

LESSONS THIS QUARTER

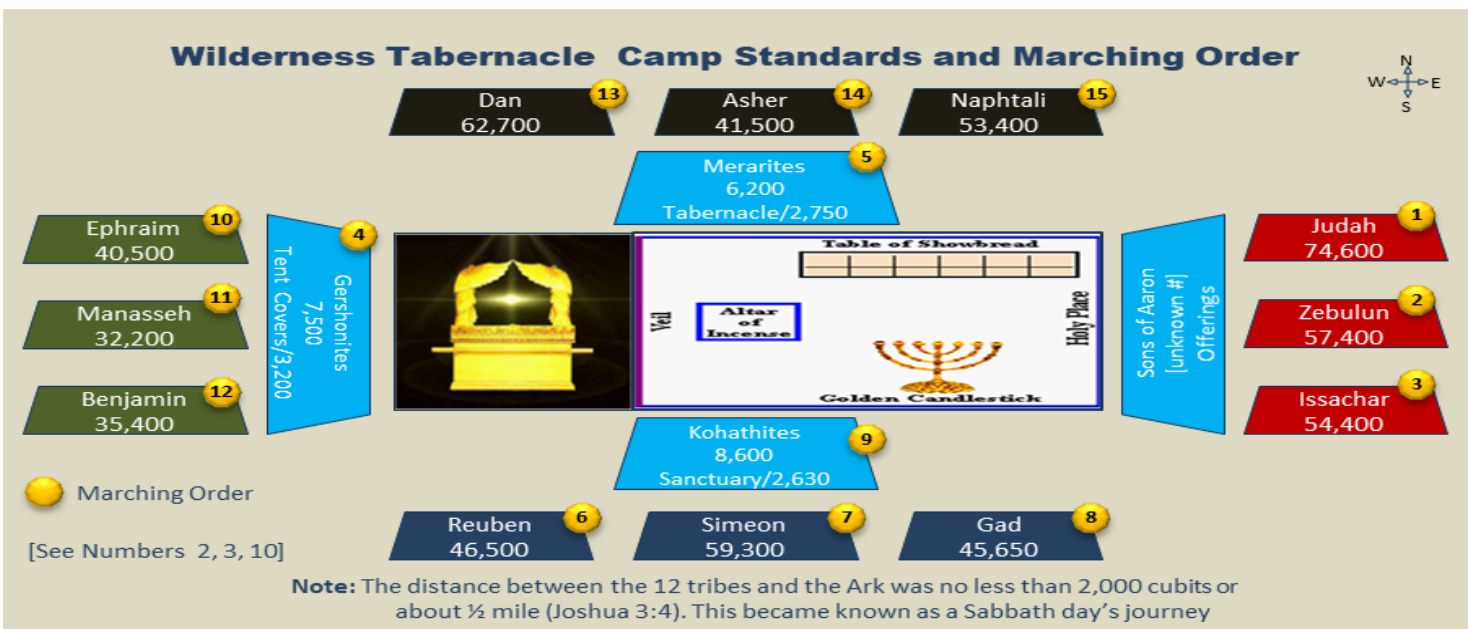
1) 07 Sept 2025	Numbers 01-09	The Journey
2) 14 Sept	Numbers 10-12	Provision
3) 21 Sept	Numbers 13	The Land
4) 28 Sept	Numbers 14	Rebellion and Judgement
5) 05 Oct	Numbers 15-20	Lack of Trust
6) 12 Oct	Numbers 21-27	God's Plan
7) 19 Oct	Numbers 28-36	Instructions Given
8) 26 Oct	Deuteronomy 01-04	Remember
9) 02 Nov	Deuteronomy 05-06	Love
10) 09 Nov	Deuteronomy 07-18	Undivided Worship
11) 16 Nov	Deuteronomy 19-28	Covenant Relationship
12) 23 Nov	Deuteronomy 29-30	Fully Committed
13) 30 Nov	Deuteronomy 31-34	God's Power

INTRODUCTION

- **Author.** Though not specifically identified, Moses is deduced to be the author of Numbers
- **Date of Writing.** The Exodus occurred ~1446-1440BC
- **Purpose.** The Book of Numbers answers the question of how Israel got from Egypt to the Promised Land and why it took so long
- In these first 8 chapters we get a glimpse of how God had Moses organized the Israelites into military brigades and the Levites into guardians of temple artifacts; we also see special instructions to resolve unusual situations; and another glimpse into priestly service and temple consecration

Passage	Comments
Numbers 1:1-54	Take a Census and Get Organized <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • vv2-3. All tribes, except Levi, were registered for the military draft, men 20 years old and up. Some take this to be the age of accountability Num 14:29; 32:11 • Levi was to transport the tabernacle & camp around it to protect the other tribes from God's wrath WHY?
2:1-34	Moses Organized the 12 Tribes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • vv1-2. God commanded Moses to organize and distribute the tribes around the tabernacle in a specific order and at an unspecified distance WHY? • According to Joshua 3:4, there was a ½ mile distance (2000 cubits) between the other 12 tribes and the tabernacle WHY SO FAR AWAY?
3:1-51	Next, Moses Organized the Levites <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • v12. Initially, the 1st born son was to be 'sacrificed' (i.e., dedicated) to the service of the Lord, but God substituted the tribe of Levi instead Exodus 13:2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Thereafter, each 1st born son is ransomed by an offering of 5 shekels of silver (~\$35) Num 18:15-16 (1 shekel = ½ oz of Silver @ \$14/oz = \$35)

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Eventually, Jesus Christ will become the ultimate ransom price for everyone • vv14-15. Every male Levite from a month old and upward was registered (37,300 total) • v17. Four (4) Levite family groups would have special duties – Gershon, Kohath, Merari, and Amram (who was the father of Aaron and Moses, Exodus 6:20) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Gershonites (7,500) Tabernacle artifacts ♦ Kohathites (8,600) Sanctuary artifacts ♦ Merarites (6,200) Tent coverings ♦ Amramites (Moses & sons of Aaron) Priestly duties • vv40-51. A count is made between the Levites and the 1st born of the other 12 tribes – 1 month old & up <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ 22,273 – 22,000 = 273 had to pay 5 shekels each (~ \$10,000 was given to sons of Moses & Aaron) ♦ God sought just compensation for the Levites
Note:	v39. Discrepancy with Levitical Count 6200 + 7500 + 8600 = 22,300, not 22,000 listed in v39 1. This is possibly due to a copyist error with the Gershonites (might be 7200 instead of 7500) 2. Or, the additional 300 might be the 1 st born of the Levites, who would not be tallied to redeem the 1 st born of the 12 tribes (Talmud tradition)
4:1-49	Levites Had an Early Retirement Plan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • vv3, 23, 30. Levites worked in their fields of service from 30-50 years of age (25-50 for the priests, 8:24) • Note. Due to the diminished number of Levites during Hezekiah's reign and following the Babylonian captivity, the minimum age for Levitical and priestly service was dropped to 20 2Chron 31:17; Ezra 3:8
High pressure job led to early retirement after only 20 years of service (Num 4:3, 23,30,35)	Levites Had to be Committed to and Meticulous in Their Duties or They DIED <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If they didn't wear the right underwear Ex 28:42,43 • If they failed to wash their hands and feet Ex 30:21 • If they looked at the holy artifacts Lev 4:20, Num 18:3 • If they sacrificed wrong Lev 10:1-2 • If they had a wardrobe malfunction Lev 10:6 • If they left the tabernacle too early Lev 8:35; 10:7 • If they drank alcohol while on duty Lev 10:9 • If they wrongfully entered the holy of holies Lev 16:2 • If they failed to put the incense on the fire Lev 16:13 • If they offered less than the best Num 18:32 • and for the High Priest, if his bells didn't tinkle Ex 28:35 Note: The retirement age for priests was extended to 30 years after the Babylonian Captivity because there were not enough of them who were 30-50 years of age Ezra 3:8



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5:1-10	Special Instructions for Tough Situations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> vv1-4. Unclean and sickly individuals were segregated from the healthy – Was this the smart 'Christian' thing to do? What would be the short term & long-term society effects by moving someone with a potentially contagious disease away from everyone else? vv5-7. Those who stole or damaged someone else's property were to repay it back with 20% penalty. Is this good/fair/equitable justice? What would our society look like if we implemented such a system?
5:11-31	The Spirit of Jealousy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> vv11-31. Drink a special cocktail mix of "holy water" and "tabernacle dirt". Could we use a truth serum like this today? Do we have anything that comes close? Yes, the polygraph! This Jealousy law would make the women of Israel watch against giving cause for suspicion. On the other hand, it would also hinder the cruel treatment of a husband such suspicions might occasion. It would also hinder the guilty from escaping, and the innocent from coming under just suspicion (source. <i>Matthew Henry Concise Commentary</i>)
6:1-27	The Vow of the Nazarite <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This needs a lesson all to itself to look at the Nazarite aspects, the reasons, the purpose, and benefits In brief, it was a vow of separation from the world and devotedness to religious services for a limited time God takes vows seriously, so we should think through and chose our words and commitments carefully whether we commit to serve in the church, to commit to a loan, or commit to a marriage ♦ Ecc 5:2. For God is in heaven and you are on the earth; therefore, let your words be few ♦ Ecc 5:4-5. When you make a vow to God, do not be late in paying it; for He takes no delight in fools. Pay what you vow! It is better that you should not vow than that you should vow and not pay ♦ Ps 15:4. But who honors those who fear the LORD; He swears to his own hurt & changes not; (in other words, a godly man will keep his commitment even if it is costly to him)
7:1-89	Anointing and Consecration of the Tabernacle <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A unique 12-day ceremony was initiated to consecrate the Tabernacle Each tribe brought the same 4 offerings – 1 silver dish and 1 silver bowl both filled with fine flour mixed with oil (grain offering); 1 gold pan full of incense, 1 bull, 1 ram, 1 male lamb (burnt offering); 1 male goat (sin offering), 2 oxen, 5 rams, 5 male goats, 5 male lambs (peace offering) The combination of the grain, burnt, sin, and peace offerings conveyed the Israelites fully recommitted themselves to God's service, fully repented of their sinful ways, fully relied on God for all their needs, and fully restored their fellowship with God
8:1-26	Commissioning of the Levites as Redeemers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> vv6-7. The Levites were shaven head to toe to fully cleanse themselves (this reflects how sin should be fully removed from our lives so we can commit ourselves to something more worthy) v11. The Levites became a wave offering – the best of the best offerings reserved for God's special service – they were washed, they were cleansed, they were made pure, and they were committed to do their best

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9:1-5	Time to Observe the Passover/Feast Unleavened Bread <ul style="list-style-type: none">An institution is established – 1st of 3 annual feasts																				
	Possible Correspondence of the Passover to the Atonement																				
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9:6-8	Damned if We Do, Damned if We Don't <ul style="list-style-type: none">If these unclean men were to keep the Passover they would have been cut off/ostracized from the rest...and if they did NOT keep the Passover, they would have suffered the same fateThey were eager to do what was right – so they sought godly direction.....Do we seek godly direction?																				
	Passover Exceptions <ul style="list-style-type: none">God is flexible – Mercy & Grace often trump processesThe Law was a precursor to the New Covenant where “we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter” Romans 7:6v13. God allows Exceptions – not Excuses<ul style="list-style-type: none">Those who violate the Passover will be cut off!																				
9:14	One Statute for All <ul style="list-style-type: none">Acts 10:34-35 Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: but in every nation he that fears Him, and works righteousness, is accepted with himThe Jews were to treat converts as family – Being prejudiced against other believers was not allowed																				
9:15-23	The Tabernacle Cloud of Fire <ul style="list-style-type: none">This cloud by day & fire by night was 1-of-a-kind eventConsider other miraculous aspects of the Exodus:<ul style="list-style-type: none">Their clothing did not wear out and they suffered no ill effects from the long marches..... Deut 8:4God either altered the 2nd law of thermodynamics so nothing wore out or He reapplied a restorative law that once existed during the time of Adam & Eve and will occur again in the Millennium Isaiah 65:22																				

CONCLUSION/APPLICATIONS

- God is meticulous with detail, though many times we don't get it
- Good laws allow for righteousness, justice, and mercy to prevail, and they help protect the weak while creating a healthy society
- Also, good moral laws only make sense in a logical world – else, chaos, tyranny, and injustice reign
- Is there room for skeptics to doubt the Exodus even happened? YES! God doesn't force anyone to believe. He gives evidence for our faith to be based on substance & not feelings

NEXT WEEK:

Numbers 10-12. The Passover – a feast for all, plus it was time to pack up everything & move more than 2M whiners.

