

# NUMBERS: Introduction

Numbers gets its name from the census lists in its first few chapters, but most of the book is a welcome return to narrative. God has given the law in Leviticus, and this book tells the story of the rest of Israel's journey toward the Promised Land.

The journey should have been relatively short, but Israel's rebellion and disobedience would lead to a long period of wandering in the wilderness. The events of Numbers span about 40 years.

Because it is a journey narrative, it is best to think about the organization of Numbers geographically:

**Numbers 1:1–10:10** — Preparation to leave Mt. Sinai

**Numbers 10:11–12:16** — Journey to Kadesh

**Numbers 13–19** — At Kadesh

**Numbers 20–21** — Journey to Moab

**Numbers 22–36** — At Moab

Here are a few guiding ideas to help you as you travel along with the Israelites through the book of Numbers:

- Numbers gives a pretty negative portrayal of the people of Israel. Notice how their **sin and rebellion** highlight the need of all people for salvation.
- Watch how Israel's sin draws attention to the **unfailing faithfulness of God**. And what other truths about God do you notice?
- As you read, think about the **theme of "wilderness."** How does God interact with His people when they are in a period of wandering and waiting? How does that personally encourage you?