**NUMBERS**

The week of 09/10/20

The next section of our Walk Through the Bible is the Book of Numbers.

**Here’s what you need to KNOW:**

The Book of Numbers gets its name from the national censuses that occur in chapters 1-4 and, 38 years later, in chapter 26.

In Hebrew tradition, an alternate name for the book was “In the Desert” which is a good description of its contents, as the book describes 38 years of Israel’s 40-year journey in the wilderness toward their promised national homeland.

There is a fair amount of material in the book that is similar to the books of Exodus and Leviticus as there are sections that deal with the nation’s laws and religious life.

An emphasis in Numbers is the cruddy attitude of the people toward God. Even though He had dramatically saved them from their Egyptian slavery and given them hope for the future, the people constantly responded with indifference, ingratitude, and rebellion. As a result, God determined that the generation that was counted in the first census would live out the rest of their lives in the desert. It was only their children, those counted in the second census, that would experience entry into the Promised Land. It’s safe to assume that the hardships of the desert made the generation that entered the promised land a tougher, hardier stock than their parents.

**Key OBSERVATIONS –**

Be sure to note how hard this whole experience was on Moses. Moses was God’s chosen leader but it was a really difficult task.

Moses had to deal with many external threats as other nations kept attacking the Israelites, trying to block their path to their new homeland in Canaan.

Moses had to deal with the low morale, disrespect, murmuring, complaining and outright rebellion of the people. He often had to deliver unpopular messages to people who didn’t want to hear it. At times, he was required to be an agent of confrontation and judgement on behalf of the Lord. He also had to lead the people through the consequences of their poor choices.

Moses also had much trouble with his leadership team. Moses was the younger brother the main ones who assisted him in his responsibilities, Aaron and Miriam. Yet, it was Aaron who assisted the people in their idolatry by making the golden calf at Sinai. And, in chapter 12, we see his siblings talking behind his back, plotting to undermine and usurp his authority.

Moses also had trouble with the broader group of leaders. After the spies returned from scoping out the Promised Land to see what they were going to up against, 10 of the 12 spies led a rebellion. The 10 convinced the people that their God-commanded instruction to enter the land was too dangerous. The group got so riled up that they were getting ready to kill Moses and Aaron with stones. It was only the direct intervention of the Lord that kept that from happening (14:10).

Finally, there was the personal disappointment Moses experienced when God told him that he would not be allowed to personally enter the Promised Land (20:12).

So, Moses had a lot of trouble fulfilling his God-given assignment to lead the people. However, the experience also came with the privilege of having profound personal experiences with God and being the agent of a great many miracles. In fact, aside from Jesus, Moses is unequaled in the experience of being the conduit of God’s miraculous power. The record of Moses’ unprecedented access to God and the ways in which God used Moses to accomplish supernatural outcomes are littered throughout Exodus, Leviticus, and Numbers.

**GET GOING!**

**Continue your personal journey through the Bible by taking a hop, skip and a jump through the Book of Numbers.**