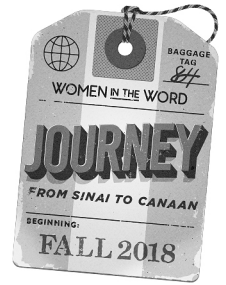


## Women in the Word Numbers 1

September 6, 2018



1. Think of a specific trip you took this summer or in the last few years. Where did you go? Describe your preparation for this trip.
2. This semester we will be studying the journey of the Israelites from Mt. Sinai to Canaan, the land God had promised them. This journey takes place in the Book of Numbers. Have you ever studied this book of the Bible?

What comes to mind when you think of the Book of Numbers?

3. The first verse in Numbers gives us the setting for the beginning of Israel's journey. Read Numbers 1:1 and answer the following questions.

Who is speaking?

To whom is He speaking?

Where is He speaking?

When is He speaking?

What happened one month before this? Read Exodus 40:1-2.

4. Read Numbers 1:2-3. What does God tell Moses to do?

Describe all the things you "number" or count when you prepare for a trip.

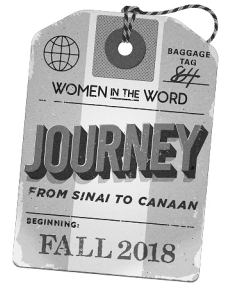
5. Read Numbers 1:3 again and find one reason for this census.
6. Read Numbers 1:4-16 and list the 12 men (one from each tribe) who will assist Moses and Aaron in taking the census.

Discuss how preparation and organization for a trip can be helpful.

7. Read Numbers 1:47-54. Which tribe is not included in this census? What is their role to be in the camp?
8. What is one thing you learn about God from this first chapter of Numbers, and how might knowing this make a difference in your relationship with God?

## Women in the Word Numbers 4–6

September 13, 2018



1. In the Scriptures, the word “holy” describes something or someone that is set apart, sacred, consecrated, pure, morally blameless. What do you think it means to be a holy nation or people, “set apart” by God? Read Deuteronomy 7:6 and 1 Peter 2:9-10.
2. In Numbers 4, God gives specific instructions for transporting the Tabernacle, also called the Tent of Meeting, and all its furnishings whenever the camp of Israelites moves. Read Numbers 4:1-20 and describe the census that Moses and Aaron take in verses 2-3.

Where will the sons of Kohath serve according to verses 3-4?

Who will actually prepare the furnishings for the move?

The furnishings of the Tabernacle include the ark of the testimony, the table of the bread of the Presence, the lampstand and the golden altar. Choose one of these furnishings and describe how it is prepared every time the camp moves.

3. If the sons of Kohath had an employee manual, what would be the most important instruction in the manual according to Numbers 4:15, 17-20?

How does the care taken with the furnishings or *most holy things* of the Tabernacle reflect reverence for a holy God?

4. In Numbers 4:21-28, the sons of Gershon are also given responsibilities for moving the Tabernacle. How do their responsibilities differ from those of the sons of the Kohathites?

5. The final responsibilities for transporting the Tabernacle go to the sons of Merari in Numbers 4:29-33. What part of the Tabernacle will be entrusted to them?
  
6. Although each of these clans has a different responsibility and service, they all play a vital role in moving the Tabernacle. How does this reflect the different but important roles believers play in the local church today? Describe some of the different roles undertaken by believers in the church.
  
7. Numbers 4, with its instructions for moving the Tabernacle, is a reminder that God Himself dwells in the midst of the Israelites. In order to maintain the holiness of the camp in which God dwells, Numbers 5 gives guidelines for personal holiness among the Israelites. Read Numbers 5:1-4. What instructions are given to maintain physical cleanliness?

How does maintaining your physical health influence your spiritual well-being? Give some examples.

How would these guidelines for physical ailments and contact with the dead be part of God's protection for His people Israel?

8. Personal sin disrupts relationships and creates disharmony in any community. What steps are individuals to take in Numbers 5:5-10 to address personal sin?

According to verse 6, what happens to our relationship with God when we sin against others? Read Psalm 51:3-4 and Isaiah 59:2.

9. Read Numbers 6:1-8. Although the Levites were singled out by God to serve in the Tabernacle, others could choose to dedicate themselves to God's service through a Nazarite vow. Record the commitments made when taking the vow of a Nazarite.

Most Nazarite vows were taken for a specific period of time. Read Numbers 6:13-20. What change in physical appearance described in verse 18 signals completion of the Nazarite vow?

In our culture, how does separating yourself from worldly pursuits help you draw near to God?

What are some things in your life that you could forego in order to spend more time with God?

10. Read Numbers 6:22-23. What ways does God engage with His people according to the priestly blessing of Numbers 6?

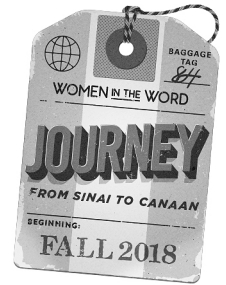
How are you encouraged as you read this blessing?

11. Read 1 Peter 1:16. Just like the Israelites, as God's people, holiness should be important to us. As you think back over these three chapters, what does your heart speak to you about your personal pursuit of holiness as a follower of Christ?

12. Write out a personal prayer request in one or two sentences to share with your small group.

## Women in the Word Numbers 7–9:1-14

September 20, 2018



1. Share some of your favorite ways to serve God. Remember that we all serve the Lord throughout our day, even if it's not an official ministry!
2. The people of Israel had been generous in giving to the construction of the Tabernacle, also known as the Tent of Meeting. Now at its dedication the people were called to be generous again by contributing to the Tabernacle's ministry and maintenance. Read Numbers 7:1-3. Who brought their contributions to the Lord at this time?

Why would these particular offerings be important as the time drew near for the Tabernacle to travel with the Israelites?

3. What was on God's mind as He accepted this contribution? Read Numbers 7:4-5.

Summarize how Moses responded to God's command from Numbers 7:6-9.

Remember that the tribe of Levi was the priestly tribe, set apart as special servants to God. What important Tabernacle responsibility do we observe that God has given the Levites?

4. Read Numbers 7:10-11. Each leader from the 12 tribes of Israel came to bring their offerings one at a time for 12 consecutive days for the dedication of the altar. Each offering was the same. Read about the first day of offerings in Numbers 7:12-17. What words come to mind regarding the contributions of the tribes?

5. Please read each of the following verses and record the name of the chief and his tribe who willingly brought their offering to the Tabernacle.

v. 12 -

v. 48 -

v. 18 -

v. 54 -

v. 24 -

v. 60 -

v. 30 -

v. 66 -

v. 36 -

v. 72 -

v. 42 -

v. 78 -

6. Read Numbers 7:84-88 to see the final amount of combined gifts. Pick *one* of these following topics and explain how we can apply the events of Numbers 7 to our lives: leadership, unity, obedience, faith or sacrifice.

7. Read Numbers 7:89 along with Exodus 33:11a. How might Moses' special time with God connect with the dedication events that preceded it? Also read Psalm 119:97-104.

In what ways has obedience in your life affected your communication with God?

8. Read Exodus 25:31-40 to be reminded of the construction of the Tabernacle lampstand. In Numbers 8:1-4 God ordered the seven lamps of the lampstand to be lit as part of the dedication of the Tabernacle. Read these verses and visualize this scene. What does God's use of a lampstand reveal about His character and His grand plan for His people then and today? Also read Christ's words in Matthew 5:14-16.

9. Before we look at the cleansing of the Levites, read Numbers 8:14-19 to understand God’s calling for the tribe of Levi. If you were an employer looking to hire a Levite, what would you want to see on their résumé?

We can see that the Levites were to be living sacrifices as Paul describes in Romans 12:1-2. Read this passage. What does it mean in your life to be a living sacrifice to God?

10. Read God’s cleansing of the Levites in Numbers 8:5-13. Make a summarized list of the actions taken to dedicate the Levites to the Lord.

A wave offering to the Lord implies saying, “Here Lord, this is Yours.” What part did the people of Israel play in offering the Levites as servants to the Lord?

11. Israel was commanded to celebrate Passover as a reminder of how God delivered them from bondage in Egypt. Read Exodus 12:1-14 to read God’s command before Israel’s deliverance. Read God’s further instructions in Numbers 9:1-14. What can we learn about God from these verses? What can we learn about Moses?

12. There are some wonderful visuals in these chapters in Numbers that we can apply to our own lives. In what ways are you being:

A giver to God like the chiefs of each tribe?

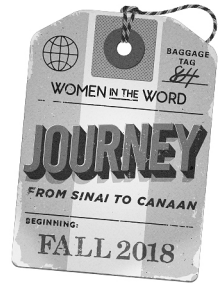
A lampstand for God like the light that lit the Tabernacle?

A wave offering to God like the Levites?

13. Write out a personal prayer request in one or two sentences to share with your small group.

## Women in the Word Numbers 9:15–10:35

September 27, 2018



1. Numbers 9:15 begins after the Israelites have received instructions for the priests and Levites. The only remaining information needed was how God would lead them to the Promised Land. Read Numbers 9:15-17 and describe how God would direct His people to move.

The cloud gives the people a visible sign and symbol of God's presence. Read Exodus 40:34-35 and record one aspect of God's character that is seen in the cloud.

Imagine moving through a vast desert land with this visible and miraculous sign of God's presence. What other characteristics of God would you experience?

2. Read Numbers 9:18-23. There is one true commander of these people: Who is it and what repeated phrase makes that abundantly clear?

Make a list of the different lengths of time that the cloud might remain over the Tabernacle. According to verses 22-23, how did the Israelites respond in every situation?

Have you ever had to wait indefinitely for something good? What helps you exercise patience and trust when you have to wait for some longed-for thing?

3. Read Numbers 10:1-7, where God prescribes the use of trumpets. Verses 3-4 describe the summoning of the people. Describe the two different trumpet blasts and the different responses they should command.

Verses 5-6 describe the alarm to break camp and move out. Record how the people were to respond to these alarms.

4. Read Numbers 10:8-10 and list the additional occasions when trumpet sounds will be used.

How might blowing a trumpet in each of these events remind the Israelites of their God?



5. God gave direction through the cloud and the trumpet blasts, but the people had to freely choose to obey. Read the following verses and write down the benefits of obeying God.

Luke 6:46-49

John 15:9-10

Share with your group an experience in your life when your obedience resulted in a blessing from God.

6. The long-awaited journey begins in Numbers 10:11-13! Read these verses and Numbers 10:14-28, which describe their movement in six well-ordered stages. From the verses below, record the tribes in each group and what, if anything, they carry. Each tribe of Israel will be referred to either by their *standard*, *camp* or by *the tribe of the people*.

vv. 14-16

v. 17 (these Levites are described by their family name)

vv. 18-20

v. 21 (these Levites are described by their family name)

vv. 22-24

vv. 25-28

As you consider this traveling arrangement, remembering that this exact order was prescribed by God, what do you notice that is wise? What is efficient?

7. Read Numbers 10:29-32. In verse 29 Moses doesn't name their destination, but how does he describe it?

What does he express about God?

8. Trusting in God's promises provides hope for Moses and for us today. Read the following verses and record the promises that we can trust during our own journeys.

Psalm 103:11-12

John 14:1-4, 16-17

Share with your group a specific promise of God that you have relied upon in your own life.

9. Look at Numbers 10:29-32 again. Hobab was Moses' gentile in-law. As Moses encourages Hobab to stay with the nation of Israel, what assurances does Moses give him?

Look back at God's original promise to Abraham and the nation of Israel in Genesis 12:2-3 and note who benefits besides the nation of Israel.

Imagine some specific blessings Hobab might experience by staying with Israel.

10. God still intends to bless the world through His people. Consider and share with your group how God's people spread God's blessing in the world today.

Think of your own sphere of influence. Prayerfully consider and write down specific ways you might bless someone who is not yet in the family of God.

11. Read Numbers 10:33-36. What does Moses request of God as they set out?

What does he request of God when they rest?

What can we learn about God from these prayers?

12. Prayerfully and reverently reflect on God's abiding presence in your life. What are the benefits, emotions, blessings that you experience in His presence?

13. Write out a personal prayer request in one or two sentences to share with your small group.

## Women in the Word Numbers 11-12

October 4, 2018



1. After camping near Mt. Sinai for almost a year, God has instructed the Israelites to set out on their journey through the wilderness. According to Numbers 10:33-34, how many days would they travel and what would God use to guide them?

Read Numbers 11:1-3. Imagine a three-day journey through the desert without modern conveniences. Describe the hardships the Israelites would have endured over those three days.

Which of those hardships would have been the most difficult for you? Please explain.

2. Read Numbers 11:1-3. How did the Israelites respond to their hardships?

How did the Lord respond to the Israelites?

3. Read Numbers 11:4-9. Who are the *rabble* traveling with the Israelites and why might they have had strong cravings for other food? Refer to Exodus 12:33-38.

In Numbers 11:7-9, how would the Israelites prepare the manna? Who is providing the manna?

What additional information do you learn about manna in Exodus 16:31?

4. Continue by reading Numbers 11:10-15. What stands out to you as you read Moses' petition to the Lord?

How did Moses' response to hardship differ from the Israelites' response to hardship?

How are we to handle our hardships according to the following portions of Scripture?

Philippians 4:6

1 Thessalonians 5:18

5. Read Numbers 11:13-15 along with verses 16-23. In verses 13-14, what two problems did Moses take to the Lord?

Briefly describe how the Lord answered each of Moses' requests.

How does Moses reveal both belief and unbelief in verses 21-22?

Consider verse 23. What is the meaning of God's words to Moses? Look at Matthew 19:26 for insight.

6. Recall a recent time when difficult circumstances revealed both your belief and your unbelief in God's ability to help you. What helped you overcome your unbelief?
7. Numbers 11 closes with the Lord providing meat for the Israelites in a miraculous way. Read verses 31-35. Each person gathered roughly 65 bushels of quail. What does this show us about the attitude of the Israelites?

Shortly after the Israelites left Egypt, God told Moses He would rain bread from heaven to feed them each day. Read Exodus 16:4. What reason does God give Moses for sending the manna each day?

According to Numbers 11:33-35, what happened to the Israelites who craved something other than what God desired for them?

8. As you read through these verses, you see how they gathered the meat, the amount of meat they gathered and how they prepared the meat. What seems to be missing? Read Psalm 9:1 and Ephesians 5:20.

9. Read Numbers 12:1-9. In your own words, describe the interaction between Aaron, Miriam and Moses.

What do you think motivated Miriam and Aaron to question Moses' authority as the leader of Israel? Look at James 3:16 and Galatians 5:26 for insight.

10. In Numbers 12:4-9, God stepped in and defended Moses against the accusations made by Aaron and Miriam. What does God say about His servant Moses?

11. Finish by reading Numbers 12:10-16. How does God punish Aaron and Miriam for their accusations against Moses?

Read Leviticus 13:45-46. What would the diagnosis of leprosy mean to Miriam? How might her leprosy also be a punishment to Aaron as well?

Instead of seeking vindication, how did Moses respond to Aaron and Miriam's punishment? What does this tell you about the character of Moses?

12. As you think back over God's different interactions with Moses and the Israelites in Numbers 11 and 12, what truths about God stand out to you? Please explain.

13. Write out a personal prayer request in one or two sentences to share with your small group.

## Women in the Word Numbers 13–14

October 11, 2018



1. Think about your everyday life. Is there something in God's Word that you find hard to *truly* believe or to *live* as though you believe it? Please share.

Why do you think this is a struggle?

2. Read all of Numbers 13 and 14. Look back at Numbers 13:2. What criteria did God give Moses for choosing the men who would explore the land?

Why might each of these two criteria be important?

3. Read Numbers 13:17-33. God set aside land specifically for His chosen and beloved people. What do you imagine that land to have looked like?

Read Exodus 3:7-9. God spoke these words about two years prior to the exploration expedition. How did the spies' report compare to what God said He would give to His people?

Given their report, what kind of reaction would you expect from both the spies and the Israelites?

4. Look back at the way the spies describe both the *people* and the *land* they explored in Numbers 13:28-33. Jot these words down.

What do these subjective words reveal about the state of mind of the spies? Why do you think this was their thinking?

5. Read and reflect on Psalm 46:1-2, Psalm 112:6-8 and Proverbs 29:25. What do you learn about fear and trusting God in these verses?

6. Read Numbers 14:1-4 and summarize the situation.

Now read Exodus 1:8-14 and record what life in Egypt had been like for the Israelites.

Think through everything you know about the Israelites. Why, in this moment, might they have wanted to go back into a life of slavery?

Can you relate to what Israel is experiencing? Please explain.

7. Read Numbers 14:5-10. Upon what truths do Caleb and Joshua stand as they strive to lead Israel to trust God's plan?

What is the significance of God's appearance at that exact moment in verse 10? How is that an encouragement to you?

Like Israel, we can be overtaken by sudden fear and have trouble trusting God. How do you or how can you in the future believe God's Word and trust Him even in the face of fear?

8. Read Numbers 14:11-19. What motivates Moses to reject God's offer to begin a new nation?

On what characteristics of God does Moses base his plea for the forgiveness of his people?

9. Read Numbers 14:20-38. Although God does offer forgiveness for the Israelites' great sins, there were tragic ramifications as a result. List these for the following groups of people:

Those who saw God's glory yet disobeyed -

Their children -

The 10 spies who brought back the bad report -

Why do you think God took Israel's lack of trust so seriously?

10. Look again at Numbers 14:24, 38 along with Deuteronomy 28:1-5 and Proverbs 13:13. Joshua and Caleb stood alone in their desire to trust and obey God, which resulted in deep conflict with those around them. Describe how *God* responded to the faithfulness of Joshua and Caleb.

Based on the example of Caleb and Joshua, along with all of the Scripture you know, what can those who trust and obey God expect from Him?

What can you do now to prepare yourself to stand firm for God in the face of possible future opposition?

11. Read Numbers 14:39-45 as we conclude this pivotal story in the book of Numbers. Unfortunately, Israel ignores God's command. What were the reasons the people should not try to take the Promised Land according to verses 42-44?
12. Think back over the saga of Numbers 13–14. What is one truth or lesson from these chapters that will remain with you? Why?
13. Write out a personal prayer request in one or two sentences to share with your small group.