

# NUMBERS

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## Numbers 1

On this episode of Kids Bible Breakdown, we're starting a new book and we're breaking down Numbers Chapter 1. And what could be more fitting than starting the book of Numbers with a census?

The LORD spoke to Moses in the tent of meeting in the Desert of Sinai on the 1st day of the 2nd month of the 2nd year after the Israelites left Egypt. He told Moses to take a census of the whole Israelite community. Each tribe was to count and write the name of every man over the age of 20 that was able to fight. God told them to get one leader from each tribe to help.

Story pause- Many times before a nation would go to battle, they would take a census to see what size army they had to work with. We're going to hear more about this in another story. Another thing to know to avoid confusion is the Bible refers to the 12 tribes of Israel, but the 12 tribes change depending on the subject. For instance, when discussing the tribes according to the sons of Jacob, we have the original 12 tribes in order of their birth. They were: Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Dan, Naphtali, Gad, Asher, Issachar, Zebulun, Joseph, and Benjamin.

However, when discussing how the land was divided up by tribes, things changed. We learned earlier that God said the Levites would not be assigned a portion of the Promised Land. But we also learned that right before Jacob died, Joseph brought his two sons to Jacob, and Jacob blessed them and claimed them as his own saying that they would receive a portion of the land. So when discussing the 12 tribes that were assigned a portion of land, we drop Levi and Joseph and we add Joseph's sons, Ephraim and Manasseh instead.

The chapter goes on to list the 12 men from the 12 land tribes that were selected to help take the census. These men were the heads of their clans of Israel. The men that were 20 years or older and able to fight:

In the clan of Reuben equaled 46,500.

In the clan of Simeon- 59,300.

In the clan of Gad- 45,650.

In the clan of Judah- 74,600.

In the clan of Issachar- 54,400.

In the clan of Zebulun- 57,400.

In the clan of Ephraim, one of Joseph's sons- 40,500.

In the clan of Manasseh, Joseph's other son- 32,200.

From the clan of Benjamin- 35,400.

From the clan of Dan- 62,700.  
From the clan of Asher- 41,500.  
And from the clan of Naphtali- 53,400.

In total, there were 603,550 people. That's a pretty good size army! And that's just the men over 20 that could fight.

The men from the tribe of the Levi were not counted along with the others because God assigned them a different job. Instead, the Levites were in charge of the tabernacle, everything that belonged to it and the camp around it. Every time the tabernacle was moved, the Levites were to take it down and set it back up again. Anyone else who approached the tabernacle would be put to death. And while all the other tribes were to set up their tents divided into their own camps and divisions, the Levites were to set up their tents around the tabernacle to be a buffer and mouthpiece between God and the Israelite community, and because they were responsible for maintaining the tabernacle and the covenant law.

And the Israelites did all this just as the LORD commanded Moses.

I found it odd God wanted Moses to take a census. I mean, sure! It's a logical way to kick off a book that's all about numbers, but what was the point? As stated earlier, typically a census was taken prior to going into battle. And they were about to head towards the Promised Land where they were warned that they should run all the people out of the land. But we just heard in Leviticus that God could make people flee without anyone even chasing them! So God doesn't need any army, much less a big one! But then I started thinking... Maybe God actually had them do it for the Israelites' and for our benefit. Look at how many people there are! That helps show us how powerful our God is! Only a powerful God could free that many people from Egypt and supply what was needed to keep them alive in the desert! Or maybe He did it just to help the Israelites understand that He expected them to go into battle, even though He had assured them the victory. Or it could be because He wanted to provide the Israelites with a log of all the men because of what is going to occur later in the book. No matter what the reason, I appreciate that God provided us a book with His word, full of information, that helps us learn more and more about our amazing God.

## Numbers 2

On this episode of Kids Bible Breakdown, we're breaking down Numbers Chapter 2.

In the last chapter, God assigned leaders to each tribe and had them take a census. In this chapter, God gives the Israelites details on the way that they are suppose to arrange themselves in camp.

As we heard in the last chapter, the tent of meeting was to be in the middle of the camp and the Levites were to completely surround it. Then the other 12 tribes, also called divisions in this chapter, were to camp around them in a specific order. The 12 tribes were divided into four camps with one tribe being the lead.

To the east of the tent of meeting, the divisions of the camp of Judah were to encamp; their appointed leader was Nahshon. The tribe of Issachar was to camp next to them and their leader was Nethanel. After them was the tribe of Zebulun being led by Eliab. In total, the number of men in the camp of Judah was 186,400. When the people were to move or set out, the camp of Judah was to lead the way.

To the south of the tabernacle was to be the divisions of the camp of Reuben. The leader of the tribe of Reuben was Elizur. Next to them was the tribe of Simeon and their leader was Shelumiel. After them was the tribe of Gad; Eliasaph was their leader. The men in the camp of Reuben totalled 151,450. This camp was to set out second, behind the camp of Judah. Then, if they were setting out, the tent of meeting along with the Levites were to follow the camp of Reuben so they would be in the middle of the caravan. But when they were in camp, the divisions of the camp of Ephraim were to set up on the west side of the tabernacle. The leader of the tribe of Ephraim was Elishama. Next to them was the tribe of Manasseh with Gamaliel as their leader. Next to that tribe was the tribe of Benjamin. Their leader was Abidan. The men in the camp of Ephraim totalled 108,100. They were to set out third behind the Levites.

The divisions of the camp of Dan were to be on the north. The leader of the tribe of Dan was Ahiezer. Next to them was the tribe of Asher with Pagiel as their leader. And then was the tribe of Naphtali. Their leader was Ahira. The men in the camp of Dan totaled 157,600. They were to be the last to set out.

This chapter states again that the total number of men able to fight among the Israelites was 603,550 and that the Levites were not counted. The chapter again ends with, "The Israelites did everything as the LORD commanded: that is the way they encamped and that is the way they set out."

Do you remember back in Genesis 48 & 49 where Jacob blesses Joseph's sons and his sons before he died? Reuben got passed over because he was inappropriate with one of his father's wives. Simeon and Levi got passed over because of killing a village full of men to avenge their sister. Then Jacob came to Judah and said,

"Your brothers will praise you, Judah.<sup>[1]</sup>

Your hand will be at the throat of your enemies,  
and your father's children will bow down to you."

And centuries later, look at which tribe leads them all! It's the tribe of Judah! And I don't know if you caught it from the last two chapters, but the tribe of Judah was the largest and the camp of Judah was the largest!

And how about Ephraim, Joseph's youngest son. Jacob crossed his hands to lay his right hand on his head giving the largest blessing to him instead of his older brother. He told Joseph that Ephraim would become greater. And here we learn that Ephraim is the leader of the west camp. I love that God has a plan. Despite everything that took place after Jacob passed, the people becoming slaves, Moses being spared from Pharaoh's awful act only to grow up as an Egyptian and commit murder, then to run away, then to reluctantly come back to be used by God to help free the people from slavery in Egypt, only to have them act defiant and sinfully time after time. And yet here we are, just as God planned. Nothing can alter the course of God's plan. He is in control - always. What an amazing God.

## Numbers 3

On this episode of Kids Bible Breakdown, we're breaking down Numbers Chapter 3.

In the last chapter, we got a census of the 12 land tribes and how they were to camp. This chapter goes into detail about the Levites, which is also the tribe that Aaron and Moses are from.

Aaron had four sons that were appointed priests. Their names were Nadab, Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar. However, we learned that Nadab and Abihu offered a sacrifice in an unapproved way and God did not take kindly to their blatant disregard for His direction, so He killed them. Since they had no sons, Eleazar and Ithamar, along with their father, served as priests during their father's lifetime. Anyone else who approached the sanctuary was to be put to death. God told Moses to bring the tribe of Levi to Aaron to assist him and the whole community by performing duties at the Tabernacle.

The LORD told Moses, "I have taken the Levites in place of the first male offspring born from every Israelite woman." God reminded them that when He struck down the firstborn sons of the Egyptians, He set apart all the firstborn male Israelites, human or animal for Himself, declaring again, "I am the LORD."

The LORD commanded that a census be taken of all the males from the tribe of Levi that were a month old or more. The tribe was broken down into clans that were named after Levi's sons, Gershon, Kohath and Merari.

The clan of Gershon was further broken down into two clans. The total number of males counted in the clans belonging to Gershon was 7,500. They were to camp on the west side, behind the tabernacle with the leader of their families being Eliasaph. This clan was responsible for the care of the tabernacle and tent, as well as the curtains and ropes and everything related to their use.

The clan of Kohath was further broken down into four clans. The number of males in these clans totaled 8,600. The leader of the Kohath families was Elizaphan. They were to camp on the south side of the tabernacle and were responsible for the care of the sanctuary including the ark, the table, the lampstands, the altars, and the articles of the sanctuary that were used for ministry along with the curtains there. The chief leader of the Levites was Eleazar, son of Aaron, the priest. He was over those responsible for the care of the sanctuary.

Next comes the Merari clan and there were two clans that made up the Merari clan. Their males totaled 6,200 and the leader of their families was Zuriel. They were to camp on the north side of the tabernacle. They were to care for the frame of the tabernacle, including the crossbars, posts, tent pegs and ropes, etc.

Moses and Aaron, along with Aaron's sons, were to camp on the east toward the sunrise, in front of the tent of meeting. They were to care for the sanctuary. Anyone else who approached the sanctuary was to be put to death.

The total number from all the clans that made up the tribes of Levi was 22,000.

The LORD told Moses to count all the firstborn Israelite males who were a month old or more and list their names. This number came to 22,273. Back in Exodus, the LORD stated that all the firstborn belonged to God. Instead of God claiming all the firstborn throughout the land, the LORD said that the whole tribe of Levi were to be dedicated to serving Him. So the LORD told Moses that the 22,000 Levites would be dedicated to Him in place of 22,000 first born Israelite males. For the remaining 273 first born Israelites, that exceeded the number of Levites, five shekels were to be paid as a redemption price. That money was to be given to Aaron and his sons. The same principle was applied to the livestock that belonged to the Levites and the firstborn livestock of the rest of the Israelites.

So the clan of Kohath was in charge of caring for articles that were in the Holy Place and the Most Holy Place, also known as the Holy of Holies. But only the priests were allowed to enter the Holy Place and only the High Priest, which was Aaron, was allowed to enter the Most Holy Place, where the ark was and He was only allowed to do that once a year. This chapter actually states twice that if anyone else approached, they would be put to death. So I guess it's a good thing that Aaron and his sons are from the clan of Kohath. Although, clearly this was no coincidence. God always has a plan. And His plan to send His only Son to die on the cross for our sin, is why anyone who accepts that gift, can now approach the throne of God without fear of death and have a personal relationship with our amazing God.

## Numbers 4

On this episode of Kids Bible Breakdown, we're breaking down Numbers Chapter 4.

The LORD tells Moses to take another census of the Levite men, who were from 30 to 50 years old who were to serve at the tent of meeting. The census started with the Kohathite branch. The men from this branch were to care for the most holy things. When the camp was moved, Aaron and his sons were to go in and take down the curtain that shielded the most holy place and place it over the ark of the covenant. Then they were to cover it with a layer of durable leather (which would help protect it), and then a layer of solid blue before putting the carrying poles in place.

Next came the table of the Presence, which they were to spread a blue cloth on and then top with the plates, dishes, bowls and jars used for the drink offerings. The bread that they were instructed to keep on the table was also to remain there. Next they were to spread a scarlet cloth over all of it, then a layer of leather, and then put the carrying poles in place. The lampstand along with all its accessories, was also to be wrapped in blue cloth and then durable leather before transporting, as was the gold altar and all the articles used for ministering. For the bronze altar, they were to remove all the ashes, spread a purple cloth on top, then place all the utensils used for the altar on top of that, and then cover that with a layer of leather before placing the carrying poles.

After Aaron and his sons finished covering the holy furnishings and articles, the Kohathites were allowed to carry the items. Although they had to be careful not to touch any of the holy things or they would die. Eleazar the priest, Aaron's son, was in charge of the oil for the light, the fragrance incense, the regular grain offering and the anointing oil. God stated again that he was to be in charge of the entire tabernacle and everything in it.

In order to ensure the clan Kohathites were not destroyed, God warned Aaron and Moses to make sure the holy things were covered prior to the movers coming in to retrieve them, because if they looked at the holy things even for a minute, they would die.

Next was the Gershonites. They were counted and assigned the task of carrying the curtains of the tabernacle and the coverings of the tent of meeting along with the ropes and all of the equipment used in the service of the tent. All their duties were to be under the direction of Ithamar the priest, also one of Aaron's sons.

The Merarites were also counted and were to carry the frame of the tabernacle including the crossbars, posts, bases, pegs, etc. Each man was to be assigned the specific thing he was to carry and all their work was also under the direction of Ithamar.

After counting the men that were 30-50 years old by their family, the Kohathites totaled 2,750, the Gershonites totaled 2,630 and the Merarites totaled 3,200. At the LORD's command, through Moses, the men were counted and assigned their work.



Did you all notice that this chapter started with and mainly consisted of, discussing work of the Kohathites? Although all the jobs carried out by the Levites were important, the work that the Kohathites were given was a job of honor because they were assigned the Holy things. And once again, Kothan was not the firstborn son of Levi. The theme of the firstborn not always receiving the largest blessing continues. We also learned in the last few chapters that Judah had the largest clan and the clan of Levi was the smallest since they only had 22,000 males who were a month old or more! The next smallest tribe of Jacob's sons was Benjamin's with 35,400 men that were 20 years or older who could fight! That's a big gap! And yet God put both the largest tribe and the smallest tribe in a place of honor.

And although this level of detail does not necessarily make for exciting reading, it does show us that when God wants you to do something, He will tell you exactly what to do. He gave the Levites details right down to the color of cloth that was to be placed on the items! (Which by the way, the blue covered the most holy things while scarlet cloth covered the other holy things.) Now He may not reveal all the answers at once or as quickly as you would like Him too, but He is going to tell you everything you need to know when you need to know it. And if you don't know where God's leading... be still, pray and wait for God to answer. He will always guide you in the correct direction because we have an amazing God.

## Numbers 5

On this episode of Kids Bible Breakdown, we're breaking down Numbers Chapter 5.

This chapter starts by revisiting some of the rules laid out in Leviticus regarding sending anyone with a skin disease or some discharge outside of the camp, so that the camp will not be soiled since God dwells among them there.

The chapter then goes on to talk about how if a person wrongs another person, they are actually being unfaithful to the LORD. The person is to confess their sins and make restitution to the person they wronged, and pay them back in full, plus add another fifth of the value. This too was discussed in Leviticus. However, this chapter adds that if restitution can't be paid to the person who was wronged, and they have no close relative that can't be paid on their behalf, then the restitution payment is to be given to the priest, along with the ram for atonement.

Before moving on, let's discuss the meaning of confession. A lot of times when I hear the term confession, I think about someone committing a crime and then admitting that they did it. That's not the type of confession God is referring to. When we do something that is against God's direction, it is a sin. And God doesn't want us to just own up to the fact that we did it. He wants us to be heartbroken over the fact that we disobeyed Him and truly have a desire to not disobey Him. He wants to ask Him to forgive us and change us so that our hearts and desires will align with His. Many people cry when they admit they did wrong, but I would venture to say that most are crying because they are upset that they got caught, not because they truly feel bad about their actions. God's in the business of seeing and changing hearts. That's what He's after here.

Moving on...

The chapter goes on to discuss how to deal with a potentially unfaithful wife, which is known as the law of jealousy. Now if you're a woman listening to this part, this may be an area you are tempted to shut down and stop listening, but hang in there with me.

The LORD told Moses to tell the people that if a man starts to feel jealous because he thinks his wife might be doing things with another man, that she was only supposed to do with him, he was to take a set amount of barley to the the priest for a grain offering, along with his wife. The priest then does this kind of bizarre ritual with the woman and presents her for judgment to the LORD. During this, the priest has her drink this holy water mixture and if the woman did not do anything wrong, she would be fine. But if she wasn't faithful to her marriage vows, there would be consequences for her sin and she

would be cursed. Her stomach would swell and she wouldn't be able to have children; which we have already discussed, was a pretty big deal back in those days.

Have you ever been accused of doing something that you didn't do by someone in a position of authority and there was no way to prove your innocence? I have... and it down right stinks. You can try to plead with them and tell them they got it all wrong but sometimes, even if they concede, they still have doubts and treat you differently. Back in the day and age this chapter was written and in that culture, women did not have as many rights or the same opportunities as men. So, if a husband felt he no longer trusted his wife, no matter how irrational it might be, the wife could find herself in a really bad situation pretty quickly and there was not much she could do about it in that society. This whole process actually worked toward the innocent woman's favor because it protected her from unsupported growing suspicion and resentment from her husband. And if the woman was guilty and she was not faithful in her marriage vows, well, there are always consequences to sin.

Later in the Bible, God gives more instruction on how a husband and wife are to treat each other in a marriage and it's actually the man who is called to a higher standard. He is to love his wife the way that Christ loved His church. You know, the same church He loved so much that He willingly and selflessly gave His life for. And God still loves us that way today! What an amazing God.

## Numbers 6

On this episode of Kids Bible Break down, we're breaking down Numbers Chapter 6.

The Lord gives more instruction to the Israelites regarding if a man or woman wants to make a special vow to the LORD called the Nazirite Vow. Nazirite comes from the Hebrew word "nazar" meaning to abstain or to choose to stay away from something, or to set oneself apart in a dedication to the LORD.

Typically, a person would choose to take this vow and it could last for as little as 30 days or as long as a lifetime. Although, it was possible for parents to dedicate their children to this vow. During the time of the vow, the person was not allowed to drink wine or any other fermented drink. Which means a drink that has gone through the process of turning into alcohol. They were also not allowed to drink grape juice and eat anything that came from the grapevine. They were not allowed to cut their hair during the entire period of the vow because their long hair was a symbol of dedication to the LORD.

They also weren't allowed to go near a dead body, even if it was their own parent or sibling, because it would make them ceremonially unclean. If someone dies suddenly in the Nazirite's presence, they would be defiled, or made unclean. On the seventh day after the event, they had to shave their head; this was the day of their cleansing. On the next day, the eighth day, they were to bring two doves or young pigeons to the priest at the entrance of the tent of meeting. The priest was to give one as a sin offering and the other as a burnt offering to make atonement because, according to the Bible, the Nazirite sinned by being in the presence of a dead body. That same day, they were to dedicate themselves to the LORD for the same amount of time as before. Then they must bring a one-year-old male lamb as a guilt offering and they must start their dedication period over. The previous days of the vow that they served did not count.

When the period of dedication was over, the Nazirite was to go to the tent of meeting and to present offerings to the LORD. These offerings consisted of a one-year-old male lamb without any flaws for a burnt offering, a one-year-old female lamb without any defect or flaws for a sin offering, a ram without any flaws for a fellowship offering, along with grain offerings and drink offerings and a basket of breads that were made different ways with the finest flour, no yeast and some olive oil. Then the priest was to present these different offerings to the LORD. Next, the Nazirite was to shave their head again and take the hair that symbolized their dedication and put it in the fire for the fellowship offering.

The priest was then to take the boiled shoulder from the ram, along with some of the bread, and perform a wave offering. Everything used in a wave offering is holy and belongs to the priest. After the wave offering, the Nazirite can drink wine again.

This chapter then discusses the priestly blessing which is how the LORD instructed Aaron and his sons to bless the Israelites. It goes like this: “The LORD bless you and keep you; the LORD make His face shine upon you and be gracious to you; the LORD turn His face toward you and give you peace.”

The LORD said the priest will put my name on the Israelites and I will bless them. That is the best blessing ever!

When I first read this chapter, I thought it was really unfair that the Nazirite had to restart their whole dedication period if someone suddenly died in their presence. Can you imagine being on day 99 of a 100-day vow and then someone, through no fault of your own, suddenly dies in your presence?! You would have to start all the way over again... at day one! And not only that! You have to pay for an offering to atone for what was considered YOUR sin even though you had no control over it! But then I thought... That's kind of like what Christ did for us. He was blameless and yet he had to pay the price for things we did. He took on our sin and died on the cross to pay the price for it. But unlike the Nazirite, who I am sure was very upset that they had to start their vow over again, Jesus paid the price willingly! Because He is a gracious, loving and amazing God.

## Numbers 7 & 8

On this episode of Kids Bible Breakdown, we're breaking down Numbers Chapter 7 and 8.

Chapter 7 discusses what occurred after the tabernacle was set up. As we heard before, Moses anointed and consecrated the tabernacle, along with all the furnishings, the altar and the utensils; meaning he set the things apart to be dedicated for the LORD. Then the 12 tribal leaders from the land tribes of Israel, brought gifts before the LORD as an offering. They brought 6 covered carts, one for every two leaders, and 12 oxen, one from each leader. The LORD told Moses to accept the gifts and give them to the Levites to use for their work at the tent of meeting. So Moses gave 2 carts and 4 oxen to the Gershonites, who were in charge of the tent coverings, and 4 carts and 8 oxen to the Meratites, who were in charge of transporting the frame of the tabernacle. The Kohathites, however, did not get any because they were in charge of the holy things that were to be transported by being carried by the men instead of being placed on a cart.

When the altar was anointed, each leader was assigned a day to bring their offerings before the altar for its dedication. One leader a day for 12 days starting with Nahshon, from the tribe of Judah, and then working their way clockwise around the camp. So day 2 was the camp of Issachar, Day 3- Zebulun, Day 4- Reuben, Day 5- Simeon, Day 6- Gad, Day 7- Ephraim, Day 8- Manasseh, Day 9- Benjamin, Day 10-Dan, Day 11- Asher and Day 12- Naphtali.

Each tribe leader brought the same exact offerings which consisted of one silver plate weighing a 130 shekels and one silver sprinkling bowl weighing 70 shekels, both filled with the finest flour mixed with olive oil as a grain offering. They also brought one gold dish weighing 10 shekels, filled with incense, one young bull, one ram and one male lamb a year old for the burnt offering, one male goat for a sin offering, and two oxen, five rams, five male goats and five male lambs a year old to be sacrificed as a fellowship offering. So in total that was, 12 silver plates and 12 silver sprinkling bowls, all filled with the finest flour mixed with olive oil, 12 gold dishes, filled with incense, 12 young bulls, 12 rams and 12 male lambs for a burnt offering, 12 male goats for a sin offering, and 24 oxen, 60 rams, 60 male goats and 60 male lambs as a fellowship offering.

The chapter goes on to say that when Moses entered the Tent of Meeting to speak with the LORD, he heard God's voice from between the two cherubim above the atonement cover of the ark. And he spoke with Him.

In Chapter 8, the LORD commands Moses to tell Aaron that when he sets up the lamps, all 7 were to be arranged so that they lit up the area in front of the lampstand. So Aaron set them up as the LORD commanded. The chapter then gives a quick recap on how the lampstand was made.

The LORD then commands that the Levites be made ceremonially clean and gives instructions on how this is to be done. Moses was to take the Levites and sprinkle the water of cleansing on them. Then the Levites were to shave their whole bodies and wash their clothes. Next, they

were to bring a grain offering of the finest flour and oil and 2 bulls to the front of the tent of meeting. There, the whole Israelite community was to gather and to lay their hands on the Levites. Then Aaron was to present the Levites before the LORD in a wave offering from the Israelites, so that they were ready to do the work of the LORD.

Next, the Levites were to lay their hands on the bulls and use one for a sin offering and one for a burnt offering to atone for them (which means to pay the price for their wrongdoing). Then it states again that the Levites were to stand before Aaron and his sons so that they could present them as a wave offering to the LORD. Everything that was presented in a wave offering was always considered holy. Although, I imagine that was quite an interesting scene! The LORD said the Levites were to be set apart from the rest of the Israelites and they were His. After all this was completed, the Levites were to go to the tent of meeting to do their work.

God reminded them that when He struck down the firstborn of Egypt, He set aside all the firstborn Israelites for Himself, but that He was taking all the Levites, in place of all the first born, so that they could work at the tent of meeting and make atonement for the Israelites so that the Israelites would not be struck down by a plague when going near the sanctuary.

The LORD also reminded Moses that all the Levite men from the age of 25 to 50 were to work at the tent of meeting. However, at the age of 50 the men had to retire from doing their regular service, although they could still assist their brothers in performing their duties. And the people did just as the LORD commanded.

At first, I was a little jealous of Moses. He got to hear the voice of God. Like he actually got to go into a room and have an audible conversation with Him! How cool is that?!? But then I had a second thought... He couldn't approach the throne of God and have a conversation with Him whenever he wanted to. And he had to prepare for that precious little time, so he wouldn't be struck dead. But Jesus prepared the way for us by dying on the cross. So now, we have unlimited access to God! We can talk to Him whenever we want! Not only that, for the times we don't recognize or hear His voice, we have His written word! An instruction manual and love letter so we can know that we are never left in the dark or alone. What an amazing God!

## Numbers 9

On this episode of Kids Bible Breakdown, we're breaking Numbers Chapter 9.

We are about a little over a year out from the Israelites leaving Egypt and slavery and the LORD told Moses to have the Israelites celebrate the Passover according to the instructions He had given them at the appointed time. Which we know was at twilight of the 14th day, of the 1st month, and it was to be a celebration of the final plague the LORD sent to Egypt which killed all the Egyptian first-born sons, but passed over all the Israelite households that were covered in the blood of the lamb. Moses instructed the people to do as the LORD had commanded. But some of the Israelites came to Moses and Aaron upset because they had become ceremonially unclean because they had been in the presence of a dead body, so they were not allowed to participate in the Passover celebration.

Moses told them to hold tight and he would see what the LORD had to say on the situation. The LORD told Moses to tell the people that if they were unclean because of a dead body or away on a journey during the Passover, they may still celebrate the Passover, but they were to celebrate it at twilight on the 14th day of the 2nd month. On that day, they were to eat the lamb and unleavened bread together, being sure not to break any of the lambs bones or leaving any of it until morning. They were to also follow all the other regulations the LORD gave them for celebrating the Passover. But the LORD goes on to warn that if a person is ceremonially clean and in town, they are to celebrate the Passover at the appointed time or suffer the consequences and be cut off from their people.

I heard Tera Leigh Cobble explain it like this... If a close family member has a birthday, you don't get a pass on celebrating or acknowledging their birthday just because you decided you don't really want to that day. And if you happen to come down with an illness that day, you might delay celebrating their birthday, but you better celebrate it at some point, or there are probably going to be some not-so-great consequences. That's kind of what the LORD was saying about the Passover; if they were able to celebrate it at the appointed date... they better. But if they couldn't celebrate it at the appointed time because of certain circumstances, they were to celebrate it at a later date.

God then shows that His love extends to more than just the Israelites by saying that any foreigners who wanted to celebrate the Passover were welcomed to join, but they were expected to follow the same rules and regulations just like the rest of His people.



The chapter goes on to say that on the day the tabernacle was set up, a cloud covered it and during the night, the cloud appeared as fire. Every time the cloud settled over the tabernacle, the Israelites would encamp for as long as the cloud remained. But when the cloud lifted, the Israelites would set out and travel to wherever the cloud led them. This is the way the LORD commanded the Israelites as to when they were to set out and when they were to encamp.

Can you imagine always having a visible sign from God to lead you!? You would never have any doubt about whether you were exactly where God wanted you to be! Although, to tell you the truth, I don't think it would be much different than the way God directs us today.

Sometimes we aren't exactly sure what God's will is and sometimes it's abundantly clear what God's will is, we just aren't really thrilled to do it. I bet it was the same for the Israelites. For instance, how many days do you think they waited before completely unpacking? I wonder if there were times where they looked at the cloud and said to each other, "Does that look like it's settling in to you? Should I unpack the dishes or is this just a rest stop and we should just live out of our suitcase for now?" I bet you God's will wasn't always 100% clear to them regardless of having a visible cloud. And I bet there were times that some of them decided, "Ok, well the cloud hasn't moved so we better encamp," and then they started to unpack and get everything in place just in time to see the cloud start moving again. It had to be kind of frustrating never knowing when you were moving! Can you imagine it being the day before a big celebration you had been planning, like a wedding, when you see the cloud start to lift?! How many times do you think the Israelites saw the cloud move and thought to themselves, "Oh you have got to be kidding me?! This is horrible timing!"

But God uses the unknown to test His people's faith in Him and His timing is always perfect, whether we recognize it or not. It was true back then and it's true today. It kind of makes me think of a time when I was leaving work and I was in a hurry to get home because I was supposed to meet up with my family for a celebration. The person driving in front of me stopped at a stop sign, but when I say "stopped", it felt like he stopped there, pulled out a sandwich from somewhere, had a little picnic and maybe some dessert and watched a movie before proceeding. Okay.... That's probably a bit of an exaggeration, but he was definitely sitting there for a lot longer than the law required him to. And I was irritated! Until a few moments later when a truck blew right through a stop sign at a high rate of speed and didn't stop until it crashed into something - hard! Then I realized that person in front of me, who I was so irritated by, was actually a blessing placed there by God. Because if they hadn't been in my way, I would have been right in the path of that truck.

God used that situation to show me that regardless of how I feel about a situation, He has perfect timing and He knows what has been, what is, and what will be. So even if I don't ever see the impending doom that He just saved me from, I should stop whining and trust that He's leading me down the right path in His perfect timing. I wish I could say that I always take the time to stop whining and trust that what I think is bad, is actually a blessing.... But that wouldn't be true. Luckily, our God is also patient and forgiving. What a blessing to have such an amazing God!

## Numbers 10

On this episode of Kids Bible Breakdown, we're breaking down Numbers Chapter 10.

God spoke to Moses and told him to have two trumpets made of silver that the sons of Aaron would use for communicating to the Israelites. When both the horns were blown in a long blast, the Israelites were to gather at the Tent of Meeting. If only one trumpet was blown, the heads of the Israelite tribes were to gather. They also used the trumpets to sound an alarm, which meant the tribes on the east side were to set out. When the next alarm was blown, the tribes on the south would set out, and so on.

They were also instructed to sound the trumpet alarm when they were going to battle so that God would remember them and save them from their enemies. Other times they were told to blow the trumpets were at the appointed feasts, at the start of every month and over the burnt offerings and peace offerings.

On the 20th day of the 2nd month of the 2nd year, the cloud lifted from the tabernacle and the LORD commanded the Israelites to set out for the first time. They left the wilderness of Sinai and followed the cloud to Paran where it settled.

The chapter states that when they set out, they did so in the order the LORD had instructed them. It then goes on to remind us of that order as well as the leaders of each tribe. The whole caravan was led by those carrying the Ark, followed by the tribe of Judah led by Nahshon, then the tribe of Issachar, led by Nethanel, the tribe of Zebulun came next led by Eliab. When the tabernacle was taken down, the Gershonite Levites, who carried the tent coverings, and the Merarite Levites, who were responsible for the frame of the tabernacle, set out.

Next in the progression was the tribe of Reuben, led by Elizur, then the tribe of Simeon led by Shelumiel, followed by the tribe of Gad, led by Eliasaph. Next was the Kohathite Levites, who were in charge of carrying all the holy things. They were in the middle of the caravan for protection and behind the other Levites so that the Tabernacle could be set up before their arrival with the holy things. Behind them was the tribe of Ephraim, led by Elishama, then the tribe of Manasseh, led by Gamaliel, followed by the tribe of Benjamin, led by Abidan. Then came the last set of tribes that were camped to the north of the Tabernacle; they set out and were to guard the rear of the caravan. These consisted of the tribe of Dan, led by Ahiezer, then the tribe of Asher, led by Pagiel, followed by the very last tribe, Naphtali, which was led by Ahira.

The chapter then tells us about a conversation Moses had with one of his in-laws, named Hobab. Moses tells him that they are heading out to go to the place that God has promised them and asks him to go with them. Hobab says that he is going to go back to his own land. But Moses makes another plea to him asking him to come with and stating that however God chooses to bless the Israelites, he will also receive the same blessings if he goes with them.

The chapter continues by saying that they set out from Mount Sinai on a three-day journey and they were guided by the cloud to go to their new resting place, with the Ark leading the way. And whenever the ark set out, Moses said, "Arise O LORD and let your enemies be scattered, and let those that hate You flee before You." And when the ark rested, Moses said, "Return O LORD to the ten thousands, thousands of Israel."

I love that the LORD watches out for His people! He even gives them instructions on effective ways to communicate! Which again, until not too long ago, the vast majority of all these people have been enslaved their entire lives! So all these details of how to live in a free society are really important!

It also might be a good time to mention that this book, that we refer to as Numbers, is often called, "In the Wilderness" in Hebrew. Mainly because it discusses the time that the Israelites were wandering in the desert. Which kind of makes it sound like they were lost and aimlessly roaming around. Especially since the journey from Egypt to the Promised Land would only have taken about a week, but here we are, a little over a year out and they are still in the desert. Although we know they weren't lost because we just recently read that God led them. So clearly, they were still in the wilderness because that's where God wanted them and for the time being at least, the Israelites had the good sense to follow the instructions given to them by their and our, amazing God.

## Numbers 11

On this episode of Kids Bible Breakdown, we're breaking down Numbers Chapter 11.

The chapter starts with stating that the people complained about how hard they felt things were and when the LORD heard them, He became angry and sent fire that burned among them and burnt up some of the outer portions of their camp. The people started crying to Moses. So once again, Moses prayed to the LORD and the fire died down. That place was called Taberah, which means burning, because the fire of the LORD burned among them there.

Now you would think the people would be on their best behavior for a little bit. But you would be wrong, because the next sentence said that the rabble with them (which means a rowdy crowd) began craving meat and the Israelites started to whine again saying all kinds of craziness like, "Do you remember all the fish and vegetables we ate back in Egypt at no cost?!" Ya know... When they were slaves. But now they were crying that they lost their appetite because all they ever see is this manna! As a reminder, manna was the bread like flakes that God gave them fresh every day to gather. But they were to only gather enough for that day and anything left over would rot.

The Bible goes on to say that Moses heard the people of EVERY FAMILY wailing at their tents and the LORD's anger grew and Moses became troubled, but not because of the LORD's growing anger at the selfish and delusional Israelites, Moses was troubled because he had to deal with these people. So Moses asked God, "Why have you brought this trouble on your servant? What have I done to displease you that you have put the burden of all these people on me? Then Moses gets a little sarcastic with God saying, "Did I help make all these people? Are they my kids?" Which clearly they are not all his children. So then Moses says to God, "If they are not my kids, why do you expect me to carry them like small infants to the land that You promised their family a long time ago?" Then he asks God, "Where am I supposed to get meat for all these people?" Moses continues by saying, "I can't deal with these people all by myself." Then he basically tells the LORD, "If this is the way you are going to treat me, just kill me now."

Once again, God shows how amazingly patient He is. He tells Moses to bring 70 Israelite leaders and officials to the Tent of Meeting to stand with him. Then the LORD says He will come down and speak with Moses. The LORD said He will take some of the power of the Spirit that is on Moses and put it on them and they will share the burden of the people so that Moses does not have to carry it all alone.

Then God addresses the people saying that they are to consecrate themselves to prepare for the following day when they would eat meat. The LORD said He has heard their comments, about how they wished they had meat to eat and how things were better off in Egypt. The LORD wanted them to know that He was not happy about their attitudes, so He was going to give them meat to eat, but not just for one day... he was going to give them so much meat for an entire month that it would be coming out of their nostrils and they would grow to hate it because they had so much of it. He said that their whining was really a rejection of Him, even when He cared about them so much that He was living among them. Moses, who was still talking to God, forgot who he was talking to for a minute and said, "There's 600,000 men here! And you say you're going to give them meat for a whole month? How is that going to happen? Is there even enough fish in the sea to feed this many people?" God replied, "Did you forget what I'm capable of? Wait for it Moses..."

So Moses went and told the people what the LORD said. Then he gathered the men as the LORD instructed. The LORD did as He said He would and put some of the power of the Spirit on the men and they began prophesying (Which means to tell of things that were going to happen in the future). But the men never did it again after that time. However, two of the elders were still in the camp. The LORD knows everything so He knew these two were to be included with the 70 even though they didn't make it to the tent on time, so the Spirit rested on them as well and they also began prophesying in the camp. A young man came to tell Moses what the men were doing. Joshua, who we had heard about before and had been Moses' aid since he was a young boy, said, "Moses my lord, stop them!" But Moses replied, "Are you jealous for my sake? I wish that all the LORD's people were to be prophets and that the LORD would put His Spirit on all of them!" WOW! That statement says so much about Moses! And then Moses and the Elders went back to camp.

Then a wind came from the LORD. It drove quail into the camp. The birds were scattered and piled three feet deep all around the camp and for a day's walk in every direction. That's A LOT of birds! The people gathered quail all day and night and all into the next day. Each person gathered like a ton of birds! LITERALLY! Thousands of pounds of birds! And as the meat from the birds were still in their teeth, the anger of the LORD burned against them and He struck the people with a plague. They called that place Kibroth Hattaavah, which means "graves of craving", because that is where they buried the people who craved other foods. The chapter ends by saying from there the people traveled to Hazeroth and stayed there.

This is one of those chapters that when I read it, I thought, "Oh man! I like meat! I may have been in some trouble if I was in that situation!" And although that might still be

true, this whole situation wasn't really about meat. Once again, it was about their hearts. We just heard a couple chapters ago about how many animals these people sacrificed for the grand opening of the Tabernacle. And not every animal was fit to be used for sacrificial purposes. So these people had meat. So what's with all the whining and all the absurdities about wishing they were back in Egypt? Good question. And one I don't really have an answer to. But I can speculate. Maybe the meat they had wasn't the meat they wanted. Or maybe they were just mad because they didn't eat meat as often as they wanted to because they did have to set some aside to use as sacrifices and they didn't like that. They also mentioned not being able to eat vegetables like they did in Egypt. And this one makes more sense to me because if you are traveling, it makes it a little more difficult to grow and harvest crops. But when it comes right down to it, these people were upset because they were out there with God and had to do what God said when really, they just wanted to do what they wanted to do. And God knew that. He knew the real issue was not wanting meat, it was the fact that they didn't want Him. And that's why it evoked God's righteous anger. After all, Moses was whining and even told God to just kill Him, and God showed patience and mercy to him because his heart was still in the right place.

Speaking of Moses... That response he gave about wishing everyone had the LORD's Spirit! These people have just been a complete pain! They cry and whine to him so much that he tells God just to kill him because they are too much for him! Which is also a pretty amazing statement because I would have probably prayed that God would strike them down! Not me! And although when someone is irritating me, I might say they need more Jesus. I don't know that deep in my heart, I really long for them to have the Spirit of the LORD like Moses wanted for these people. But he's right! That's what everyone needs! More Holy Spirit! Can you imagine how wonderful things would be if all of us had the common goal of doing God's will and looking out for each other instead of ourselves?! That should be our ongoing prayer! That all of us develop and continue to deepen in a personal relationship with the LORD and become more and more like our amazing God.

## Numbers 12

On this episode of Kids Bible Breakdown, we're breaking down Numbers Chapter 12.

Remember how in the last chapter, the Israelites were making Moses' life difficult? Well things are about to get a lot closer to home. Moses' sister and brother, Miriam and Aaron, the high priest, began to talk out against Moses because of his Cushite wife. Today, Cushitic speaking people are mainly in what is known as the Horn of Africa. So Moses' wife was most likely from the area known as Somalia or Ethiopia.

The chapter states that Moses was a very humble man. It actually says he was "more humble than anyone else on the face of the earth." But Miriam and Aaron seem to have a bit of a jealousy streak because they start saying, "Has the LORD spoken through Moses? Hasn't He spoken through us too?" Of course, the LORD heard the conversation and immediately called Moses, Aaron and Miriam to come to the Tent of Meeting. So they went, and the LORD came down in a pillar of cloud, stood at the entrance to the tent of meeting and called Miriam and Aaron forward saying "Listen to My words." I'm pretty sure I would be shaking so badly, I probably wouldn't even be able to walk.

Then the LORD said, "When there is a prophet (someone who speaks the LORD's will and plans to the people on the LORD's behalf) when there is a prophet among you, I (the LORD) reveal myself in visions and speak to them in dreams. But this is not true of Moses; he is faithful and I speak to him face to face; Moses sees the form of the LORD." Then the LORD says, since clearly Moses is my man, "Why were you not afraid to speak against my servant?"

The LORD's anger burned against them and He left them. And when the cloud lifted, Miriam's skin became leprous and white as snow. Leprosy was a terrible disease. It slowly ate away at the skin and was painful. To make matters worse, it was contagious and basically meant a slow and painful death. So anyone with leprosy was immediately cast out and lived in isolation or with other leopards, struggling to survive until they died. When Aaron turned to her and saw that she had been diseased, he turned to Moses and begged him to not hold their foolish sin against them and not let this awful thing happen to their sister. .

I think it's interesting that Aaron said this to Moses and not God. But I guess it's like when you have to ask dad for something, but you know dad is not thrilled with you or the situation, so you go to mom and ask her to go to dad on your behalf because you know dad likes mom... so he's more likely to concede if mom asks and not you.



And Moses, being the humble man he was, didn't say to Aaron and Miriam, "Well you all shouldn't have messed with me!" But instead, he reflected God's love and mercy and he cried out to the LORD and asked God to heal her.

The LORD responded, "If her father had spit in her face, would she not have been in disgrace for seven days?" Back then, if someone did a shameful act, they would receive the ultimate insult of being disgraced by being spit on and then would be excluded for seven days. So God is saying, even if her earthly father spit on her because of some shameful behavior, she would be in a seven day time out to think about her actions. So God, once again showing an abundance of mercy, said that Miriam was to be sent to live outside the camp for seven days, but she could be brought back after that, which means she would be healed. God also did not have the people move on until she was brought back, but once she returned, the people left Hazeroth and encamped in the Desert of Paran.

Look at what these last few chapters have taught us about God. We have a just God who has the power to control nature and illness and everything else! And instead of using it against us, He fights our battles for us and shows us love and mercy! That is a God who is worthy of all our praise because He is an amazing God!

## Numbers 13

On this episode of Kids Bible Breakdown, we are breaking down Numbers Chapter 13.

The LORD commanded Moses to send some men to explore the land of Canaan, the Promised Land that He was going to give the Israelites. Moses was to send one man from each one of the land tribes. Now bear with me, because once again we have a long list of names, so I am likely to butcher it, but we are going to give it our best shot. The men that were sent as the LORD commanded were:

Shammua from the tribe of Reuben,  
Shaphat from the tribe of Simeon,  
Caleb from the tribe of Judah,  
Igal from the tribe of Issachar,  
Hoshea (Who Moses named Joshua) from the tribe of Ephraim,  
Palti from the tribe of Benjamin,  
Gaddiel from the tribe of Zebulun,  
Gaddi from the tribe of Manasseh,  
Ammiel from the tribe of Dan,  
Sethur from the tribe of Asher,  
Nahbi from the tribe of Naphtali,  
And Geuel from the tribe of Gad.

Moses told them to go through the Negev and on into the hill country; see what the land was like and if the people there were strong or weak, few or many. He also told them to find out if the land is good or bad, what kind of towns they lived in and if they are unwalled or fortified (which means protected). He also wanted them to find out if the soil was fertile or bad for growing and if there were trees. He instructed them to bring back fruit from the land if they could. It happened to be grape season and who doesn't enjoy some nice juicy grapes.

So the men went to explore the land and took the path from the Desert of Zin (which was located on the border of Canaan) as far as Rehob toward Lebo Hamath, then through the Negev and came to Hebron where some of the descendants of Anak lived. These people were known to be large and strong. When they reached the Valley of Eshkol, they cut off a branch that had a single cluster of grapes on it. It was so large, that apparently, they had to carry it on a pole between two men! They also took some pomegranates and figs.

And after 40 days, the men returned from exploring the land and came back to Moses and Aaron and the whole Israelite community at Kadesh in the Desert of Paran. They showed everyone the enormous grapes and told them that the land flowed with milk and honey! BUT the people who lived there were powerful and their cities were big and fortified. Then they reported all the enemies they saw: the descendants of Anak that lived in Hebron, the Amalekites that lived in the Negev, the Hittites, Jebusites and the Amorites that lived in the hill country, and the Canaanites that lived along the sea and the Jordan river. Basically saying, "Yeah, it's good land, but we got a lot of really strong enemies there!" But Caleb silenced the people and said, "We should go up and take possession of the land, for we can certainly do it!"

But the men who went with him (minus Joshua) said, "Are you crazy?! We can't attack those people! They are stronger than we are!" So they started to spread lies about the land to the Israelites saying the land they explored destroys all those who live in it. And how the people there were huge and were Nephilim (which we learned back in Genesis are believed to be the children of demons). They told the Israelites that they looked like grasshoppers compared to them. So in summary, they reported that if they tried to go take the land God had promised them, they would all be squashed like bugs.

I think this chapter shows us what a huge responsibility it is to lead others and how important it is to lead them well. As Peter Parker's (AKA Spiderman) uncle said, "With great power comes great responsibility." Now what I'm about to say may seem like I'm insulting Moses' leadership. I'm not. I do not envy his position and I would not have even lasted a day. Hard pass on that whole situation. But I couldn't help but notice when he told them to go explore the land, He didn't just say, "Go explore all the ways this land that God is giving us is awesome and come back to tell us all that we have to look forward to when God runs all of them out of the land and gives it to us!" He said, "Report back if the people are strong or weak, many or few, if their cities are fortified or not." To me, that puts doubt in the people's mind right from the get go! Like if God told you He would take care of it, just like He took care of the Egyptians without the Israelites having to fight, why does it matter if the people are big and strong with big fortified cities? Maybe what their leader said led their minds down the wrong path. Then again, maybe the whole point was to see if the people had enough of their own faith to trust that God would do what He said He would.

Unfortunately, even after everything these people have seen God do, it's really sad that they didn't have more faith. But the really great news for me and you, is that despite their lack of faith and failures, God still loved them and called them His. Glory to God for that! Because as easy as it is for me to judge them, I have more in common with them

than I would like to admit. But Praise be to God for loving me anyways. What an amazing God!