out® discussions. They are designed to help you reason through the content of the lessons and to ensure you have understood what your group should have learned from their study. The guides offer effective plans for leading discussions.

The Holy Spirit is your guide as you prepare. He is the one who knows what your group needs to apply to their lives. Pray for them as they study and for yourself as you prepare to lead the discussion.

These guides can be used for either the NASB or the ESV edition of the courses. ESV words follow the NASB after a slash / or are set off with parentheses.

Leader Guides include the following:

- Lesson emphasis
- A logical order for the discussion
- Discussion questions
- Suggested visual aid(s)

Practical tips for using the Leader Guide:

- **Don't simply "do" the lesson.**
Stay with the lesson until you have a good understanding of it. This will give you a better grasp of how the Leader Guide takes you through the lesson.
- **You don't have to ask every question in the guide.**
Often one question will be covered while discussing another question so there is no reason to ask it. Your goal is not to ask every question, but to ask enough questions to make sure your group understood the lesson and to help them apply the truths to their lives.

Using the Leader Guide with In & Out

When your entire group uses In & Out

Compare an In & Out lesson with the Leader Guide. Use what relates to the In & Out lesson as a guide for the discussion. Don't teach what's not in In & Out lessons. Remember your goal in the discussion is for your group to discuss what they've learned, not for you to lecture on what you learned.

For groups studying both Precept Upon Precept and In & Out

Use the Leader Guides as designed for PUP, knowing that the In & Out assignments will be covered in the discussion. Make a note in the Leader Guide of what is not in the In & Out.

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To locate a particular lesson in the pdf, click on  in the grey bar on the left side of the window. Bookmarks will appear for each of the lessons. Select the lesson you need.

IMPORTANT NOTE:

Lesson One of Numbers Precept Upon Precept covers the first eleven chapters of Numbers. While it is possible to cover these chapters in one lesson, many find it better to divide this lesson into two, three, or even four weeks of study, depending on the time available.

Possible divisions for Numbers Lesson 1

2 lessons:

Days 1 and 2
Days 3–5

3 lessons:

Day 1
Day 2 and Numbers 7–8 of Day 3
Numbers 9 of Day 3 and Days 4–5

4 lessons:

Day 1
Day 2
Day 3
Days 4–

NUMBERS
LEADER GUIDE
Lesson 1

Lesson emphasis:

- Numbers 1–11

NUMBERS 1

To begin this discussion, you can tell your group to look at their At a Glance chart as a visual aid. You might ask what they noted as the theme of Numbers 1. They probably wrote something like the following.

Census of Israel's men, 20 and over, for war

Verses 1-16

What's the time reference in verse 1? If your group studied Exodus and Leviticus, then ask how this relates to the time of those two books.

Numbers begins on the 1st of the 2nd month, in the 2nd year after Israel had come out of Egypt.

A month had passed since the tabernacle had been completed, and they were still camped in the wilderness at Mount Sinai.

What are the first verses about?

God told Moses to take a census of the men who were 20 years old and older. They were the men who could go to war.

Then the leaders of the twelve tribes are named in these verses. They were the heads of the divisions of Israel.

Verses 17-46

How was Israel numbered, and what was the number of men?

They were numbered by tribe. The list began with Reuben, the oldest of Israel's sons.

Joseph's two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, are in the list instead of Joseph and Levi.

There were 603,550 men who were 20+ years old. This was Israel's army.

You might ask your group if God kept His promise to Abraham about making a great nation out of his descendants. Give time for them to discuss any application.

Verses 47-53

What are these verses about?

The Levites were not numbered among the tribes. They were appointed over the tabernacle and all its furnishings, and were to camp around the tabernacle. When it was time for the camp to set out, then the Levites were close to the tabernacle to take it down, etc.

Tell your group to look at the diagram in their lesson showing Israel's camp arrangement. Use this also as a visual aid for this discussion.

NUMBERS 2

What is this chapter about? Ask your group what they wrote on their At a Glance chart as the theme.

Israel camped on four sides of tent / set out by tribes

Verses 1-9

Who and what are these verses about?

The first group was under the standard of Judah and was to camp on the east side of the tent of meeting, the tabernacle. They were the first ones to set out when Israel moved.

The tribes in this group were: Judah, Issachar, and Zebulun.
They all had the banners of their fathers' households, referring to the tribes.

This was an army of 186,400 men.

Verses 10-16

Who was next? Where did they camp?

Reuben, Simeon, and Gad camped under Reuben's standard on the south side.
They set out second and numbered 151,450 men able to go to war.

Verse 17

Who is this about?

Then the Levites would set out with the tent of meeting in the middle of Israel's procession.

Verses 18-24

Who was next, and where did they camp?

Ephraim, Manasseh, and Benjamin camped on the west side. The standard was Ephraim.
These set out third and numbered 108,100 men.

Verses 25-31

Who went out last?

Dan's standard was on the north side of the camp. Dan, Asher, and Naphtali made up this group. There were 157,600 men who set out last.

You might ask your group if they learn anything about God from this camp arrangement. Give time for them to discuss application.

Verses 32-34

How does this chapter end?

These verses seem to summarize Numbers 1 and 2.

NUMBERS 3

Ask your group about the theme of this chapter.

Levites given to priests, Levites numbered

Verses 1-4

Who and what are these verses about?

Aaron's sons, ordained to serve as anointed priests

Nadab and Abihu died before the Lord when they offered strange fire
They had no children.

Eleazar and Ithamar served as priests
Future priests would come from these two.

Verses 5-39

What are the main points in these verses?

God took the Levites instead of the firstborn to be His.
He gave the Levites to serve the priests.

The Levites were numbered, one month old and upward. The total was 22,000.
This lists them by family name, where they camped, and their duties.

Gershon, verses 21-26
7,500
Camped west of the tabernacle
Duties—tabernacle, tent with the hangings, screens, and cords

Kohath, verses 27-32

8,600

Camped south of the tabernacle

Duties—ark, table, lampstand, altars, utensils, and screen

Merari, verses 33-37

6,200

Camped north of the tabernacle

Duties—frames of the tabernacle, its bars, pillars, sockets, and equipment

Moses and Aaron, verse 38

Priests camped east of the tabernacle

Verses 40-51

What are these verses about?

The Lord told Moses to number / list all the firstborn males of Israel.

The firstborn males from one month old and upward totaled 22,273.

The Levites numbered 22,000.

A ransom was paid in shekels to Aaron and his sons for the remaining 273.

Ask your group what they learn about the Lord from these numbers. Give time to discuss application.

NUMBERS 4

What is this chapter about?

Census and service of the Levites

Ask your group what they learned from this chapter.

Another census was taken. This time it was of the Levites 30 years old to 50 years old.

These were the ages for the Levites who would serve the priests.

This chapter also tells the different duties of the tent of meeting and who performed them.

Verses 1-20

Who and what are these verses about?

Kohathites

Their duties were to work in the tent of meeting with the holy things and carry them when the camp set out.

Verses 5-15

First, when Israel set out, Aaron and his sons would go into the holy place and the Holy of Holies and cover the holy objects before the sons of Kohath could carry them.

The Kohathites were not to touch the holy objects.

How do the cross-references in Chronicles relate to this?

1 Chronicles 13:1-14

David instructed that the ark should be brought to the City of David. They transported it on a cart, and the oxen nearly upset it. Uzza put out his hand to hold it, and the Lord struck him down.

The Lord had given clear direction for how His ark was to be carried and who was to do it.

1 Chronicles 15:1-15

No one was to carry the ark of God but the Levites. David told them to consecrate themselves in preparation for moving it. They carried it on their shoulders with the poles as the Lord had said.

Give time for your group to discuss what they learn about keeping God's word. He means what He says. How does that apply now?

Lead your discussion back to Numbers 4:16. Who is this verse about?

Eleazar, the priest

He was responsible for the oil, the incense, continual grain offerings, the tabernacle, and all in it. So it appears that he directed moving all of this.

Verses 21-33

Who and what are these verses about?

Gershonites

They primarily carried the curtains and screens of the tabernacle.

Sons of Merari

They carried the framework and what was connected with it.

Ithamar, the priest

He directed the Gershonites and the sons of Merari, verses 28 and 33.

Verses 34-49

What were the total numbers of this census?

Kohath—2,750 men between the ages of 30 and 50

Gershon—2,630
Merari—3,200

There were a total of 8,580 Levites to care for the tabernacle and serve the priests.

What are Numbers 1–4 about? How do they fit together?

The census of the people, the census of the Levites, the 2nd census of Levites
These chapters establish where the people camped and the Levites' duties.
It all centered around the tabernacle, God's dwelling in their midst.

Give time for your group to discuss any application.

NUMBERS 5

What is this chapter about?

The unclean sent outside the camp / restitution / the law of jealousy

Verses 1-4

Why were the unclean sent outside the camp?

So the camp wouldn't be defiled.
It was where the Lord lived in their midst.

At this point, you might ask your group when God said these things to Moses for Israel.

It was a short time, maybe only a month, after the tabernacle was completed and set up. It was the beginning of setting up the camp.

Since God was in the midst of the camp, it would be orderly and holy. Defilement was to be taken outside the camp until the person was made clean.

Verses 5-10

What are these verses about?

Restitution and the holy gifts—provision for the priests

The priests were the recipients of the holy gifts and any restitution when there was not a family member to receive it.

Verses 11-31

Ask what your group learned about the law of jealousy (ESV—the law in cases of jealousy).

If a spirit of jealousy came over a man, he could take his wife before the priest. She would be given the water of bitterness to drink.

If innocent, undefiled, she would be free and would conceive children.

If she had defiled herself, then her abdomen would swell, her thigh would waste away, and she would become a curse among her people.

NUMBERS 6

You might ask your group what they put on their At a Glance chart as the theme of this chapter.

The law of the Nazirite

When a man or woman made a special vow, the vow of a Nazirite, and dedicated himself to the Lord,

he was to abstain from wine and strong drink,
not use a razor on his head,
and not go near a dead person / body.

He was set apart, holy, all the days of his separation.

When his vow was fulfilled,
he was to present offerings
and shave his dedicated hair.

Verses 22-27

What is the blessing?

This blessing of the priest to the sons of Israel is sometimes pronounced or sung in churches during or to end an assembly.

Give time for your group to discuss any application relevant to these chapters in Numbers.

NUMBERS 7

What is the time of this chapter, and what is it about?

This chapter goes back a month in time.

Verse 1 refers to the day Moses finished setting up the tabernacle.

According to Exodus 40:17, it was the 1st day of the 1st month of the 2nd year.

Numbers 1 begins with the 1st day of the 2nd month in the 2nd year.

It's about the offerings for the tabernacle and altar dedication / anointing.

Verses 1-9

Who were the offerings from? Who were they given to, and why?

Israel's leaders, the men of Numbers 1:4-16, brought offerings of 6 carts and 12 oxen.

Two carts / wagons and four oxen were given to the sons of Gershon for their service. Relate this to Numbers 4:24-26.

Four carts and eight oxen were given to the sons of Merari, Numbers 4:31-32.

None were given to the Kohathites since they carried the holy things on their shoulders.

You might relate this to the references in 1 Chronicles about moving the ark.

Verses 10-88

What were the offerings for and who brought them?

One leader a day for 12 days brought offerings for the dedication of the altar when it was anointed. All 12 brought identical offerings. The silver dishes and bowls and the gold pans would be used in the tabernacle.

How does this chapter end?

Moses entered the tent, and the Lord spoke to him from between the cherubim on the mercy seat over the ark.

NUMBERS 8

You might ask your group what they noted as the theme of this chapter on their At a Glance chart.

Levites cleansed and presented for service

Verses 1-4

Who and what are these verses about?

This might be some of what the Lord told Moses when he entered the tent at the end of Numbers 7. This is how Aaron was to mount, raise up, the lamps of the lampstand.

Verses 5-22

What did the Lord say when He again spoke to Moses?

Cleanse the Levites and present them before the tent of meeting and before the Lord. Gather the whole congregation to lay hands on the Levites. They were presented as a wave offering before the Lord, and separated from the others of Israel.

This was after the Levites were exchanged for the firstborn.
Verse 19 says that they were a gift to Aaron and his sons.

After the Levites were purified and atonement was made for them, they went in to serve in the tent before Aaron and his sons.

Verses 23-26

What else did the Lord speak to Moses in this chapter?

The Levites served from 25 years to 50 years, retiring at 50.
After 50 they could do no work; however, they could still assist their brothers.

NOTE: There is an age difference here with that of Numbers 4:3. Chapter 4 says 30 to 50 in age. Some think this might be because of transporting the tabernacle as opposed to service in it, or it might indicate a training period of 5 years.

NUMBERS 9

What is this chapter about? Ask your group what they put as the theme on the At a Glance chart.

Passover / Israel followed the cloud

Verses 1-14

What is the time reference? What is the subject?

The 1st month of the 2nd year after God brought Israel out of Egypt
Compare this with Numbers 1:1. Numbers 9 was about 2 weeks earlier.

Israel observed the Passover on the 14th day of the 1st month at twilight.
Some were unclean because of a dead person, but desired to observe Passover.

Moses went to God to ask His command concerning this.

God said that those who were unclean because of a dead person or who were on a distant journey could observe the Passover on the 14th day of the 2nd month.

However, the one who neglected the Passover would be cut off from his people.

Verses 15-23

What is the time reference in these verses? What is the subject?

The day the tabernacle was erected / set up—1st day of the 1st month, the 2nd year
On that day the cloud covered the tabernacle.
At night it was the appearance of fire.

No matter how short or long the time, when the cloud lifted, Israel was to set out. When it settled down, they camped. The cloud was as the command of the Lord to them.

You might ask your group what they've learned from the time references in Leviticus 1–9.

On the day the tabernacle was erected—1st day of 1st month in the 2nd year
The cloud covered the tent
The leaders brought offerings for 12 days

14th day of the 1st month was Passover

1st day of 2nd month
God told Moses to take a census

If needed, you can put the above on a simple time line for your group to see.

NUMBERS 10

Ask your group about the theme for this chapter.

Two silver trumpets and Israel's first move

Verses 1-10

Ask what they observed about the two silver trumpets. Use the camp diagram as a visual aid.

To summon the congregation

Both blown, congregation gathers at the doorway of the tent of meeting
One blown, leaders assemble before Moses

To have the camps set out

Blow alarm, camps on east set out
Blow second alarm, camps on south set out

Priests blow the trumpets

Sound alarm to go to war

As a reminder of you before your God

In day of gladness
In appointed feasts
On first / beginnings of month

Verses 11-36

What is the time reference, and what happened?

The 20th day of the 2nd month in the 2nd year

The cloud was lifted and Israel set out from the wilderness of Sinai.
They followed the cloud going to the wilderness of Paran.

This was the first time Israel moved out according to the commandment of the Lord with their standards and order.

What was the order?

The standard of Judah set out first.
Gershon and Merari set out next carrying the tabernacle.

The standard of Reuben followed them.
Then the Kohathites set out, carrying the holy objects.

When they arrived, the tabernacle was already set up and ready for the furniture and utensils.

The standard of Ephraim followed, then the standard of Dan.

In verses 33-34 it says that the ark of the covenant journeyed in front of them with the cloud above them. This gives more information than chapter 2 did.

Ask your group what they learned about God from verses 35-36. Give time for application discussion.

NUMBERS 11

What is this chapter about?

People complained / Spirit on 70 elders / quail, God's anger

Ask what the main points or events are in this chapter. Or you can use the questions below.

Verses 1-3

What happened in these verses?

The people complained about adversity / misfortunes. The Lord heard it and became angry. As a result, he sent fire which consumed outskirts of the camp.

When the people then cried out to Moses, he prayed and the fire died out.
So that place was named Taberah (meaning burning).

Verses 4-15

What else happened?

The rabble might refer to people who came out of Egypt with Israel. They had greedy desires / strong craving. Also Israel cried again that they wanted meat to eat. They desired food like they had eaten in Egypt. The manna didn't look good to them anymore.

Moses heard their weeping.

The Lord was angry.

Moses was displeased, and talked to the Lord. He asked the Lord why he had to have the burden of this people. He said that he was not able to carry the burden alone anymore.

Verses 16-23

What was the Lord's solution?

The Lord told him to gather seventy men from the elders, and He would put His Spirit Who was upon Moses on the seventy also. They, then, would help carry the burden of the multitude of people.

Then the Lord told Moses to tell the people that they would have meat on the next day for a whole month until they got sick of it because they had rejected Him.

Moses offered some thoughts on how this was to be done, but the Lord said that His power wasn't limited. God's word always comes true, and it's based on His power, not man's ideas.

Verses 24-30

What happened in these verses? Discuss cross-references when relevant.

Moses told the people what the Lord said.

He gathered the 70 elders, and the Lord came down and put His Spirit on them.

When the Spirit rested upon them, they prophesied.

Genesis 1:2

The Spirit of God was in the beginning moving in God's creative acts.

Exodus 31:3 and 35:31

The Spirit of God has wisdom, understanding, and knowledge. In these particular instances the Spirit gave wisdom for craftsmanship for the work of the tabernacle.

1 Samuel 16:13-14

God's Spirit came mightily upon David from that day forward, but departed from Saul.

So sometimes in the Old Testament the Spirit would stay upon a person for the rest of his life, and sometimes He would depart from the person.

NOTE: Don't get caught up in a discussion of the evil spirit from the Lord on Saul.

Nehemiah 9:30

The Spirit would admonish through the prophets.

Joel 2:28-32

This is the promise of the new covenant when God would pour forth of His Spirit not on just a few at specific times for certain tasks, but on all of His servants, men and women.

Acts 2

This was the fulfillment of Joel's prophecy. It is the initial indwelling of the Holy Spirit for all believers. Peter explained what was necessary to receive the Spirit: repent, and be baptized (be placed into unity with, identified with) in Jesus' name. The Spirit is for all whom the Lord calls to Himself, all believers, all who are saved, all who are forgiven of their sins.

Ephesians 1:13-14

At salvation, believers are sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise. He is given as the pledge of our inheritance.

John 14 and 16

The Spirit is our Helper forever. He is our guide into all the truth. He glorifies the Son and convicts the world.

Romans 8:9

If one does not have the Spirit, then that one does not belong to Christ . . . has never been saved.

Give time for your group to discuss application.

Lead your discussion back to Numbers 11 and ask what happened in verses 31-35.

God sent a wind that brought quail from the sea to fall beside Israel's camp, a day's journey away. The quail fell about 36 inches deep on the surface of the ground all around the camp.

The people gathered the quail for two days and a night.

But while they were eating the quail, the Lord struck them with a severe plague.

The greedy people were buried there, and it was called Kibroth-hattaavah.

Where did Israel go next?

They went to Hazeroth.

As you end your discussion, give time for your group to share application.

NUMBERS
LEADER GUIDE
Lesson 2

Lesson emphasis:

- Numbers 12–14

REVIEW

To begin your discussion, you can ask your group what Numbers 1–11 is about. Tell them to use their At a Glance chart as a visual aid.

- 1 Census of Israel's men, 20 and over, for war
- 2 Israel camped on four sides of tent / set out by tribes
- 3 Levites given to priests, Levites numbered
- 4 Census and service of the Levites
- 5 Unclean sent outside camp / restitution / the law of jealousy
- 6 The law of the Nazirite
- 7 Offerings for tabernacle and altar dedication
- 8 Levites cleansed and presented for service
- 9 Passover / Israel followed the cloud
- 10 Two silver trumpets and Israel's first move
- 11 People complained / Spirit on 70 elders / quail, God's anger

According to Numbers 10:11, when was Israel's first move from the camp at Mt. Sinai? Tell your group to look at the map as a visual aid for this discussion.

In the 2nd year, in the 2nd month, on the 20th of the month, the cloud of the Lord rose up and began to lead Israel from Mount Sinai to the wilderness of Paran.

What are the places in Numbers 11? What happened on the way to the wilderness of Paran?

- 11:3 Taberah—the people complained and God sent fire among them.
- 11:34 Kibroth-hattaavah—greedy people ate quail and were struck with a plague.
- 11:35 The people set out for Hazeroth and remained there.

NUMBERS 12

What is the theme of this chapter?

Aaron and Miriam spoke (grumbled) against Moses / Miriam leprous

Verses 1-8

What happened?

Miriam and Aaron, Moses' sister and brother, spoke / grumbled against him because he had married a Cushite woman. But it appears that the primary reason was jealousy. They said that Moses wasn't the only one through whom the Lord had spoken.

NOTE: If someone brings up Moses' wife or has questions about it, the following might help. The Cushite woman might have been Moses' second wife. His wife Zipporah (Exodus 2:16, 21), of Midian descent, might have died. Midian was a son of Abraham by Keturah (Genesis 25:1-5), and Cush was one of Ham's sons, Noah's grandson (Genesis 10:1-20).

The Lord called all three of them to the tent of meeting and confronted Aaron and Miriam about what they had done.

He told them that He spoke mouth to mouth with His faithful servant Moses. When He spoke to a prophet, it was in a vision or dream, but Moses saw the form of the Lord.

Then He asked them why they weren't afraid to speak against His servant.

Give time for your group to discuss application and what they learned from Moses' example.

He was more humble than any man, even though God spoke to him and he saw the Lord's form.

When spoken against by his sister and brother, he didn't speak against them.

Verses 9-15

What was the result of the Lord coming down to them?

Miriam was leprous.

Aaron confessed their sin to Moses.

Moses then prayed for Miriam's healing, but she was still sent outside the camp for seven days according to the law of leprosy.

Ask your group what they learned from Moses' example in these verses. Give time for application discussion.

According to verse 16, where did Israel go next?

From Hazeroth to the wilderness of Paran

NUMBERS 13

What is the theme or main event of this chapter?

Twelve spies sent to spy out the land of Canaan

Verses 1-16

What are these verses about?

The Lord told Moses to send out 12 spies, one leader from each tribe.
They were to go into the land of Canaan from the wilderness of Paran.

Draw attention to the map—where Israel was camped in the wilderness of Paran and where Canaan was.

Verses 4-15 name the spies and the tribe they were from.

Verse 16 says Moses called Hoshea (the leader spy from Ephraim) by the name of Joshua.

Verses 17-20

What were the instructions Moses gave to the spies?

Go into the Negev (look on the map) and then the hill country.

He told them to find out:

What the land was like—good or bad, fat or lean, trees or not
If the people were strong or weak, many or few
If the cities are open or fortified (ESV—camps or strongholds)

Get some fruit. It was the time of the first ripe grapes.

Verses 21-24

Where did the spies go? Follow on the map.

From the wilderness of Zin to Rehob at Lebo-hamath
Negev to Hebron

Anak's descendants lived in Hebron.

According to verse 33, they might have been giants.
It was older than Zoan in Egypt. (Some think this might be Tanis.)

Valley of Eshcol

A single cluster of grapes with some pomegranates and figs were carried on a pole
between two men.

They called it Eshcol because of the cluster.

NOTE: If any in your group have been to Israel, they might remember an insignia of two men carrying a pole of fruit is the official logo of Israel's Department of Tourism. Tour guides in Israel have this on the side of their vehicles as they show people their land.

Verses 25-33

When did the spies return, and what was their report?

They were in the land for 40 days, and then returned to Kadesh in the wilderness of Paran. (Use the map to see how close these places are.).

They gave a report to Moses and Israel and showed them the fruit.

The land flowed with milk and honey as shown in its fruit.

The people were strong and the cities fortified.
The spies saw the descendants of Anak there.

Amalek in the Negev
Hittites, Jebusites, Amorites in the hill country
Canaanites by the sea and the side of the Jordan

Caleb, one of the twelve, quieted the people and said that they should go and take possession of the land. He said that they would overcome it.

Ten of the spies gave a bad report in saying that Israel was not able to go against the people of Canaan because of their great size. They said that the land devours its inhabitants.

NUMBERS 14

Ask your group what they noted on their At a Glance chart as the theme of this chapter.

Israel rebelled against God, didn't enter the land

Verses 1-10

How does this chapter continue from Numbers 13?

The congregation wept and grumbled against Moses and Aaron. Again they mentioned that life in Egypt was better than where they were at that point. They wanted to appoint / choose a leader and go back.

Joshua and Caleb were the only two who said that they should obey the Lord and take the land.

They tore their clothes in mourning because of the suggestion to return to Egypt.

They said that the land was exceedingly good . . . just like the Lord had promised.

Their reasoning was that if He was pleased with Israel, then He would bring them into the land and give it to them.

Joshua and Caleb warned the people about rebelling against the Lord. They said that the protection of the people in Canaan had been removed from them so that Israel should not fear them.

The result of their encouragement was that the people wanted to stone them.

Then the glory of the Lord appeared to all the people.

Verses 11-25

What was the conversation between the Lord and Moses?

The Lord asked two questions which actually made statements about the people.

They spurned / despised Him

They didn't believe in Him.

God said that He would smite those people and make a greater nation from Moses.

Moses' intercession was not based on the righteousness of the people or on anything connected with them. It was based on Who the Lord is and what He had said that He would do with Israel.

God had said that He would bring Israel into the land of Canaan.
Moses interceded according to the Word and character of the Lord.

Give your group time to discuss what they know about the Lord. Do they apply this knowledge at appropriate times?

His power is great.
He's slow to anger and abundant in lovingkindness.
He forgives iniquity and transgression, but will not clear the guilty.

Moses asked for pardon based on God's character.

God pardoned them because of Moses' words. He didn't wipe them out and make a nation from Moses.

But He said that because they had tested Him ten times in the wilderness and had not listened to His voice, but had spurned Him, they would not see the land.

The exception was Caleb who had a different spirit and followed the Lord fully.

What did the Lord tell Moses in verse 25?

Change direction. They weren't headed to the land anymore.
The next day they were to set out to the wilderness by way of the Red Sea.

Verses 26-35

What did the Lord say?

He would not continually bear with the evil congregation of grumblers and complainers.

He did as they had voiced in their fears—they would die in the wilderness.
All of the numbered men 20 years old and above who had grumbled would not enter the land.

Only Caleb and Joshua would enter the land God promised the whole nation.
He would bring their children, those under 20, into the land.
The parents had rejected it. God said that He would destroy them in the wilderness.

But the sons would suffer for the fathers' unfaithfulness—40 years in the wilderness until all the fathers died there.

How did God describe the congregation? You can use the chart at the end of the lesson as a visual aid.

Spurned God
Didn't believe in Him
Tested Him
Didn't listen to God's word
Evil
Grumbled and complained
Unfaithful

What does Hebrews 3 say that relates to this?

Moses was a faithful servant in God's house which was unfaithful Israel at that time.
Their hearts were hard, evil, and unbelieving. They went astray in their hearts.
They sinned, and their bodies fell in the wilderness.
God was angry with them for 40 years.
They were disobedient unbelievers.

Give time for your group to discuss relevant application.

Lead your discussion back to Numbers 14:36-38

What happened to the twelve spies?

The ten who gave the bad report died by a plague.
Joshua and Caleb remained alive.

If you have time, you can give time for your group to review what the text says about Joshua and Caleb in contrast to the rest of the spies and the whole congregation. Use the chart at the end of the lesson as a visual aid. Also discuss relevant application.

Caleb had quieted the people when they first heard the report about the land and its inhabitants. He told them that they could overcome and take possession of it.

Joshua and Caleb believed that God would give them the land.
They warned the people against rebelling against the Lord.
They cautioned them about fearing the people of the land.
They knew that God had removed protection from the enemy and was with Israel.

Caleb had a different spirit from the congregation.
He followed the Lord fully.
He and Joshua would enter the land.

Verses 39-45

What happened?

When the people heard what the Lord had said, they decided to be obedient.
But it was too late to enter the land.
The consequences for their sin had already been declared.

They went up to conquer some of the land; but without God's help and presence, against His Word.

They were struck and beaten back to Hormah. It was too late.

Ask your group what they learned from these chapters and events that are pertinent to life today, to their own lives, to understanding Who God is and how important His Word is.

Encourage your group to examine their lives. Is their lifestyle that of Israel—one of unbelief, rejecting God's Word, rebelling against God? Or like Caleb, do they desire to follow God fully?

NUMBERS
LEADER GUIDE
Lesson 3

Lesson emphasis:

- Numbers 15–17
- Korah's rebellion

REVIEW

To begin this discussion, you can ask your group what they remember from Numbers 1–14. Then use the At a Glance chart to review chapter or segment themes.

Israel was camped in the Sinai wilderness after coming out of Egypt.

- 1 Census of Israel's men, 20 and over, for war
- 2 Israel camped on four sides of tent / set out by tribes
- 3 Levites given to priests, Levites numbered
- 4 Census and service of the Levites
- 5 Unclean sent outside camp / restitution / the law of jealousy
- 6 The law of the Nazirite
- 7 Offerings for tabernacle and altar dedication
- 8 Levites cleansed and presented for service

Everything was ready for God's people to begin their journey to the land He'd promised to give them.

- 9 Passover / Israel followed the cloud
This Passover was one year after the Lord brought Israel out of Egypt.
- 10 Two silver trumpets and Israel's first move
In the 2nd year, in the 2nd month, on the 20th of the month, the cloud began to lead Israel from Mount Sinai to the wilderness of Paran.
- 11 People complained / Spirit on 70 elders / quail, God's anger
- 12 Aaron and Miriam spoke against Moses / Miriam leprous
- 13 Twelve spies sent to spy out the land of Canaan
- 14 Israel rebelled against God, didn't enter the land
Verse 11 says that they spurned God and did not believe in Him.
Verse 31 says that they rejected the land.

How does Numbers 14 end?

When the people heard the consequences of their disobedience, they wanted to correct it.

They went, without God, to the ridge / heights of the hill country to take the land.
Moses told them that the Lord was not with them, but they still went.
The Amalekites and Canaanites defeated Israel.

NUMBERS 15

What is this chapter about? You can ask your group what they noted as the theme for this chapter on their At a Glance chart.

When in the land—offerings, unintentional and intentional sins, tassels to remember

Verses 1-10

What are these verses about? How does this chapter begin?

This is another time when the Lord spoke to Moses.
These instructions about offerings are for when Israel entered their land.

The offerings are to make a soothing / pleasing aroma to the Lord. They had nothing to do with sin and guilt. These were burnt offerings or sacrifices:

- To fulfill a vow
- A freewill offering
- Offerings in appointed times / feasts

A grain offering and a drink offering were to be added to these.

Verses 11-16

Who is included in these verses?

An alien / stranger living among Israel could also make these offerings.
There was one law and one ordinance / rule for all.

Verses 17-21

What and when are these verses about?

Again, the time reference is when Israel went into their land.

When Israel was in their land and ate the food from it, they were to lift up to the Lord a cake as an offering from the first of their dough. (ESV says to present a loaf as a contribution.)

Verses 22-31

What's the contrast in these verses with verses 1-21?

If a person or the congregation unwittingly or unintentionally failed to do what they were instructed, they were to make sin offerings so the priest could make atonement, and they could be forgiven.

Verse 30 introduces a contrast—when a person defiantly sins.
The Hebrew literally means, “to sin with a high hand.”
It is to deliberately disobey God.

It is blaspheming the Lord, despising His Word, breaking His commandment.
The person who sinned defiantly was to be cut off from his people.
There was no offering for it.

Give time for your group to discuss application. You might ask how unintentional sin is still contrasted with defiant sin.

Verses 32-36

What are these verses about?

This is an event that illustrates defiant sin.
A man was found gathering wood on the sabbath, and he was stoned to death.

He intentionally, knowingly disobeyed God's commandment not to work on the sabbath, despising God's Word.

Give time to discuss application.

Many people defiantly disobey God. They know what His Word says, but they don't take His Word seriously—don't treat Him as holy. Sometimes the attitude is, “It's just a little thing,” or a person rationalizes that it's all right because of the circumstances. But it's not.

Verses 37-41

How does this chapter end?

Again, the Lord spoke to Moses.

He said that Israel was to make tassels for the corners of their garments.
The tassels were for a reminder to do all of the Lord's commandments and be holy.
It was a constant reminder.

It was God's heart that His people remember His Word and not die.

NUMBERS 16

What is this chapter about?

Rebellion led by Korah, Dathan, and Abiram

Use the chart in the lesson as a visual aid for this part of your discussion.

What are the events?

Korah, Dathan, Abiram, and On rose up against Moses.

They had with them 250 leaders of the congregation. Korah was a Kohathite, a Levite, Exodus 6:21, 24; Numbers 3:17, 19.

Relate this to Numbers 3:29-31 and 4:15.

Dathan, Abiram, and On were from the tribe of Reuben.

They said that all the congregation was holy and the Lord was in their midst.

Then they accused Moses and Aaron of exalting themselves above the assembly.

Moses fell on his face and then told them that the Lord would show who was His and who was holy. God would bring near to Himself the one He will choose.

Korah and his company were to take censers for themselves with fire and lay incense on them in the Lord's presence. God's acceptance would show whom He chose as holy.

Then Moses exposed the reason for Korah's rebellion. He wasn't satisfied with the duties God had given him as a Levite. He wanted the priesthood also.

What does Jude 11 say about Korah's rebellion?

The whole letter of Jude is a warning. It's about contending for the faith.

He warned of ungodly people who creep in unnoticed among believers.

Then he named certain of those ungodly people as examples. Korah was one of them.

He perished in his rebellion. Woe to anyone who follows his example.

Give time for your group to discuss relevant application.

What happened next?

Moses summoned Dathan and Abiram, but they didn't come. They said Moses had brought them out of the land of milk and honey (Egypt) to die in the wilderness. He had not brought them into the land promised by the Lord.

The next day Korah and the 250 each brought a censer with fire and put incense on it at the doorway of the tent of meeting.

The glory of the Lord appeared, and the Lord told Moses and Aaron to separate themselves from the congregation, that He might consume them. Moses and Aaron fell on their faces, interceding for the people. Then the Lord said to tell the congregation to get back from the dwellings of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram.

The congregation knew the Lord had sent Moses because He did an entirely new thing. The ground split and the earth swallowed them alive into Sheol. Numbers 26:9-11 says that this did not include Korah's sons.

Deuteronomy 11:1-7 and Psalm 106:16-18

Later Moses referred to this event as one of the times when Israel saw the Lord's discipline and greatness. The Psalm says they became envious / jealous of Moses; they were wicked. And again, this event was a reminder of Israel's sins and God's mighty deeds.

Fire from the Lord consumed the 250 men at the tent of meeting. They were offering incense, which only the priests should do. Numbers 3 says that the layman who comes near was to be put to death. Relate this to Nadab and Abihu.

Eleazar, Aaron's son, was to take the censers and hammer them into plating for the altar, because they had been presented before the Lord and were holy. They were a sign, a reminder that no layman who was not of the descendants of Aaron should come near to burn incense.

Verses 41-50, the congregation grumbled against Moses and Aaron, saying that they caused the death of the Lord's people.

The glory of the Lord appeared, and God once again told Moses to get away from the congregation that He might consume them. Moses and Aaron fell on their faces.

Moses instructed Aaron to make atonement for the people. He stood between the dead and the living, and the plague was checked. 14,700 died by the plague.

Relate this to Numbers 14:32-35.

God had told them that all of those twenty years old and upward would die during forty years of wandering in the wilderness. Death for their rebellion was continuing.

NUMBERS 17

You can ask your group what they noted as the theme of this chapter on their At a Glance chart.

Aaron's rod produced ripe almonds

How does this chapter fit with Numbers 16?

Aaron's leadership had been challenged, and God would use rods to show Israel that He had chosen Aaron as the priest.

Verses 1-7

What are these verses about?

Again, the Lord spoke to Moses.

Each household (tribe) was to write the leader's name on a rod / staff, and Moses would deposit them in the tent of meeting in front of the testimony, the ark of the covenant.

The rod or staff of the man God chose would sprout.

God said this was to lessen / cease Israel's grumblings.

Verses 8-11

What happened on the next day?

Aaron's rod / staff for the house of Levi had sprouted, put forth buds, produced blossoms, and bore ripe almonds.

Moses brought the rods / staffs out to all the people, then God told him to put back Aaron's rod before the testimony. It was to be kept as a sign against the rebels to put an end to their grumblings against God, so that they would not die.

The word "rebels" connects this incident to Korah and his company in the previous chapter. The earth swallowing up the people showed that Moses was the leader. The rod budding showed that Aaron was God's chosen priest.

Verses 12 and 13

How does this chapter end?

The people of Israel said they were perishing, dying—that everyone who went near the tabernacle of the Lord must die. This was true; the layman was not to come near or he would be put to death.

You might end this discussion by asking your group what they learned about the Lord and about Moses from this lesson. Tell them to use their chart in the lesson as a visual aid.

NUMBERS
LEADER GUIDE
Lesson 4

Lesson emphasis:

- Numbers 18–20
- Treat God as holy

REVIEW

Using the At a Glance chart as a visual aid, ask your group what Numbers 1-15 is about. You might also refer them to the map as they discuss these events.

1–8 The Lord told Moses to number the people, where they were to camp, how to move out, to establish duties for the Levites

Everything was ready for God’s people to begin their journey to the land He’d promised to give them.

9–10 After Passover, the cloud rose up for Israel’s first move

In the 2nd year, in the 2nd month, on the 20th of the month, the cloud began to lead Israel from Mount Sinai to the wilderness of Paran.

11–14 The people began to complain and rebel. They rejected the land, spurned God, and did not believe in Him.

15 The Lord told Moses about offerings when they entered the land and tassels to remind them of His commandments.

16 Korah, a Levite, rebelled against Moses and Aaron. He wanted the priesthood. God killed him and all who were with him.

17 Aaron’s rod produced almonds, showing that his family was the Lord’s choice for the priesthood.

How does the end of Numbers 17 lead into the beginning of Numbers 18?

The people said to Moses that whoever came near God would die.

They asked if they would perish completely.

NUMBERS 18

What is the theme of this chapter?

The Lord spoke to Aaron about priests, Levites, holy gifts, and inheritance

Verses 1-7

How do these verses relate to the end of chapter 17?

“So the Lord said to Aaron....” This continues from Numbers 17.

The people were asking if everyone who went near the tabernacle would die. The Lord told Aaron that he held the priesthood and was responsible for the duties of the tabernacle. Anyone else who came near would die.

The Levites were to serve Aaron and his sons while they were before the tent of meeting. But the Levites were not to come near to the furnishings of the sanctuary and the altar or they and the priests would die.

The priesthood was a bestowed service for only Aaron and his sons. It was given to them by the Lord Himself. He was the One Who also sent wrath when someone other than a priest tried to come near—Korah and the other Levites of Numbers 16–17.

God had chosen Aaron from the tribe of Levi as the one through whom the priests would come, even though all the Levites had a special place among the people before the Lord to serve the priests.

NOTE: The ESV uses the word “guard” in verses 3, 4, 5, and 7. The NASB uses the term “attend to your obligation.”

Use the chart at the end of the lesson as a visual aid as your group discusses this chapter.

Verses 8-20

What else did the Lord speak to Aaron about?

The holy gifts (ESV—consecrated things) offered by the people were a perpetual allotment for Aaron and his sons. The Lord’s provision for the priests was from the offerings.

Certain portions of the gifts could be eaten by anyone of Aaron’s household who was clean. But portions of certain other gifts could only be eaten by the males.

The people were to bring the best of the fresh oil, the fresh wine, and of the grain.

The holy gifts were an allotment for the priests. It was an everlasting covenant of salt before the Lord to Aaron and his sons.

The Lord was the priests’ inheritance; they had no inheritance in the land.

Verses 21-24

What was the last thing that the Lord told Aaron?

The Lord had given the tithe of the people to the Levites for an inheritance, in return for their service. They had no other inheritance.

Verses 25-32

Who did the Lord speak to, and what was it about?

He spoke to Moses, who was to tell the Levites what He said.

The subject was still the tithe from the people. The Levites were to give an offering / contribution from the tithe that they received. A tithe of the tithe was to be given to the priests.

The people gave an offering / contribution to the Lord.
The Levites received a tithe from it, one tenth.
The Levites, then, gave a tithe from that to the priests.

Verses 29-30 describe the gifts, the tithe, as coming from the best.

Discuss the cross-references with your group and relevant application.

Galatians 6:6, 10

The one who is taught the Word should share all good things with the one who teaches him.

1 Corinthians 9:3-10

Whoever sows spiritual things should reap material things from the people served.

Paul said that the apostles had a right to receive their material needs from the churches they served. They had a right to refrain from working to meet their physical and material needs.

Lead your discussion back to Numbers 18. What's the warning in verse 32?

Death or a similar warning was given by the Lord four times in this chapter.
Death was part of life for Israel because of their disobedience, their unbelief.

The holy, sacred gifts were not to be profaned, and only Aaron and his sons, the priests, had the charge of them.

How does this compare with New Testament believers being priests to God?

God provides for our needs.
We are to give Him our best.
Believers are to treat God as holy.

NUMBERS 19

Ask about the theme of this chapter or what it's about.

Red heifer ashes for purification

Tell your group to look at their drawings as visual aids for this part of your discussion.

Verses 1-10

How does this chapter begin? What is the content of these verses?

The Lord spoke to both Moses and Aaron.

He told them to tell Israel to bring to Eleazar the priest a red heifer.

No defect
Never been yoked

Slaughtered outside the camp in Eleazar's presence

Eleazar was to sprinkle some of its blood toward the tent of meeting seven times
Whole heifer burned in his sight with cedar wood, hyssop, and scarlet material

Eleazar and man who burned heifer wash clothes and bathe, unclean until evening

A man who was clean was to gather up the ashes from the heifer and put them in a clean place outside the camp. He would wash his clothes and be unclean until evening.

The ashes were to be kept as water to remove impurity. It was purification from sin.

Verses 11-13

What are these verses about?

A person who had touched a corpse was to be cleansed, sprinkled with this water on the third and seventh days.

Touching dead bodies would defile the tabernacle of the Lord if the person who touched the corpse was not cleansed properly.

Verses 14-19

What happened when people died?

If a man died in his tent, then the tent and everyone in it along with its furnishings were unclean, as well as every open vessel.

Whoever touched a body, bone, or grave in an open field was unclean for seven days.

The process for cleansing was:

A clean person would dip hyssop into the ashes mixed with flowing water. Then sprinkle it on the tent, furnishings, and persons who were unclean.

This was to be done on the third and seventh days.

The person should then wash his clothes and bathe and be clean by evening.

Ask your group to relate this to Psalm 51:7.

David asked God to purify / purge him with hyssop and to wash him.

Verses 20-22

How does this chapter end?

There is a warning in verse 20. Whoever would not purify himself would be cut off from the assembly because he defiled the sanctuary of the Lord.

This washing with water was a perpetual statute for Israel.

Since a person other than a priest could do the cleansing of the unclean one, then there would be less time involved than sending for a priest to do it all.

This was necessary because of all the death that was going on in the camp.

What does Hebrews 9:13-14 teach that is relevant to this chapter?

The sprinkling of the heifer's ashes only cleansed the flesh.

The blood of Christ cleanses / purifies the conscience from dead works to serve the living God.

Give time for your group to discuss application of this. How is God treated as holy?

NUMBERS 20

What is this chapter about?

Miriam died; Moses struck the rock; Edom refused passage; Aaron died

Use the map as a visual aid for discussing this chapter.

Verse 1

What happened first?

Miriam died in the first month and was buried in the wilderness of Zin. Israel was camped at Kadesh.

Verses 2-13

What was the situation? What happened?

There was no water, and the people contended / quarreled with Moses him.

This situation is similar to the one in Exodus 17.

But the people's contention / quarreling has also been in Numbers a few times.

Moses and Aaron fell on their faces before the Lord.

The glory of the Lord appeared to them, and He spoke to Moses.

Give time for your group to discuss Moses' habit when something went wrong or when he needed direction. Relate this to their lives.

What did the Lord tell Moses to do?

Take the rod / staff, assemble the congregation, and speak to the rock before their eyes (ESV—tell the rock to yield its water). Then water would come from the rock for the people to drink.

According to 1 Corinthians 10:1-4, what was the rock?

The rock was Christ. He was the provision in the wilderness.
He still gives the water of life to the thirsty.

How does Exodus 17:1-7 compare with this incident? Use the chart in the lesson as a visual aid.

This was another no water situation where the people quarreled with Moses.

In Exodus, the Lord told Moses to strike the rock with the staff, the one with which he had done the wonders to bring Israel out of Egypt.

In Numbers 20, the Lord told him to take the rod / staff, but only speak to the rock for the water to come out.

Moses did just as the Lord commanded in Exodus; he struck the rock and water came out.

In Numbers 20 he struck the rock twice, and water came out. But in striking the rock, Moses disobeyed what the Lord told him to do.

God still brought water from the rock for the congregation and animals, but His words to Moses and Aaron were reproof. They would not enter the land because they had not treated Him as holy before the people. They did not believe what He had said.

The waters were called “Meribah” in both instances, Exodus 17 and Numbers 20. Meribah means “quarrel” or “contention.”

Exodus 17:1-7 took place in the Wilderness of Sin at Rephidim, and Numbers 20 was in the Wilderness of Zin at Kadesh.

Discuss the consequence of Moses' action. How are we to treat the Lord as holy before all people?

Moses had been obedient, yet God did not allow him to go into the promised land because of that one incident. This shows the seriousness of obedience and treating the Lord as holy.

We are to be obedient to His Word. There are consequences to disobedience, even for believers.

Relate this to the cross-reference in Deuteronomy 32:1-4.

Moses said the Rock's work is perfect and all His ways are just.

Verses 14-21

What else happened at Kadesh?

Moses sent messengers to the king of Edom to allow Israel safe passage through his land.

How do Genesis 25:21-30 and 32:3 relate to this?

Jacob and Esau were the twin sons of Isaac, Abraham's son.
Esau was also called Edom. Later, God changed Jacob's name to Israel.
The two nations in Rebekah's womb were Israel and Edom.

In his message to the king of Edom, Moses referred to Israel as Edom's brother because of the family connection between Jacob and Esau.

Edom refused to let Israel pass through their land and went with a heavy force against Israel. So Israel turned away.

Verses 22-29

Where did Israel go next, and what happened?

From Kadesh, Israel went to Mount Hor.
Moses, Aaron, and Eleazar, Aaron's son, went up Mount Hor.

Moses stripped Aaron of his priestly garments and put them on Eleazar.
Aaron died there on the mountaintop.
Israel wept for him for thirty days.

NOTE: Numbers 33:38-39 say that Aaron was 123 years old when he died. He died in the 40th year, the 5th month, the 1st day. This gives the time as near to the end of wandering in the wilderness when Aaron died.

What was the significance of putting Aaron’s garments on Eleazar?

This showed the people that God had chosen Eleazar to replace his father Aaron.

To end this discussion, you might ask how Psalm 99:8-9 relates to how God dealt with Aaron and Moses.

The holy God forgives, but there are consequences for not treating Him as holy.

Give time for your group to discuss application.

NUMBERS
LEADER GUIDE
Lesson 5

Lesson emphasis:

- Numbers 21–25
- Balaam

REVIEW

To begin this discussion, ask your group about Numbers 1–20. Tell them to use their At a Glance chart as a visual aid.

Numbers 1–10

The Lord prepared Israel to go into the land He had promised to give them as an everlasting possession.

In the last part of chapter 10, the cloud lifted and they followed it as the Lord led them toward that land.

Numbers 11–14

The people complained several times about several things.

The Lord led Israel to enter the land, but they rebelled and rejected the land. They didn't believe in the Lord.

So He said that they'd die in the wilderness. They would wander in it for 40 years. Their children would enter the land.

Numbers 15–20

There was more rebellion. God again established Aaron as priest and the Levites to serve the priests.

Miriam and Aaron died. Moses was denied entrance into the land because He didn't treat God as holy when he struck the rock.

Use the map as a visual aid for this discussion.

NUMBERS 21

What is the theme of this chapter?

Israel defeated Canaanites / fiery serpents / Israel defeated Sihon and Og

Verses 1-3

What happened in these verses?

The Canaanite king of Arad fought against Israel and took some of them captive. Israel vowed to the Lord to utterly destroy their cities if He would give Israel victory over them.

The Lord did, and Israel utterly destroyed their cities. The place was called Hormah.

Relate this to Numbers 14:39-45.

After the Lord had told Israel that their corpses would fall in the wilderness, Israel admitted their sin, then fought against the Amalekites and Canaanites against the Lord's command. They were struck down as far as Hormah.

In Numbers 21, Israel fought at the Lord's command and defeated the Canaanites.

Verses 4-9

Where did Israel go, and what happened?

Israel set out from Mount Hor, going around Edom.
Numbers 20 said that the king of Edom refused to let them pass through the land.

The people became impatient and spoke against God and Moses. They complained about the manna God had provided.

The Lord sent fiery serpents that bit the people, and many died.

Relate this to 1 Corinthians 10.

Verse 9 says that some of the people tried the Lord and were destroyed by the serpents.

What was the response of the people to the fiery serpents?

The people went to Moses and admitted their sin, asking Moses to intercede for them.
Once again he did.

What did the Lord tell Moses to do? Relate this to the cross-references.

Moses was to make a serpent of bronze and set it on a standard / pole.
When one who had been bitten looked at the bronze serpent, he lived.

John 3 and 2 Corinthians 5:21

John 3 says that as Moses lifted up the serpent, so must the Son of Man be lifted up . . . on a cross. Looking to the serpent saved the Israelites from physical death. Looking to Christ saves from eternal death.

What was causing their death was lifted up on a pole. They had to look, believe what Moses told them to do, in order to live.

Jesus took the sins (what causes death) of the world on Himself at the cross; all who believe what the Word says and look to Him in faith live.

Give time for your group to discuss application.

Verses 10-20

What are these verses about, and where?

Israel journeyed and came to Moab.

Verses 21-35

What happened next?

Messengers went to the king of the Amorites, Sihon, asking to pass through his land. He would not permit it, and instead fought against Israel. Israel struck him, took possession of the land as far as Ammon, and lived in the cities.

Israel spied out Jazer and captured its villages. Og the king Bashan fought against them at Edrei. The Lord gave him into their hand; him, his sons and his people, until there was no remnant / survivor left. Israel also possessed his land.

NUMBERS 22

What is this chapter about—what’s the theme?

Balak hired Balaam to curse Israel

What are the main points of this chapter?

Israel camped in the plains of Moab beyond the Jordan opposite Jericho.

Moab was in great fear because they had seen what Israel had done to the Amorites. Balak, king of Moab, sent messengers to Balaam, a diviner, to come and curse Israel. Balak was to pay well for Balaam’s divination and curses.

Evidently Balaam was well-known throughout the region since Balak knew that the one whom he cursed was cursed.

At first, the Lord told Balaam not to go with the messengers from Balak. He would not allow Balaam to curse Israel because they were blessed by Him.

The leaders told Balak that Balaam refused to come, so he sent more distinguished leaders, saying he would honor Balaam richly. Balaam said he could do nothing contrary to the command of God but would find out what else the Lord would speak to him.

God came to him saying to go with the men, but to speak only His words to them. Balaam went with them, but evidently had wrong intent because God was angry with him and would have killed him.

Balaam's donkey saw the angel of the Lord with a sword and would not continue on. Balaam struck the donkey three different times. The Lord opened the donkey's mouth to speak to Balaam. Then the Lord opened Balaam's eyes, and he saw the angel of the Lord standing in the way with his sword.

Balaam acknowledged his sin and said he would turn back, but the angel of the Lord told him to go with the men but speak only the word he would tell Balaam.

When Balak greeted Balaam, Balaam told him he would speak the words God put in his mouth. They went to Kiriath-huzoth, and Balak sacrificed oxen and sheep and sent some to Balaam.

Balak took Balaam up to the high places of Baal where a portion of Israel could be seen.

NUMBERS 23

Ask your group how they summarized the theme of this chapter on their At A Glance charts.

Balaam blessed Israel twice

How does this continue from Numbers 22?

Balak and Balaam offered a bull and a ram on each of seven altars, then went to a bare hill where the Lord met Balaam and put a word in his mouth.

NOTE: Just because the Lord uses a person does not mean that that one is a believer. Balaam had been sacrificing with Balak to Baal.

How does the New Testament describe Balaam?

2 Peter 2:15-16

Balaam loved the wages of unrighteousness (ESV—he loved gain from wrongdoing). He was not a man of righteousness.

Jude 11

Many ungodly people rush headlong / abandon themselves into the error of Balaam, religion for pay. He wanted wages, pay.

Ask about the content of this chapter and Balaam's discourses.

Tell your group to use their notes on the discourse texts in the lesson as visual aids for discussing them.

1st Discourse

Balaam returned to Balak and took up his discourse saying he could not curse whom God had not cursed. He spoke of Israel as a people *who* dwells apart / alone, and not reckoned /counting themselves among the nations. “Who can count the dust of Jacob . . . ?”

Israel is a holy people, set apart by the Lord to Himself.
God had promised to multiply them as the dust.

Balak said Balaam had blessed rather than cursed Israel and took him to the top of Pisgah in the field of Zophim where the same offerings were made. Balaam went to meet the Lord, and the Lord put a word in his mouth.

2nd Discourse

Balaam said God would do what He had said. What God had blessed, Balaam could not revoke. God had not seen trouble in Israel. He was with him and had brought him out of Egypt. A people, Israel, rise like a lioness and won't lie down until it devours the prey.

Balak then took Balaam to the top of Peor, saying that it might be agreeable with God to curse them from there. The same sacrifices were again offered.

NUMBERS 24

What's the theme of this chapter?

Balaam's two oracles about God and Israel

How does the account of Balaam continue?

Balaam saw that it pleased the Lord to bless Israel, so he did not go to seek omens. Evidently he had at the other times.

3rd Discourse

Balaam set his face toward the wilderness where Israel was camping, and the Spirit of God came upon him. He took up his discourse, saying that this was the oracle of him who hears the words of God.

About Israel:

Fair / lovely tents and dwellings / encampments
Water shall flow from his buckets
His seed shall be by many waters
His king shall be higher than Agag
His kingdom shall be exalted

About Israel's adversaries:

God (or Israel) will devour them / eat them up, crush / break their bones

Everyone who blesses Israel is blessed.
Everyone who curses Israel is cursed.

How does Ephesians 1:3-14 relate to these blessings that God spoke for Israel?

God has blessed believers with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ.

Believers:

chosen in Him before the foundation of the world
predestined to adoption as sons
His grace freely bestowed on them
redemption and forgiveness
sealed with the Holy Spirit, a pledge / guarantee of our inheritance

What was Balak's reaction and Balaam's response?

Balak was angry because he had called Balaam to curse his enemies, but Balaam had blessed them three times. Balaam reminded him that he had said he would speak what the Lord commanded. He then told Balak that he would tell what Israel would do to his people in the days to come.

4th Discourse

Again Balaam said this was the oracle of him who hears the words of God.

About Israel he said:

A star shall come forth from Jacob
A scepter shall rise from Israel
And shall crush through the forehead of Moab
Edom and Seir shall be a possession (ESV—dispossessed)
One from Jacob shall have dominion
And destroy the remnant / survivors from the city

Balaam took up his discourse against:

Amalek—his end shall be destruction

The Kenite—Kain shall be consumed / burned when Asshur takes captive

Balaam took up his discourse again:

Who can live except God has ordained it? (ESV—when God does this?)
Asshur and Eber shall also come to destruction.

Then Balaam departed.

What was the result of Balaam's discourses, for Israel and for the surrounding nations?

Israel would prosper because of the promises of the Lord.
They would destroy the other nations.

NUMBERS 25

What is this chapter about?

Israel's harlotry with Baal of Peor; Phinehas stopped the plague

Verses 1-9

What happened?

At Shittim, Israel began to play the harlot with the daughters of Moab. Israel accepted invitation to the sacrifices to Baal of Peor and ate and bowed down to the gods.

Balak was the king of Moab.

The Lord was angry and told Moses to have the leaders to execute those who had participated. Moses then told the judges to slay their men who had joined / yoked themselves to Baal of Peor.

NOTE: In the NASB and ESV, it reads as though the leaders were executed; however, in the Hebrew, the above translation is correct.

One of the men even brought a Midianite woman into the congregation / family. Phinehas, the son of Eleazar, went after the man and pierced them both. Phinehas was a priest whose responsibility it was to distinguish between the holy and the profane. He pursued the immoral persons to put them to death as the Lord had commanded.

The Lord sent a plague on Israel because of the idolatry and 24,000 died.
The righteous action of Phinehas stopped the plague.

Relate this to 1 Corinthians 10.

In verse 8, Paul warns not to act immorally as some of the Israelites did and 23,000 fell in one day.

NOTE: Numbers 25 says 24,000 were killed by the plague. 1 Corinthians 10 says that 23,000 fell in one day. If the verse in 1 Corinthians is referring to the Baal of Peor incident, one possible explanation is that those 24,000 may have fallen over a longer period of time than the one day in which the 23,000 fell.

A second possible explanation is that 1 Corinthians 10:8 continues the reference from verse 7 to the golden calf incident of Exodus 32. This would mean that in addition to the 3,000 slain (Exodus 32:28), 20,000 died by the plague that same day.

What does the New Testament say about why Israel did this?

Revelation 2:14

Balaam kept teaching Balak to put a stumbling block before Israel, to eat things sacrificed to idols and to commit acts of immorality.

What information do the other cross-references give about Balaam?

Numbers 31:8, 16; Joshua 13:22; 24:9, 10; Micah 6:5

Balaam was killed by Israel. It was by his counsel that Midian and Moab caused the sons of Israel to trespass against the Lord.

Balaam could not curse Israel because the Lord had blessed them.
But he told Balak how to lead Israel into sin so that the Lord would judge them.
It was the women of Moab and Midian who seduced the men of Israel and led them into not only immorality but also idolatry.

Deuteronomy 23:3-6; Nehemiah 13:1-3

No Ammonite or Moabite could enter the assembly of the Lord because they hired Balaam to curse Israel. The Ammonites were also in on the hiring of Balaam.

Verses 10-15

What did the Lord say about Phinehas?

He turned away the Lord's wrath from Israel because he was jealous with God's jealousy and made atonement for Israel so that God did not destroy them. God gave Phinehas a covenant of peace for him and his descendants, a covenant of perpetual priesthood.

The priesthood passed from Aaron to Eleazar and then to Phinehas and his descendants.

The slain man was Zimri of the tribe of Simeon. The Midianite woman was Cozbi the daughter of Zur.

Verses 16-18

What were the Lord's instructions to Moses concerning Midian and why?

Be hostile to (ESV—harass) Midian because they were hostile to (harassed) you.

Midian used tricks / wiles to deceive / beguile Israel into idolatry.
Balaam was the one who told them how to do it.

To end this discussion, you can ask how 1 Corinthians 10:1-13 relates to what your group has studied in Numbers.

Verses 1-5 describe Israel as they journeyed from Egypt to their land.
God provided for them along the way.

But they didn't believe in Him, so He was not pleased with them.

They rebelled, so He killed that generation in the wilderness.

Verses 6 and 11 show that these verses are a warning to people calling themselves believers. These things were written as an example; the one who thinks he stands should take heed that he does not fall. If unrighteousness is the habit of one's life, that one is not saved.

Verses 7-10 tell of several times when Israel showed their unbelief by their sin. These instances are also warnings to the church.

Believers are able to endure any temptation because of God's provided way of escape. We don't have to give in to sin.

NUMBERS
LEADER GUIDE
Lesson 6

Lesson emphasis:

- Numbers 26–31

REVIEW

To begin this discussion, ask your group about the main points in Numbers 1–25. Tell them to use their At A Glance charts as a visual aid.

Numbers 1–10

The Lord prepared Israel to go into the land He had promised to give them as an everlasting possession.

In the last part of chapter 10, the cloud lifted and they followed it as the Lord led them toward that land.

Numbers 11–14

The people complained several times about several things.

The Lord led Israel to enter the land, but they rebelled and rejected the land. They didn't believe in the Lord.

So He said that they'd die in the wilderness. They would wander in it for 40 years. Their children would enter the land.

Numbers 15–21

There was more rebellion. God again established Aaron as priest and the Levites to serve the priests.

Miriam and Aaron died. Moses was denied entrance into the land because He didn't treat God as holy when he struck the rock.

Israel was moving and defeating their enemies.

Numbers 22–25

Balak, king of Moab, hired Balaam to curse Israel, but God blessed them instead.

Balaam told Balak how to get Israel to sin, idolatry with Baal of Peor.

Phinehas, Eleazar's son, stopped God's plague of judgment. He was given the priesthood.

At this point, you might ask your group what Numbers 26–31 is about.

It's a segment in Numbers about the new generation who is to enter the land.

You might use the map in the course as a visual aid for this discussion.

NUMBERS 26

Ask your group what they noted as the theme of this chapter.

The census of Israel in Moab

What happened in Numbers 26 “after the plague”?

God told Moses and Eleazar to take a census of the men twenty years old and upward who were able to go to war. Relate this to Numbers 1 when Moses and Aaron numbered Israel in the wilderness of Sinai.

Seven of the tribes actually had larger counts than previously, though in the overall count, they were 1,820 fewer.

Verse 53 gives an additional reason for the numbering. The land was to be divided for an inheritance according to the number of names in each tribe. It would be divided by lot, so it was the Lord who determined their inheritance.

You might ask your group what they learned from the cross-references about the inheritance of believers in Jesus Christ.

Ephesians 1:13-14

Believers are sealed with the Holy Spirit who is the pledge / guarantee of our inheritance.

1 Peter 1:3-5

Those born again obtain an inheritance which is imperishable, undefiled, will not fade away / unfading, and is reserved / kept in heaven.

Give time for your group to discuss application.

Lead the discussion back to the Levites in Numbers 26.

There is a list at the end of this lesson’s guide which you can use as a visual aid.

The Levites were also numbered / listed from a month old and upward. Their number had increased by 1,000 (3:39) since the previous census. In Numbers 1, they had been numbered and used to redeem the firstborn of Israel.

The Levites had not been numbered because no inheritance of land was given to them. In Numbers 18, it said that the inheritance of the Levites was the tithe and the inheritance of Aaron’s household was the Lord.

When the men were numbered in chapter 26, there was not a man of those numbered at Sinai who was still alive except Joshua and Caleb. Moses did the numbering and Eleazar.

Relate this to Numbers 13–14.

Because Israel rejected the land, the Lord said that they would all die in the wilderness, except Caleb and Joshua.

NUMBERS 27

What is this chapter about?

Daughters of Zelophehad / Moses commissioned Joshua

Verses 1-11

What are these verses about?

The daughters of Zelophehad, from Manasseh, stood before everyone and requested that they be given possession among their father's brothers. Their father had died in the wilderness, not among the company of Korah, and he had no sons.

Moses brought the case before the Lord.

The Lord told Moses that if a man died with no sons, his inheritance was to be transferred to his daughter. If no daughter, to his brother, and last to his nearest kinsman.

Verses 12-14

What did the Lord tell Moses to do?

He was to go to the mountain of Abarim and see the land. Then he would die. Because Moses didn't treat God as holy in Numbers 20, he wasn't allowed to enter the land.

What does Deuteronomy 34 add to the information about Moses' death?

The Lord showed Moses all the land, reminding him that this was the land He had sworn to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob to give to their descendants. Moses died there, and the Lord buried him.

He was 120 years old when he died, and his eyes were not dim, nor his vigor abated.

NOTE: Moses didn't die until Deuteronomy 34. But the Lord told him about it in Numbers 27.

Lead your discussion back to Numbers 27:15-23.

What was Moses' concern and God's response?

Moses asked the Lord to appoint a leader for Israel. As usual, he thought of the people's needs.

The Lord said to commission Joshua in the sight of all the people. Moses did so, laying his hands on Joshua.

NOTE: Someone may ask about verse 21. Joshua was to stand before the priest, and Eleazar would inquire for him by the judgment of the Urim. Scripture does not give information as to how the Urim was used; however, it is likely that the Urim in some way showed the congregation God's choice of Joshua as Moses' successor.

At this point, ask what your group learned from the cross-references about Joshua.

Exodus 24:13 and 33:11; Numbers 11:28

Joshua is called Moses' servant / assistant, a young man. He went up to the mountain of God when Moses went up on the mountain and was given the stone tablets. He stayed at the tent of meeting when Moses returned to camp after speaking with the Lord.

Numbers 13:8, 16; 14:6-8, 30, 38

Joshua, the son of Nun, was from the tribe of Ephraim. He, along with Caleb, gave a good report about the land and encouraged the people that God would bring them into the land. Only Joshua and Caleb would enter the land of those 20 years old and upward.

Numbers 27

The Lord described Joshua as "a man in whom is the Spirit."

Deuteronomy 34

"Joshua . . . was filled with/ full of the spirit of wisdom, for Moses had laid his hands on him."

Give time for your group to discuss application from what they've learned about Moses and Joshua. Is there someone in your life who has been an influence like Moses was to Joshua, an example of godly wisdom? Is there someone in your life to whom you need to be an example of godly wisdom? Do you treat God as holy before people?

NUMBERS 28

What is the theme of this chapter?

Offerings at appointed times

Why are these instructions being given again?

This was a new generation that had been younger when God had given information about the offerings and feasts previously. Some of the feasts would not have been celebrated until they went into the land.

Also, the feasts and offerings, along with their accompanying grain offerings and libations are mentioned here in a concise manner with some additional detail.

Which appointed times are in Numbers 28?

Daily continual burnt / food offerings
Weekly sabbath offerings
Beginning of the month
Annual Feast of Passover and Feast of Weeks

Use the Feasts chart as a visual aid for discussing these two chapters.

NUMBERS 29

What is this chapter about?

Offerings for the appointed times in the 7th month

Based on the chart, which of the feasts are in this chapter?

Verses 1–6, Trumpets

Verses 7–11, Day of Atonement

Verses 12–38, Feast of Tabernacles or Booths

Give time for your group to discuss any relevant application from discussing God's instructions for this new generation about to enter the land He promised.

NUMBERS 30

Ask your group what they noted as the theme of this chapter on their At A Glance chart.

God's word concerning vows

What are the vows in this chapter?

If a man made a vow or an oath, he was not to violate his word. He must do all he said.

If a woman made a vow or an oath, she was to keep it unless her father (single woman) or husband (married woman) forbade / opposed it on the day he heard of it. If the husband annulled it later, then he would bear her guilt.

NOTE: This shows a woman's submission to her father or husband. It also shows the seriousness of a man's responsibility as head of the home.

This chapter shows the responsibility to keep any vows made.

What do the cross-references say about vows?

Ecclesiastes 5:4-5

One should not be late in paying what was vowed.
It is better not to vow than to vow and not pay.

Matthew 5:33-37

Jesus referenced the Old Testament saying that the ancients were told to fulfill their vows to the Lord. He then said to make / take no oath at all, but say yes or no. Anything beyond that is evil.

James 5:12

Don't swear by heaven or earth or with any other oath (vow). Yes should be yes, and no should be no, so that one doesn't fall under judgment / condemnation.

How does this relate to what we say? Give time to discuss application.

Believers should do as they say, always speaking the truth.

NUMBERS 31

How can this chapter be summarized?

God's vengeance on Midian

Discuss what the Lord told Israel to do and why.

The Lord told Moses to take full vengeance on the Midianites. Verse 3 says they were to execute the Lord's vengeance on Midian.

Afterward Moses would be gathered to his people, he would die. But that wasn't until Deuteronomy 34.

How does this relate to Numbers 22–25?

Midian had been among the nations who hired Balaam to curse Israel. God only allowed him to bless Israel. However, Balaam counseled them to lead Israel into the sins of immorality and idolatry by the Midianite women.

According to Numbers 31, who went to take the Lord's vengeance and what was the result?

A thousand from each tribe went to war, along with Phinehas, the holy vessels, and the trumpets for alarm.

They killed every male, the five kings of Midian, and Balaam the son of Beor.

NOTE: Zur, one of the five kings, was the father of Cozbi, the Midianite woman slain by Phinehas in Numbers 25. See Numbers 25:15.

The women and children were captured; cattle, flocks, and goods were plundered; and their cities and camps were burned.

Moses was angry that the women had been spared because they had caused the sons of Israel to trespass against the Lord. They were to kill every male among the little ones and every woman who had known a man intimately.

NOTE: Some in your group might question the killing of the male little ones. If so, ask what they need to remember about God. The Lord is completely just, whether people understand or not. All that He does is right and good. People are not to judge God. One should trust in His character, not human feelings.

How were the men of war purified?

They remained outside the camp seven days, and purified themselves and their booty / plunder on the third and seventh days.

They used water mixed with the ashes of the red heifer to purify themselves, because they had touched corpses. This followed the statute given in Numbers 19.

What were the results of the battle?

Half of the booty / plunder was given to the warriors who went to battle and half to the congregation. The warriors were taxed one in five hundred, which they gave to Eleazar the priest as an offering to the Lord. The congregation gave one in fifty to the Levites.

A census was taken and no man was missing of those that went out to war. The Lord had prepared them for the battle, commanded them to go into battle, and given them His desired results. This time Israel obeyed when He said to go and fight.

Relate to Numbers 14. Compare the results.

To close this discussion, give time for your group to discuss any relevant application.

Numbers	The New Generation
26	Census Inheritance
27	Joshua, new leader
28–29	Offerings at appointed times
30	Vows
31	Vengeance on Midian

NUMBERS
LEADER GUIDE
Lesson 7

Lesson emphasis:

- Numbers 32–36

REVIEW

Ask your group to review the main points of Numbers 1–31, using their At A Glance charts.

- 1–10 God numbered and prepared His people, priests, and Levites to enter the land
- 11–14 He led them to the land, but they didn't believe and rejected the land
- 15–21 Israel continued to rebel, God brought judgments
They defeated Sihon and Og
- 22–25 Balaam blessed Israel, but told Moab how to lead them to idolatry
- 26–31 The new generation prepared to enter the land

Use the map and At a Glance chart as visual aids for this discussion.

NUMBERS 32

What is the theme of this chapter?

Land for Reuben, Gad, and ½ of Manasseh

Verses 1-5

Who asked what of Moses, and why?

The tribes of Reuben and Gad asked that they be allowed to live in the land east of the Jordan, the land of Jazer and Gilead, because of their large number of livestock. This land was suitable for livestock, so it seemed to be a reasonable request.

NOTE: According to Genesis 15:18-21, the land promised to Abraham's descendants included this land of the Canaanites and Amorites.

Verses 6-15

What was the warning?

Moses objection was to Reuben and Gad not entering Canaan and going to war with the rest of Israel. This could cause discouragement to the rest of the nation like at Kadesh.

He reminded them of what happened. Moses gave them a warning in verse 15 about turning away from following the Lord— into war for the land of Canaan.

Verses 16-27

What took place in these verses?

Gad and Reuben gave assurance that their men of war would enter Canaan with the rest of Israel until all of the tribes had possessed their inheritance. Then they would return to their homes on the east side of the Jordan River.

Moses said that was agreeable, but gave another warning in verse 23. If they didn't go, their sin would find them out.

You might ask your group if anyone ever really gets away with sin. Who always knows?

Verses 28-42

What two things did Moses do in these verses?

He told Eleazar, Joshua, and the heads of the other tribes what was agreed with Gad and Reuben.

They were the leaders of the new generation. Eleazar had become the priest after Aaron died. Joshua had been commissioned to take Moses' place as the leader of Israel. And the other leaders needed to be aware of the decision before entering the land of Canaan so that when the land had been conquered, the two tribes could go back to their possession east of the Jordan.

He gave to Gad, Reuben, and half of the tribe of Manasseh the kingdom of the Amorites and Bashan with their cities and surrounding land.

NUMBERS 33

What is this chapter about?

The journeys of Israel

Verses 1-49

What did Moses record?

Israel's journeys during the 40 years from Egypt to the plains of Moab

There are places in this list that have not been mentioned before, and there are places mentioned before which are not included on this list.

This is not every place, but the starting places of their journeys.

What time reference is in verse 38? Relate this to Numbers 20:22-29.

Aaron died in the 40th year after Israel came out of Egypt.

Numbers 20 says that it was at Mount Hor. This was when Eleazar was clothed with the priestly garments of his father Aaron.

Verses 50-56

What warning and instructions did Moses give to Israel before they entered the land?

Drive out all the inhabitants of the land.

Destroy all their figured stones and all their molten / metal images.

Demolish all their high places.

Take possession of the land and live / settle in it because the Lord had given it to them to possess. Relate this to Numbers 14.

Division of the land to the tribes would be by lot and according to the size of the tribe.

If Israel did not obey the Lord by driving out the inhabitants of the land of Canaan, then those left in the land would trouble Israel.

Relate this to what happened in Numbers 25.

Midianite women deceived Israel and led some of them into immorality and idolatry. This was why Israel needed to destroy the figured stones and molten / metal images of the Canaanite nations and demolish their high places.

You might ask your group if they allow anything of the world to control their lives. Are they being deceived and seduced into some sin or bondage?

The last statement of the warning is in verse 56.

The Lord clearly told Israel that if they did not obey Him, then He would do to them what He planned to do to the Canaanites— remove them from the land.

NUMBERS 34

What's the theme of this chapter?

The borders of Canaan and who was to apportion the land

What are the main points of this chapter?

The borders of the land

9½ tribes inherited land in Canaan

2½ tribes east of Jordan; Gad, Reuben and ½ of Manasseh

The tribe leaders were to apportion the land, and their names are listed.

NUMBERS 35

Ask your group what they noted on their At A Glance chart as the theme of this chapter.

The cities of refuge and the blood avenger

Verses 1-8

How are the cities of refuge described?

The Lord provided 48 cities for the Levites to have in the land, since they received no inheritance. Relate this to Numbers 18:24. These cities were to be given to the Levites from the inheritance of the other tribes.

God even said how large these cities were to be.

There were 6 cities of refuge among the 48 cities for the Levites.

Verses 9-34

What are these verses about?

Three of the cities of refuge were to be on the east of the Jordan River, and three were for the west side of the Jordan.

They were for the refuge of a person who had killed another unintentionally.

Refuge was needed because of a blood avenger, a relative who avenged the death of a kinsman.

“avenger”—*gaal* or *goel* can mean, “to redeem.”¹

Genesis 9:5-6

God requires the life of one who murders another because He made man in His image. He said that whoever shed the blood of a man, took his life, was to be killed by man. The reference to the one who shed the blood of man is speaking of murder, since the Lord had told Israel to kill many in battle.

What are the connections between the cities of refuge, the manslayer, and the blood avenger in Numbers 35?

If a person unintentionally killed another, he could flee to one of the cities of refuge where the blood avenger could not kill him. This was for the protection of the innocent who had unintentionally slain a person.

¹ R. L. Thomas, *New American Standard Hebrew-Aramaic and Greek Dictionaries*: Updated Edition, H1350 (Anaheim: Foundation Publications, Inc., 1998, 1981).

The blood avenger was one who avenged the death of a kinsman who had been intentionally killed. If the congregation judged the manslayer as guilty of intentional murder, he was put to death. His life could not be ransomed. There had to be at least two witnesses for a murderer to be put to death.

If the manslayer left the city of refuge, then the blood avenger could kill him.

The manslayer had to live in the city until the death of the high priest, Aaron's descendant who was anointed. The high priest was Eleazar at the point in time when this was given.

Why did murder need to be avenged?

God said that blood pollutes, defiles the land.
The land was to be holy since it was the dwelling of the Lord among His people.

NUMBERS 36

What is the theme of this chapter?

Land inheritance to remain within the tribe

Verses 1-12

What is addressed in these verses?

The heads of Gilead approached Moses and the leaders. They were concerned that if a daughter who received an inheritance married outside of her tribe, her inheritance would become part of the inheritance of the tribe into which she had married.

Relate this to Numbers 27:1-11 the daughters of Zelophehad asked for the inheritance of their father and had been granted it by Moses.

Because the daughter was a part of another tribe, in the jubilee her inheritance would be added to the inheritance of that tribe. Leviticus 25 says that in the year of jubilee land reverted to its original owner. Because the daughter had inherited the land it would stay with her, the owner, at the jubilee.

The Lord said the land was to stay within the specific tribes. If a man had no sons, his daughters were to marry within his tribe so that his inheritance remained with his tribe.

Verse 13

How does Numbers end?

The Lord prepared the people in the plains of Moab to enter the land of Canaan. He had given commands and ordinances for Israel to Moses for the last time.

To end this discussion, give time for your group to share what they've learned from Numbers.