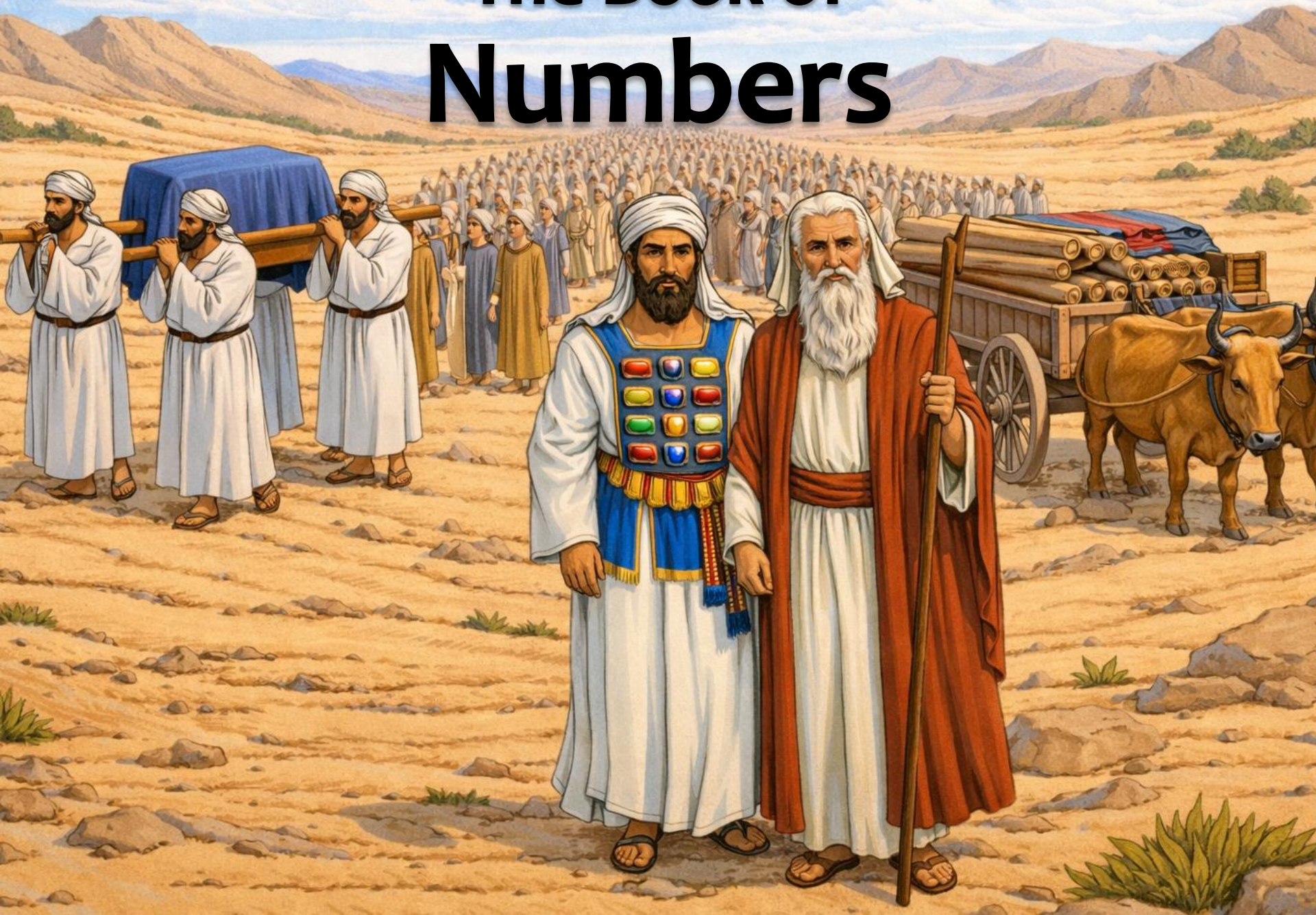
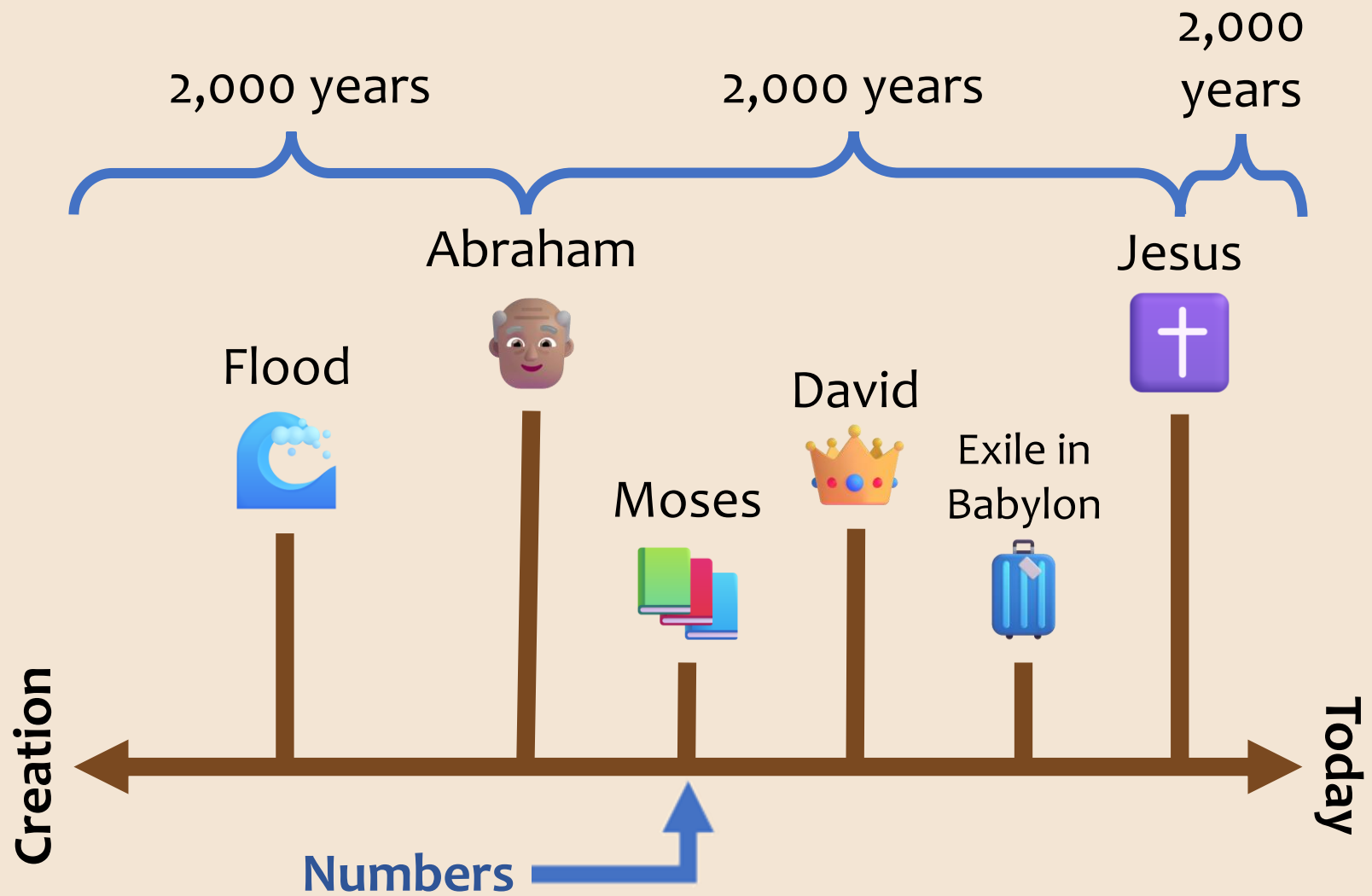


The Book of Numbers



Bible timeline



Summary

The book of *Numbers*

• In the Wilderness

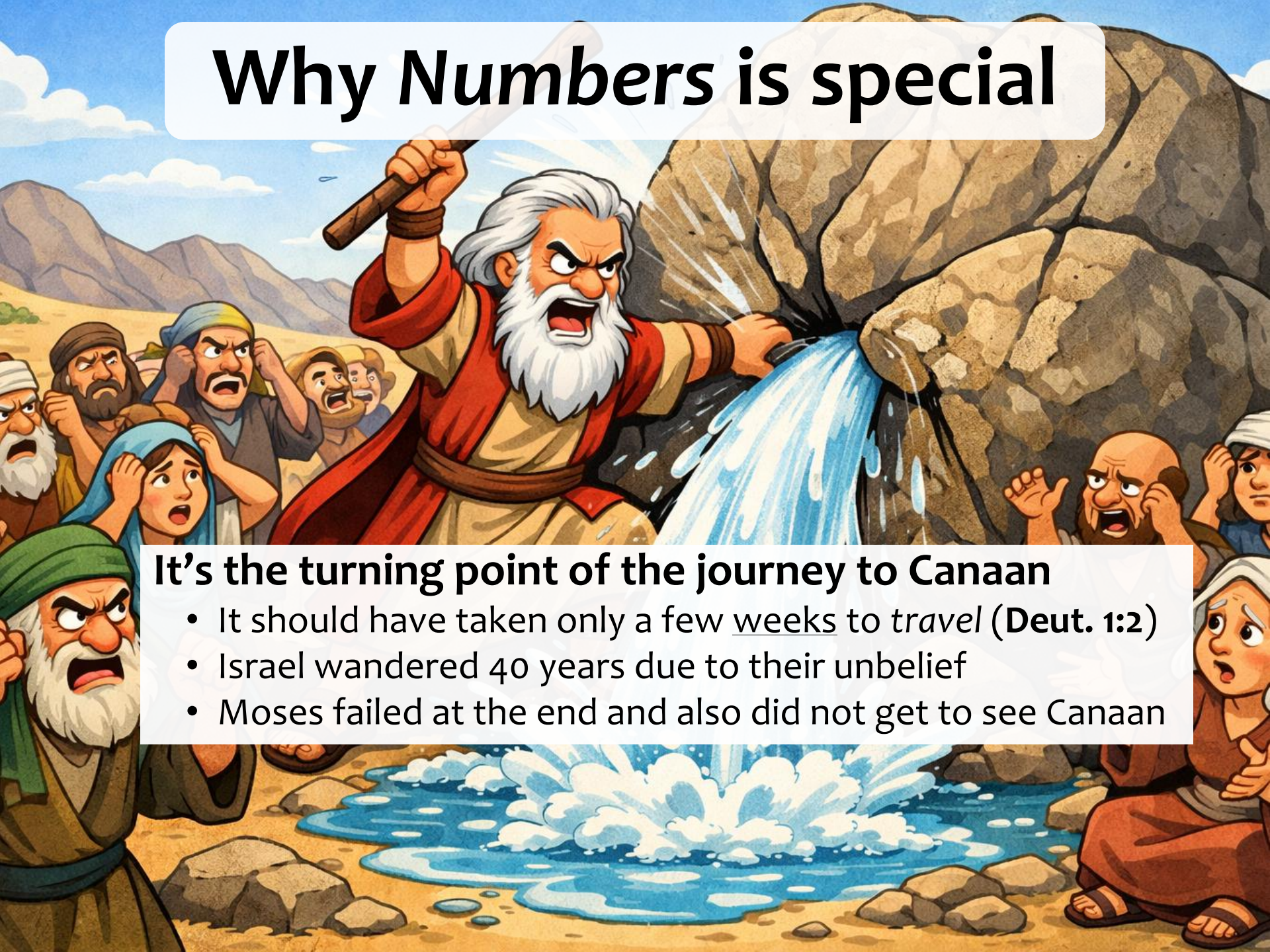
- This is the original name of the book
- And a very good description of it
- This is the only book about the wandering in the wilderness
- Stories you may know
 - 12 spies
 - Israel complains
 - Korah's rebellion
 - Balaam and the donkey
 - Bronze serpent
 - Moses hits the rock
- What there is little of
 - Numbers



Why Numbers is special

It's the turning point of the journey to Canaan

- It should have taken only a few weeks to *travel* (Deut. 1:2)
- Israel wandered 40 years due to their unbelief
- Moses failed at the end and also did not get to see Canaan



Main characters

- 🧔 Moses
- 🧔 Aaron
- 🔥 Levites
 - Priests' servants
- 🐎 Balaam →
- 😡 Korah
- 🧔 🧔 Joshua and Caleb
 - The only *adult* survivors of the wilderness



Outline of *Numbers*

- **Year 1 (plus a month): chapters 1-10** **Mt. Sinai**
 - (First) census
 - Priestly laws and ceremonies
- **Years 2-39: chapters 11-20** **Wilderness of Paran**
 - 12 spies; Israel punished with 40 years of wandering
 - Miriam and Aaron oppose Moses
 - Korah and crew opposes Moses and Aaron
 - Moses hits the rock and forfeits chance to go to Canaan
- **Year 40: chapters 21-36** **Plains of Moab**
 - Bronze serpent (and plague of serpents)
 - Defeat of Og and Sihon (land east of the Jordan)
 - Balaam and Balak (and the donkey)
 - Second census
 - Plans for their new homeland

Where do those dates come from?

- **Numbers 9:1** marks "the first month of the second year after they had come out of the land of Egypt" (NASB)
- **Numbers 10:1** is not long after, "In the second year, in the second month, on the twentieth day of the month" (NASB)
- In **Numbers 20:28**, Aaron dies.
 - Why is that relevant?
 - **Numbers 33:38** specifies that Aaron died "in the fortieth year after the people of Israel had come out of the land of Egypt" (NASB)
- Put that together and it means chapters 10-20 cover at least 38 years

Theology and doctrine

- Christ is seen in the book of *Numbers*
 - **John 3:14**, “And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up”
 - **1 Corinthians 10:4**, “for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ.”
 - **Numbers 24:17**, “A star shall come forth from Jacob, A scepter shall rise from Israel”
 - (All quotes from KJV)
- Israel’s and Korah’s rebellions are remembered
 - **Psalm 95:7-11** reminds of Meribah and disobedience
 - **Hebrews 3:7-19** riffs on Psalm 95
 - **Jude 11** cites Balaam and Korah as warnings

Recap of the book of *Numbers*

- **Overview**

- In the wilderness

- **Why it is special**

- It's the turning point of the journey to Canaan

- **Main characters**

- Moses
 - Aaron
 - Levites
 - Balaam
 - Korah
 - Joshua and Caleb

- **Outline**

- Year 1: chapters 1-10
 - Years 2-39: chapters 11-20
 - Year 40: chapters 21-36

- **Theology and doctrine**

- Christ is seen in the book of Numbers
 - John 3:14
 - 1 Corinthians 10:4
 - Numbers 24:17
 - Israel's and Korah's rebellions are remembered
 - Psalm 95:7-11
 - Hebrews 3:7-19
 - Jude 11

12 Spies Sent to Canaan

Numbers 13-14



Summary

12 spies sent to Canaan

- God commands that 12 people from Israel to do recon in Canaan
 - Meaning: to spy out the land they are about to invade, and bring back a report of the geography, people and resources
- It's scary there
 - Joshua and Caleb believe God can lead them to victory
 - The other 10 do not, and convince the nation also. As a result...
- They whole nation must wander for 40 years and die in the desert
 - Only Joshua and Caleb will survive (and any kids)








Why this story is special



- It is the moment when Israel seals its fate
 - Hundreds of thousands of people will die on the way

Main characters

-   **Joshua and Caleb**
 - Two of the 12 spies
 - They trust in God to deliver everyone
-  **Ten other spies**
 - Think they are all going to die
-  **Israelites**
 - Think they are all going to die
-  **Moses**
 - Pleads to God to not kill everyone immediately

Outline

1. Spies chosen: one per tribe (13:1-16)
2. Moses gives instructions (13:17-20)
3. The spies go out and report back (13:21-29)
4. Caleb is confident, but his companions are afraid (13:30-33)
5. The nation gives up... on everything (14:1-4)
6. Joshua and Caleb plead with the nation and are almost killed for it (14:5-10)
7. The LORD is going to start over with a new nation (14:11-12)
8. Moses begs God not to (14:13-19)
9. God agrees but promises the punishment: 40 years of time in the wilderness and the adults will die before the end (14:20-38)
10. Israel “repents” by going into Canaan, against the command of Moses, and is defeated (14:39-45)

In case you missed it

- Joshua the spy is THAT Joshua
 - A book of the Bible is named after him
 - Led Israelite warriors to defeat Amalek (**Exodus 17**)
 - Went on the Mountain of God with Moses, and was not involved with golden calf (**Exodus 24:13-14**)
 - Was “the assistant of Moses from his youth” (**Numbers 11:28** ESV)
 - Chosen to replace Moses as leader of Israel (**Deuteronomy 3:28**)
- Joshua was originally named *Hoshea*
 - Moses changed his name (**Numbers 13:16**)

Theology and doctrine

- Was God really going to kill everyone – before Moses interceded?
 - Moses seems to have thought so (**Numbers 14:15**)
- Possibly it is a test, in the same way that Abraham was asked to kill Isaac
 - Why kill the son that God had promised as an heir?
 - But Abraham believed God could raise him from the dead (**Hebrews 11:19**)
- Similarly, if the nation was wiped out, it would also seem to violate certain prophecies
 - Like kings from Judah (**Genesis 49:10**)
- But God can always find a way (**Hebrews 7:13-14**)

Recap of the Twelve Spies

- **Overview**

- Two spies believe Canaan can be conquered, but the others convince the nation that they are all doomed

- **Why it is special**

- It is the moment when Israel seals its fate

- **Main characters**

- Joshua and Caleb
- Ten other spies
- Moses
- Israelites

- **In case you missed it**

- Joshua is the famous Joshua (warrior and Moses' successor)

- **Outline**

1. Spies chosen
2. Instructions
3. Spies go and report
4. Caleb believes; others are afraid
5. Israel gives up
6. Joshua and Caleb plead
7. God wants to start over
8. Moses begs Him not to
9. God relents but punishes
10. Israel goes anyway and is defeated

- **Theology and doctrine**

- Was God really going to kill everyone?

Poem: Psalm 136

His Steadfast Love Endures Forever

- 26 times it says, “His steadfast love endures forever” (at the end of every verse!)
- Verses 16-22 relate to the book of Numbers
- Six sections:
 - Give thanks to God (vs. 1-3)
 - God created the world (vs. 4-9)
 - God delivered Israel out of Egypt (vs. 10-15)
 - God defeated kings in the wilderness (vs. 16-22)
 - God cares for the needy (vs. 23-25)
 - Give thanks to God (v. 26)