

# Numbers 33 Commentary

PREVIOUS Numbers: Journey to God's Rest-Land by Irving Jensen- used by permission

NEXT

Source: Ryrie Study Bible

THE BOOK OF NUMBERS "Wilderness Wandering"								
WALKING Numbers 1-12			WANDERING Numbers 13-25			WAITING Numbers 26-36		
Counting & Camping Nu 1-4	Cleansing & Congregation Nu 5-8	Carping & Complaining Nu 9-12	12 Spies & Death in Desert Nu 13-16	<a href="#">Aaron</a> & Levites in Wilderness Nu 17-18	Serpent of Brass & Story of Balaam Nu 21-25	Second Census 7 Laws of Israel Nu 26-30	Last Days of Moses as Leader Nu 31-33	Sections, Sanctuaries & Settlements Nu 34-36
Law & Order			Rebellion & Disorder			New Laws for the New Order		
Old Generation			Tragic Transition			New Generation		
Preparation for the Journey: Moving Out			Participation in the Journey: Moving On			Prize at end of the Journey: Moving In		
At Sinai <a href="#">Mt Sinai</a>			To <a href="#">Moab</a> <a href="#">Mt Hor</a>			At <a href="#">Moab</a> <a href="#">Mt Nebo</a>		
En Route to <a href="#">Kadesh</a> (Mt Sinai)			En Route to Nowhere ( <a href="#">Wilderness</a> )			En Route to <a href="#">Canaan</a> (Plains of Moab)		
A Few Weeks to 2 Months			38 years, 3 months, 10 days			A Few Months		
Christ in Numbers = Our "Lifted-up One" (Nu 21:9, cp Jn 3:14-15)								
Author: <a href="#">Moses</a>								

**Numbers 33:1** These are the journeys of the sons of Israel, by which they came out from the land of Egypt by their armies, under the leadership of Moses and Aaron.

- **by their armies:** Ex 12:37,51 13:18
- **under the leadership:** Jos 24:5 1Sa 12:8 Ps 77:20 Mic 6:4
- [Numbers 33 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## THE ITINERARY OF THE NATION OF ISRAEL

**Four Divisions of Numbers 33 - 41 Stages in 40 years.**

1. Egypt to Sinai (Nu 33:1–15),
2. wilderness wanderings (Nu 33:16–36),
3. Kadesh to Moab (Nu 33:37–49) ([See excellent map](#))
4. Final orders for Canaan (Nu 33:50–56).

**Irving Jensen** (EvBC-Nu) summarizes the journey as follows...

- Nu 33:1–15: the marches from Egypt to Sinai
- Nu 33:16–36: 21 encampments from Sinai to Kadesh (encampments of Nu 33:19–36 are those of the 37 years of wandering)

- Nu 33:37–49: from Kadesh to the Jordan

**Jensen** applies this chapter noting that "One impression cannot escape the student who has followed the account of Numbers up to this point, that is, the long-suffering grace of God in preserving a people as He had originally promised, through all the experiences of this vast number of places. Even so, the rest-life which the Christian may enjoy in this life depends ultimately on the same grace of God, who offers to give such happy living to His own children." (EvBC-Nu)

**Ronald Allen** (EBC) has some interesting thoughts on this chapter...

We may conclude from these factors the following:

1. The recording of the list was done by the hand of Moses at the command of the Lord (v.2).
2. The listing thus should be taken seriously as an accurate reprise of the stages of the journey, despite our difficulty in locating many of the sites today.
3. The numerical factor of forty sites between Rameses and the plains of Moab suggests some styling of the list, which helps to account for the inclusion or exclusion of some sites.
4. As in the case of genealogies in the Torah, not all the factors of ancient significance may be apparent to the modern reader.
5. Ultimately the record is a recital of faith in the Lord's blessing over his people for the extended period of their desert experience. Although certainly not without geographical importance, the listing of the stages of Israel's experience in the desert is fundamentally a religious document, a litany of the Lord's deliverance of his people.

**Warren Wiersbe** - this chapter is more than a list of places; it's a testimony to the sovereignty of God in dealing with His people. **Dr. A. T. Pierson** said, "History is His story." It is good to review the past and discern the hand of the Lord at work. God delivered them from Egypt and brought them to Sinai, where they entered into a covenant with Him (Nu 33:1–15). Then He brought them to the border of the Promised Land, where they refused to go in (Nu 33:16–36). They wandered for forty years and then ended up on the plains of Moab (Nu 33:37–49). Unbelief means wasted time, wasted lives, and wasted opportunities, but God is gracious and long-suffering with His people. (In his commented "Be Counted" Wiersbe adds "God doesn't just write history; He plans history and sees that His plan is executed. "The counsel of the Lord stands forever, the plans of His heart to all generations" (Ps. 33:11NKJV). When Israel didn't permit God to rule, then He overruled. Israel lost the blessing but God achieved His purposes. No difficulty was too great for God. He opened the Red Sea to let His people march through, and then He closed it and drowned the pursuing Egyptian army. When His people were in danger, God gave them victory over their enemies. When they were thirsty, He supplied water, and each morning He rained manna from heaven to feed them." )

**These are the journeys of the sons of Israel, by which they came out from the land of Egypt by their armies** In this chapter of journeys, Moses reviews the past record of the nation after God had delivered them from Egypt. As we come to the end of this chapter, we find the travelogue brings us to the plains of Moab opposite Jericho in preparation for going into the Promised land.

**under the leadership of Moses and Aaron** - Under the leadership is literally "under the hand (yad)" where "hand" in OT speaks of power and/or authority. Note not just Moses but also Aaron. Why Aaron? One answer is that Aaron spoke for Moses at times. Another is that Aaron was the high priest so he led the nation spiritually.

#### Related Resource:

- For more detail see [G.I. Davies, "The Wilderness Itineraries: a Comparative Study," Tyndale Bulletin 25 \(1974\): page 46-81](#)

**Rod Mattoon** - This chapter is a record of the journey over the past 40 years. It shows that God noted and recorded the steps that the people took. Beloved, rest assure that God is taking note of our steps too.

1. God numbers our steps.

Job 14:16—For now thou numberest my steps: dost thou not watch over my sin?

2. Our steps are ordered and directed by our Lord.

Psalm 37:23—The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord: and he delighteth in his way.

Proverbs 16:9—A man's heart deviseth his way: but the Lord directeth his steps.

3. God's Word influences our steps.

Psalm 119:133—Order my steps in thy word: and let not any iniquity have dominion over me.

4. The Lord gives us confidence and stability in our lives.

Psalm 18:36—Thou hast enlarged my steps under me, that my feet did not slip.

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## **Brian Bell** - REVIEWING THE PAST! (1-49)

### 1. **FROM EGYPT TO SINAI!** (1-15)

2. History is **His Story**. It is good to review the past & discern the hand of the Lord at work.

1. God delivered them from Egypt & brought them to Sinai, where they entered a covenant with God.
2. Israel history meant **knowing why** the past unfolded as it did, so that the present & future could be understood properly.
  1. Each stop along the way proved God's **grace, faithfulness, power, & love**.

### 3. **FROM SINAI TO KADESH!** (16-36)

4. Next God brought them to the border of the Promised Land, where they refused to go in.

5. So really this is a record of **ineffectual marches**. A number of **halting-places**.

1. They recall **journey's**, that they never needed to take.
2. Journey's of criss-crossing the desert back & forth.
3. Such is the doom of **unbelief**: to effect nothing, to miss the rest of God, & to perish on the threshold of achievement.
  1. James 1:6 But let him ask in faith, with **no doubting**, for he who **doubts** is like a wave of the sea driven and tossed by the wind.
4. God has given us in Christ the promise of **rest, victory, & satisfaction**; let us enter upon our **inheritance!**

### 6. **FROM KADESH TO MOAB!** (37-49)

7. Then they wandered for 40 years & then ended up on the plains of Moab.

1. Unbelief means: wasted **time**; wasted **lives**; wasted **opportunities**.
2. But God is gracious & long suffering w/His people.

**Numbers 33:2 Moses recorded their starting places according to their journeys by the command of the LORD, and these are their journeys according to their starting places.**

- **journeys**: Nu 9:17-23 Nu10:6,13 De 1:2 Dt 10:11
- [Numbers 33 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## **RECORD OF STARTING PLACES FOR JOURNEYS**

**Moses recorded their starting places according to their journeys**- "Moses recorded their departures according to their journeys." (Nu 33:2NET)

**Constable** observes Moses "did not describe the march by identifying the places where Israel stopped but by citing them as places from which they set out (Nu 33:2). This emphasizes the importance of the goal of their journey: the Promised Land. They set out from these places on their trek to the land.

**By the command of the LORD**- Moses obediently recorded their journeys. And beloved remember that what the LORD commands, He always enables! And Israel was enabled to wander in the barren, dry desert for 40 years, because it was commanded by Yahweh. If you are in a "wilderness" because God has allowed it or brought you there for a time of testing, then keep your eyes fixed on Jesus the Author and Perfecter of our faith (Heb 12:2+). Jesus is always enough!

How did YAHWEH direct the nation? When the cloud of glory, the [Shekinah glory cloud](#) moved, the nation was to move. This is clearly stated in more detail in Numbers 9

Whenever the cloud was lifted from over the tent, afterward the sons of Israel would then set out; and in the place where the cloud settled down, there the sons of Israel would camp. 18 At the command of the LORD the sons of Israel would set out, and at the command of the LORD they would camp; as long as the cloud settled over the tabernacle, they remained camped. 19 Even when the cloud lingered over the tabernacle for many days, the sons of Israel would keep the LORD'S charge and not set out. 20 If sometimes the cloud remained a few days over the tabernacle, according to the command of the LORD they remained camped. Then according to the command of the LORD they set out. 21 If sometimes the cloud remained from evening until morning,

when the cloud was lifted in the morning, they would move out; or if it remained in the daytime and at night, whenever the cloud was lifted, they would set out. 22 Whether it was two days or a month or a year that the cloud lingered over the tabernacle, staying above it, the sons of Israel remained camped and did not set out; but when it was lifted, they did set out. 23 At the command of the LORD they camped, and at the command of the LORD they set out; they kept the LORD'S charge, according to the command of the LORD through Moses. (Nu 9:17-23+)

**THOUGHT** - Is there not a principle in this passage of how we are to order our steps (Ps 37:23KJV, Ps 119:133KJV)? God's Word and Will and Prayer should be our watchword and our hearts should be submissive to His command to order our starts and our stops. A good way (the only way) to enjoy walking in the center of His will, turning neither to the left nor the right is to begin the morning hours with prayer (confess your sins so the "slate is clean" - 1 Jn 1:9+, cf Pr 28:13+, remember sin grieves and quenches the Spirit - Eph 4:30+, 1 Th 5:19+), including a prayer for God's Spirit to open our eyes to His Word (Ps 119:18+, Eph 1:18-19+) to be able to discern His will. Then we arise and in the power of the Spirit (which is related to letting the Word richly dwell within us - Col 3:16ff+), we walk forth, continually careful how we walk, not as unwise but wise (Eph 5:15+). This principle always brings to mind Rich Mullins great song [Step by Step](#).

**And these are their journeys according to their starting places**- Starting places according to Ryrie is literally the plucking up, or breaking camp. Note that many of the following **places** are names of campsites, not specific towns, so that the location of most of these **places** is not known.

**Henry Morris** - Moses clearly states here that he was the one who wrote about the journey of Israel from Egypt to the promised land--Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy. The assertion by critics that Moses' generation did not know how to write is universally refuted by both internal and external evidences.

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**Joe Sprinkle** - God's people should reflect on what God has seen them through on the path of life. Moses is asked by God to write down the starting places of Israel's journey (Num. 33:1-2) and to record certain things that God has done at those places. What Moses does is a form of journaling. Though no Scripture mandates it, journaling is a good thing for us to do as well. Donald Whitney, in his book *Spiritual Disciplines for the Christian Life*, advocates journaling: "As a Christian, your journal is a place to record the works and ways of God in your life. Your journal can include an account of daily events, a diary of personal relationships, a notebook of insights into Scripture, and a list of prayer requests.....Each of us has a travelogue of places where God has worked in our lives. All of us can remember the bad things that God has seen us through and the good things that God has brought our way. God had Moses do that for Israel. But we can do it for ourselves, whether formally in a journal or informally through reflection."

**It is important to remember the past-**

Poetry: Sonnet XXX, by William Shakespeare. This well-known sonnet begins,

"When to the sessions of sweet silent thought  
I summon up remembrance of things past."

Shakespeare expresses many regrets, but he also asserts,

"But if the while I think on thee, dear friend,  
All losses are restor'd and sorrows end."

That can be true of remembering the good friends we have made throughout our lives. But it is especially true of our best friend of all, Yahweh, who has seen us through life's journey.

**It is important to evaluate our present in light of the future**

Agriculture: One of the first lessons learned for driving a tractor is where to put your eyes. If one's focus is too limited and narrow, the rows will be crooked. It is important to pick a spot in the distance and consistently check back again and again to be sure that one is headed there. The discipline of journaling gives us an opportunity to look forward and look back, to watch for trends and keep our eyes focused on the future that God calls us to pursue. (Teaching the Text - Nu)

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**Henry Blackaby - A SPIRITUAL MARKER**

I have found it helpful to identify spiritual markers in my life. Each time I encounter God's call or directions, I mentally build a marker. A spiritual marker identifies a time of transition, decision, or direction when I clearly know that God has guided me. Over time, I can look back at these spiritual markers and see how God has faithfully directed my life according to His divine purpose. When I review my markers, I see more clearly the directions God has been moving my life and ministry. Sometimes, it is unclear as we look forward

to where God is leading us. But when we look back, we can more readily discern the purposeful guidance of God at key times in our lives.

At times, I may face several options by which I could serve God, and I need to know which of these good things is what God desires of me. When I face a decision about God's direction, I review my spiritual markers. I don't take the next step without the context of God's full activity in my life. This helps me see God's perspective for my past and present. Then I look at the options before me to see which one is most consistent with what God has been doing in my life up to that point. Often, one of the potential directions follows on what God has already been doing. If that is not the case, I continue to pray and wait for the Lord's guidance and timing.

#### MY OWN SPIRITUAL MARKERS

Several years ago, I was approached about taking on a new ministry with my denomination's home missions agency. The organization asked me to direct its emphasis on prayer and spiritual awakening, but I had never had such a job in my life. If I accepted, it meant leaving Vancouver, where we were settled and happy, and moving to Atlanta, Georgia. Only God could reveal whether this was part of His divine purpose, and the spiritual markers in my life helped me view this decision from God's perspective.

My own spiritual markers start before I was born. My heritage goes back to England, where a number of my family members were graduates of Spurgeon's College when Charles Spurgeon was trying to win England for Christ. Revival and awakening were "in my blood," you might say.

I grew up in a Canadian town where there was no evangelical church. There, my father served as a lay pastor and helped start a mission church. Way back in my teen years, I sensed a deep burden for communities all across Canada that did not have an evangelical church. While I was in seminary, God assured me that He loved my nation enough to bring a great movement of His Spirit across the land. When I accepted God's call to Saskatoon, He used the prospect of a spiritual awakening there to affirm my call. A revival and spiritual awakening did occur and spread across many parts of Canada in the early 1970s. Now I was part of exciting events in British Columbia where God was obviously at work.

Then one day someone from Atlanta, Georgia, called me. He said, "Henry, we have prayed much about filling a position in prayer for spiritual awakening. We have been seeking a person for over two years. Would you consider coming and directing our denomination in this emphasis?"

The spiritual markers in my life showed that spiritual awakening was an important element throughout my ministry. Although I had assumed I would spend the rest of my life serving the Lord in Canada, when I heard this invitation was in the area of spiritual awakening, I sensed the Holy Spirit's involvement in the opportunity. After prayer and confirmation in the Word and by other believers, I accepted the position. God didn't lead me into something in which I had never been interested. Rather, this job brought together things God had been building into my life for decades.

#### SUMMARY

God used circumstances to reveal to Jesus what He was to do. Jesus paid attention to know where the Father wanted to involve Him in His work. God also will use circumstances to reveal His directions to you. However, you must check these against what God says through the Scriptures, prayer, and other Christians. Reviewing your spiritual markers is one way in which God may give you a sense of direction through your circumstances. When God is ready for you to take a new step or direction, it will be in agreement with what He has already been doing in your life.

Sometimes, you may find yourself in difficult or confusing circumstances. To understand these events, God's perspective is vital. Never determine the truth of your situation by focusing on the circumstances. You cannot know the reality of any situation until you have heard from God.

**EXPERIENCING GOD TODAY** == Ask God to help you identify your own spiritual markers. These may begin with your heritage, your salvation experience, times you made significant decisions regarding your future, and so forth. What are some of the times of transition, decision, or direction in your life when you knew for sure that God guided you? Start developing a list of your own spiritual markers, but don't feel like it has to be comprehensive. Add to it as you reflect and pray about God's activity in your life. (Experiencing God)

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#### Stage by Stage

At the Lord's command Moses recorded the stages in their journey. Numbers 33:2

Today's Scripture & Insight: Numbers 33:1–15, 36–37

Numbers 33 is a chapter in the Bible we might pass by without reflection. It appears to be nothing more than a long list of places tracing Israel's pilgrimage from Rameses in Egypt to their arrival in the plains of Moab. But it must be important because it's the only

section in Numbers that follows with the words: “At the Lord’s command Moses recorded . . .” (v. 2).

Why keep a record of this? Could it be that this list provides a framework upon which the Israelites emerging from the wilderness could retrace that forty-year journey in their thoughts and recall God’s faithfulness at each location?

I envision an Israelite father, sitting near a campfire, reminiscing with his son: “I will never forget Rephidim! I was dying of thirst, nothing but sand and sage for hundreds of miles. Then God directed Moses to take his staff and strike a rock—actually a hard slab of flint. I thought, What a futile gesture; he’ll never get anything out of that stone. But to my amazement water gushed out of that rock! A generous flow that satisfied the thirst of the thousands of Israelites. I’ll never forget that day!” (see Ps. 114:8; Ex. 17:1–7; Num. 33:14).

So why not give it a try? Reflect on your life—stage by stage—and remember all the ways God has shown you His faithful, covenant love. By: David H. Roper ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Count your many blessings,  
name them one by one.  
Johnson Oatman Jr.

For reflection on the faithfulness of God, listen to this Discover the Word program: [discovertheword.org/faithfulness](http://discovertheword.org/faithfulness).

God’s faithfulness extends to all generations.

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**C H Mackintosh** - Dt 2:7 “For the LORD your God has blessed you in all that you have done; He has known your wanderings through this great wilderness. These forty years the LORD your God has been with you; you have not lacked a thing.” He went before them every step of the way; He traveled over every stage of the wilderness; in all their afflictions He was afflicted. He took care of them like a tender nurse. He suffered not their garments to wax old, or their feet to swell, for these forty years; and here He retraces the entire way by which His hand had led them, carefully noting down each successive stage of that marvelous pilgrimage, and every spot in the desert at which they had halted. What a journey! What a Traveling Companion! **It is very consolatory to the heart of the poor weary pilgrim to be assured that every stage of his wilderness journey is marked out by the infinite love and unerring wisdom of God. He is leading His people by a right way, home to Himself; and there is not a single circumstance in their lot, or a single ingredient in their cup, which is not carefully ordered by Himself, with direct reference to their present profit and their everlasting felicity.** Let it only be our care to walk with Him, day by day, in simple confidence, casting all our care upon Him, and leaving ourselves and all our belongings absolutely in His hands. This is the true source of peace and blessedness all the journey through; and then, when our desert wanderings are over—when the last stage of the wilderness has been trodden, He will take us home to be with Himself forever.

There with what joy reviewing  
Past conflicts, dangers, fears—  
Thy hand our foes subduing,  
And drying all our tears—  
Our hearts with rapture burning,  
The path we shall retrace,  
Where now our souls are learning  
The riches of Thy grace.

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### **John Bennett - THESE ARE THEIR JOURNEYS**

Chapter 33 is one of those sections of the word of God which we are tempted to hurry by with only a passing interest when we reach it in our daily reading! Yet we will be the poorer in our appreciation of scripture, and of the character of our God, if we treat any part of the inspired word in this way.

Not only do we accept that, ‘All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable’, 2 Tim 3:16, but we note further that the details of today’s chapter are specifically attributed to ‘the commandment of the Lord’, v. 2.

The journey from Egypt to Sinai took just two months, and is recorded in Exodus chapters 13–19. Israel remained at Sinai almost a whole year while the law was given and the tabernacle was constructed. No further movement is recorded until Numbers chapter 10, when ‘the cloud was taken up ... and ... Israel took their journeys’, vv. 11–12.

From Sinai to Kadesh involved a number of movements, as seen in verses 16–36 of our chapter, yet only nine encampments are

recorded during the forty years of wandering that followed, vv. 37–49. The history of those years is found in Numbers chapters 20–31.

Why then is Moses instructed to keep this detailed log of the journey? Remember, it was the Lord who led them by an angel, Exod. 23:20 and fed them angels' food, Ps. 78:25. For forty years neither clothes nor shoes wore out! Deut. 29:5. Each place recorded is a memorial to the gracious keeping and leading power of our God; in spite of their waywardness, their murmuring and their sin.

It would be a challenging exercise for each one of us to think back to the time when He redeemed us 'out of Egypt', and to record the various staging posts on our journey through life. To acknowledge His faithfulness, His love, His mercy and His grace toward us. We would have to confess that at times we have been every bit as stubborn and self-willed as Israel. We have been unprofitable servants, not worthy of the least of His mercies. Yet at the end of the journey we will look back and say with gratitude,

Jesus led me all the way',  
F. J. CROSBY.

**Numbers 33:3 They journeyed from Rameses in the first month, on the fifteenth day of the first month; on the next day after the Passover the sons of Israel started out boldly in the sight of all the Egyptians,**

- **They journeyed from Rameses** Ge 47:11 Ex 1:11 12:37
- **in the first** : Ex 12:2, 13:4
- **started out boldly** Ex 14:8 Ps 105:38 Isa 52:12 Mic 2:13
- [Numbers 33 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passage:

Exodus 14:8 The LORD hardened the heart of Pharaoh, king of Egypt, and he chased after the sons of Israel as the sons of Israel were going out boldly.

Rameses in land of GOSHEN

**They journeyed from Rameses in the first month, on the fifteenth day of the first month; on the next day after the Passover the sons of Israel started out boldly in the sight of all the Egyptians** - Beginning with Rameses there are 40 places listed in this journey of Israel from bondage to being on the verge of blessing (Nu 33:49).

**Allen** points out on **boldly** - In contrast to Nu 15:30, the expression בְּיַד רַמָּה (beyād rāmāh, "with a high hand") is used in a positive sense as a figure of triumph (NIV, "boldly"). With hand held high, the Israelites left in a deliberate and conscious sense of the presence of the grander, higher hand of the Lord over them in blessing.

**NET NOTE** on **boldly** - Heb "with a high hand"; the expression means "defiantly; boldly" or "with confidence." The phrase is usually used for arrogant sin and pride, the defiant fist, as it were. The image of the high hand can also mean the hand raised to deliver the blow (Job 38:15).

#### Related Resources:

- American Tract Society [Rameses](#)
- Bridgeway Bible Dictionary [Rameses \(ra'amses\)](#)
- Easton's Bible Dictionary [Rameses](#)
- Fausset Bible Dictionary [Rameses](#)
- Holman Bible Dictionary [Rameses](#)
- Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible [Raamses, Rameses Rameses](#)
- Morrish Bible Dictionary [Raamses, Rameses Rameses](#)
- 1911 Encyclopedia Britannica [Rameses](#)
- International Standard Bible Encyclopedia [Raamses; Rameses Rameses](#)
- Kitto Biblical Cyclopedia [Rameses](#)
- McClintock and Strong's Bible Encyclopedia [Rameses](#)
- The Nuttall Encyclopedia [Rameses](#)
- The Jewish Encyclopedia [Rameses](#)



**Numbers 33:4** while the Egyptians were burying all their firstborn whom the LORD had struck down among them. The LORD had also executed judgments on their gods.

- **were burying all their firstborn:** Ex 12:29,30 Ps 105:36
- **executed judgments on their gods:** Ex 12:12 Ex 18:11 Isa 19:1 Zep 2:11 Rev 12:7-9
- [Numbers 33 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## **JEHOVAH JUDGES EGYPT'S FIRSTBORN SON AND FALSE GODS**

**while the Egyptians were burying all their firstborn whom the LORD had struck down among them-** The record begins with Israel's exodus from Egypt.

**Moses** described this event in Ex 12:29-30+

"Now it came about at midnight that the LORD struck all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, from the firstborn of Pharaoh who sat on his throne to the firstborn of the captive who was in the dungeon, and all the firstborn of cattle. Pharaoh arose in the night, he and all his servants and all the Egyptians, and there was a great cry in Egypt, for there was no home where there was not someone dead."

**The LORD had also executed judgments on their gods** - Moses described this in Ex 12:12 "For I will go through the land of Egypt on that night, and will strike down all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgments—I am the LORD."

**Numbers 33:5** Then the sons of Israel journeyed from Rameses and camped in Succoth.

- **removed:** Ex 12:37
- [Numbers 33 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Rameses to Succoth

**Journey from Egypt to the Red Sea - Nu 33:5-8**

**Then** - [Then](#) is usually an [expression of time](#) and helps mark the order of events and means something, next in sequence or after the events just described.

**The sons of Israel journeyed from Rameses and camped in Succoth** - Ex 12:37+ "Now the sons of Israel **journeyed from Rameses to Succoth**, about six hundred thousand men on foot, aside from children." Of course apparently at least two million people left Egypt under Moses at this time (cf Ex 1:7+).

**Related Resources:**

- American Tract Society [Succoth](#)
- Easton's Bible Dictionary [Succoth](#)
- Fausset Bible Dictionary [Succoth](#)
- Holman Bible Dictionary [Succoth](#)
- Hitchcock Bible Names [Succoth](#)
- Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible [Succoth](#)
- Morrish Bible Dictionary [Succoth](#)
- International Standard Bible Encyclopedia [Succoth-Benoth Succoth \(2\)](#) [Succoth \(1\)](#)
- Kitto Biblical Cyclopaedia [Succoth](#)
- McClintock and Strong's Bible Encyclopedia [Succoth](#)
- The Jewish Encyclopedia [Succoth](#)

**Numbers 33:6** They journeyed from Succoth and camped in Etham, which is on the edge of the wilderness.



- **They journeyed from:** Ex 13:20
- [Numbers 33 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### Succoth to Etham (see #3 above)

#### Journey from Egypt to the Red Sea - Nu 33:5-8

**They journeyed from Succoth and camped in Etham, which is on the edge of the wilderness-** Ex 13:20 - "Then they set out from Succoth and camped in Etham on the edge of the wilderness."

#### Related Resources:

- American Tract Society [Etham](#)
- Easton's Bible Dictionary [Etham](#)
- Fausset Bible Dictionary [Etham](#)
- Holman Bible Dictionary [Etham](#)
- Hitchcock Bible Names [Etham](#)
- Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible [Etham](#)
- International Standard Bible Encyclopedia [Etham](#)
- Kitto Biblical Cyclopedia [Etham](#)
- McClintock and Strong's Bible Encyclopedia [Etham](#)

**Numbers 33:7 They journeyed from Etham and turned back to Pi-hahiroth, which faces Baal-zephon, and they camped before Migdol.**

- Nu 33:8 Ex 14:2,9
- [Numbers 33 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### Etham to Migdol (see #4 above)

#### Journey from Egypt to the Red Sea - Nu 33:5-8

**They journeyed from Etham and turned back to Pi-hahiroth, which faces Baal-zephon, and they camped before Migdol** - Pi-hahiroth was the encampment where Israel was overtaken and threatened by Pharaoh's army as recorded in Exodus 14.

Exodus 14:2-9+ "Tell the sons of Israel to turn back and camp before [Pi-hahiroth](#), between [Migdol](#) and the sea; you shall camp in front of [Baal-zephon](#), opposite it, by the sea. 3 "For Pharaoh will say of the sons of Israel, 'They are wandering aimlessly in the land; the wilderness has shut them in.' 4 "Thus I will harden Pharaoh's heart, and he will chase after them; and I will be honored through Pharaoh and all his army, and the Egyptians will know that I am the LORD." And they did so. 5 When the king of Egypt was told that the people had fled, Pharaoh and his servants had a change of heart toward the people, and they said, "What is this we have done, that we have let Israel go from serving us?" 6 So he made his chariot ready and took his people with him; 7 and he took six hundred select chariots, and all the other chariots of Egypt with officers over all of them. 8 The LORD hardened the heart of Pharaoh, king of Egypt, and he chased after the sons of Israel as the sons of Israel were going out boldly. 9 Then the Egyptians chased after them with all the horses and chariots of Pharaoh, his horsemen and his army, and they overtook them camping by the sea, beside [Pi-hahiroth](#), in front of [Baal-zephon](#).

#### Related Resources:

**Numbers 33:8 They journeyed from before Hahiroth and passed through the midst of the sea into the wilderness; and they went three days' journey in the wilderness of Etham and camped at Marah.**

- Ex 14:21-31 Ex 15:22-26

- [Numbers 33 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Migdol to Marah (see #5 above)

## THE CROSSING OF THE RED SEA

- Journey from Egypt to the Red Sea - Numbers 33:5-8
- Journey from the Red Sea to Sinai - Numbers 33:8-15

They journeyed from before Hahiroth and passed through the midst of the sea into the wilderness- Read the commentary of the Crossing of the Red Sea described in Exodus 14:21-31.

And they went three days' journey in the wilderness of [Etham](#) and camped at [Marah](#) (bitter) - Marah was a bad stop for during the 3 days they found no water. The LORD was allowing their first "NO WATER" test which they would fail. Moses recording

Bible Picture Book - The Bitter Waters  
The Tree Sweetened the Bitter Water

"Then Moses led Israel from the Red Sea, and they went out into the wilderness of Shur; and they went **three days in the wilderness and found no water.** 23 When they came to [Marah](#), they could not drink the waters of [Marah](#), for they were bitter; therefore it was named [Marah](#). 24 So the people **grumbled** at Moses (GRUMBLING AT MOSES ~ GRUMBLING AGAINST GOD), saying, "What shall we drink?" 25 Then he cried out to the LORD, and the LORD showed him a tree; and he threw it into the waters, and the waters became sweet. There He made for them a statute and regulation, and there He tested them. 26 (HERE WAS THE CONDITIONAL PROMISE -- THE LORD'S POWER TO MAKE BITTER SWEET SHOULD HAVE BEEN THEIR "WAKE UP" CALL THAT THEY SHOULD HEED HIS WORD AND EXPERIENCE HIS PROTECTION AS HE PROMISED HERE.) And He said, "IF YOU WILL give earnest heed to the voice of the LORD your God (AKA "IF YOU OBEY"), and do what is right in His sight, and give ear to His commandments, and keep all His statutes, (JEHOVAH'S PROMISE) I will put none of the diseases on you which I have put on the Egyptians; for I, the LORD, am your healer.(JEHOVAH NAMED HIMSELF HERE - [Jehovah Rapha: \(Jehovah Rophe\) The LORD the Healer](#) )" (Ex 15:22-26+)

**Numbers 33:9 They journeyed from Marah and came to Elim; and in Elim there were twelve springs of water and seventy palm trees, and they camped there.**

- [Numbers 33 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Marah to Elim (see #6 above)

## WELCOME WATER RESPIRE

- Numbers 33:8-15 chronicles from the Red Sea to Sinai.

They journeyed from Marah and came to [Elim](#); and in [Elim](#) there were twelve springs of water and seventy palm trees, and they camped there - Parallel passage in Ex 15:27+ "Then they came to [Elim](#) where there were twelve springs of water and seventy date palms, and they camped there beside the waters."

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**F B Meyer** - Numbers 33:9 They journeyed from Marah and came unto Elim: and in Elim.... (R.V.)

In his enumeration of the halting places of Israel, Moses mentions Marsh and Elim. In the case of the former, he does not dwell on the murmuring of the people over the bitter stream: but in the case of Elim, he loves to dilate on the twelve springs of water, and the three-score and ten palm trees, under which they pitched. Years of weary travel had not obliterated the memory of the refreshment

afforded by those seventy palms.

We should remember the blessings of the past. — God has so made as that we soon forget pain; but memory is willing to keep the fresco-pictures of sunny scenes unobliterated upon the walls of her galleries. Thus we may encourage our faith and comfort our hearts, by musing on the hand of the Lord which has been upon us for good. You have had many hard tracks of desert sand to traverse; but never forget those three-score and ten palm trees. Let their gracious shade and fruit still refresh you. And remember that God will restore them, whenever needed. If not, you can always find your palm trees and wells in Himself.

God does not remember the sins of the past. — There is no word of their murmurings, either at Marsh or Rephidim. It is thus that God deals with us. "I, even I, am He that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins." When God forgives, He forgets. He erases the record from his book, and deals with us as though no sin had been committed. When we get to heaven and study the way-book, we shall find all the deeds of love and self-denial carefully recorded, though we have forgotten them; and all the sins blotted out, though we remember them.

### Numbers 33:10 They journeyed from Elim and camped by the Red Sea.

- [Numbers 33 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- **Numbers 33:8-15 chronicles from the Red Sea to Sinai.**

**They journeyed from Elim and camped by the Red Sea** - Parallel passage gives us the time sequence. Ex 16:1+ = "Then they set out from Elim, and all the congregation of the sons of Israel came to the wilderness of Sin, which is between Elim and Sinai, on **the fifteenth day of the second month** after their departure from the land of Egypt." Recall they left Rameses **first month, on the fifteenth day of the first month**. So they have been on the road about one month.

**Brueggemann**- Red Sea (Nu 33:10–11; see 14:25; 21:4; Exod 15) is literally "Sea of Reeds." This was a later encampment on the eastern shore of the Suez Gulf (Hoffmeier 2005:164), which followed the crossing of Reed Sea, "one of the marshy lakes in the Isthmus of Suez" (Hoffmeier 2005:164). This station is not mentioned in the Exodus record. (CBC)

### Numbers 33:11 They journeyed from the Red Sea and camped in the wilderness of Sin.

#### From Elim to Wilderness (Desert) of Sin (see #7 above)

**They journeyed from the [Red Sea](#) and camped in the [wilderness of Sin](#).** - This is a coastal area of northwest Sinai along the Suez Gulf (see map).

**Sin, Wilderness of [Easton]** - lying between Elim and Sinai (Ex. 16:1; comp. Num. 33:11, 12). While the Israelites rested here for some days they began to murmur on account of the want of nourishment, as they had by this time consumed all the corn they had brought with them out of Egypt. God heard their murmurings, and gave them "manna" and then quails in abundance.

**SIN, WILDERNESS OF [Smith]** - a tract of the wilderness which the Israelites reached after leaving the encampment by the Red Sea. (Numbers 33:11,23) Their next halting-place, (Exodus 16:1; 17:1) was Rephidim, probably the Wady Feiran; on which supposition it would follow that Sin must lie between that way and the coast of the Gulf of Suez, and of course west of Sinai. In the wilderness of Sin the manna was first gathered.

#### Related Resources:

- Fausset Bible Dictionary [Sin, Wilderness of](#)
- Holman Bible Dictionary [Sin, Wilderness of](#)
- Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible [Sin, Wilderness of](#)
- Morrish Bible Dictionary [Sin, Wilderness of](#)
- International Standard Bible Encyclopedia [Sin, Wilderness of](#)

### Numbers 33:12 They journeyed from the wilderness of Sin and camped at Dophkah.

- [Numbers 33 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- **Numbers 33:8-15 chronicles from the Red Sea to Sinai.**

**They journeyed from the wilderness of Sin and camped at [Dophkah](#).** - Location uncertain.

**Related Resources:**

- Easton's Bible Dictionary [Dophkah](#)
- Fausset Bible Dictionary [Dophkah](#)
- Holman Bible Dictionary [Dophkah](#)
- Hitchcock Bible Names [Dophkah](#)
- Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible [Dophkah](#)
- Morrish Bible Dictionary [Dophkah](#)
- International Standard Bible Encyclopedia [Dophkah](#)
- Kitto Biblical Cyclopedia [Dophkah](#)
- McClintock and Strong's Bible Encyclopedia [Dophkah](#)

**Numbers 33:13 They journeyed from Dophkah and camped at Alush.**

- [Numbers 33 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- **Numbers 33:8-15 chronicles from the Red Sea to Sinai.**

**They journeyed from Dophkah and camped at [Alush](#).** - Location uncertain.

**Related Resources:**

- Fausset Bible Dictionary [Alush](#)
- Holman Bible Dictionary [Alush](#)
- Hitchcock Bible Names [Alush](#)
- Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible [Alush](#)
- Morrish Bible Dictionary [Alush](#)
- International Standard Bible Encyclopedia [Alush](#)
- Kitto Biblical Cyclopedia [Alush](#)
- McClintock and Strong's Bible Encyclopedia [Alush](#)

**Numbers 33:14 They journeyed from Alush and camped at Rephidim; now it was there that the people had no water to drink.**

**Camped at Rephidim**

**SECOND NO  
WATER TEST**

**Numbers 33:8-15 chronicles from the Red Sea to Sinai.**

**They journeyed from Alush and camped at [Rephidim](#); now it was there that the people had no water to drink-** Israel fails second no water test and God allows Moses to bring water from the rock. The place was named [Massah](#) and [Meribah](#).

**Rephidim** - 5x in 5v - Exod. 17:1; Exod. 17:8; Exod. 19:2; Num. 33:14; Num. 33:15

**Exodus 17:1-8+** records this event

Then all the congregation of the sons of Israel journeyed by stages from the wilderness of Sin, according to the command of the LORD, and camped at Rephidim, and there was no water for the people to drink. 2 Therefore the people quarreled with Moses (EQUIVALENT WITH QUARRELING WITH GOD AS MOSES

EXPLAINS!) and said, "Give us water that we may drink." And Moses said to them, "Why do you quarrel with me? **Why do you test the LORD?**" 3 But the people thirsted there for water; and they **grumbled against Moses** (AND AGAINST GOD!) and said, "Why, now, have you brought us up from Egypt, to kill us and our children and our livestock with thirst?" 4 So Moses cried out to the LORD, saying, "What shall I do to this people? A little more and they will stone me." 5 Then the LORD said to Moses, "Pass before the people and take with you some of the elders of Israel; and take in your hand your staff with which you struck the Nile, and go. 6 **Behold**, I will stand before you there on the rock at Horeb; and you shall strike the rock, and water will come out of it, that the people may drink." And Moses did so in the sight of the elders of Israel. 7 He named the place **Massah and Meribah** because of the quarrel of the sons of Israel, and because they tested the LORD, saying, "Is the LORD among us, or not?" 8 Then Amalek came and fought against Israel at Rephidim.

#### Related Resources:

- American Tract Society [Rephidim](#)
- Easton's Bible Dictionary [Rephidim](#)
- Fausset Bible Dictionary [Rephidim](#)
- Holman Bible Dictionary [Rephidim](#) [Rephidim](#)
- Hitchcock Bible Names [Rephidim](#)
- Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible [Rephidim](#)
- International Standard Bible Encyclopedia [Rephidim](#)
- Kitto Biblical Cyclopedia [Rephidim](#)
- McClintock and Strong's Bible Encyclopedia [Rephidim](#)
- The Jewish Encyclopedia [Rephidim](#)

#### Numbers 33:15 They journeyed from Rephidim and camped in the wilderness of Sinai.

- Ex 16:1 Ex 19:1-2
- [Numbers 33 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Wilderness of Sinai

##### Numbers 33:8-15 chronicles from the Red Sea to Sinai.

**They journeyed from Rephidim and camped in the wilderness of Sinai** - The **wilderness of Sinai** ([Wikipedia](#)) would be generally in the south-central portion of the Sinai peninsula (see [map of Sinai Peninsula](#)). Moses records that "In the third month after the sons of Israel had gone out of the land of Egypt, on that very day they came into the wilderness of Sinai. When they set out from Rephidim, they came to the wilderness of Sinai and camped in the wilderness; and there Israel camped in front of the mountain." (Ex 19:1-2+). The **Wilderness of Sinai** is the setting for **Exodus** (chapters 19-40), all 27 chapters of **Leviticus**, and the first 10 chapters of **Numbers**. Then in Nu 10:11+ Israel broke camp Moses recording

"Now in the second year, in the second month, on the twentieth of the month, the cloud was lifted from over the tabernacle of the testimony."

The Israelites remained **camped in the wilderness of Sinai** for over 11 months.

**Wilderness of Sinai** - 13x - Exod. 19:1; Exod. 19:2; Lev. 7:38; Num. 1:1; Num. 1:19; Num. 3:4; Num. 3:14; Num. 9:1; Num. 9:5; Num. 10:12; Num. 26:64; Num. 33:15; Num. 33:16

#### Numbers 33:16 They journeyed from the wilderness of Sinai and camped at Kibroth-hattaavah.

- Nu 10:11-13,33 De 1:6
- [Numbers 33 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passage:

Deuteronomy 1:6 "The LORD our God spoke to us at Horeb, saying, 'You have stayed long enough at this

mountain.

## FROM MT SINAI

**The Wilderness Wanderings are chronicled in Nu 33:16-36** encompassing about 37 years of wandering. These passages are little more than the name of the place, but many are unknown today. Apparently not much happened that warranted recording when they were wandering.

**THOUGHT** - Beloved, when we are "wandering" from the highway of holiness in our Christian journey those times seldom are fruitful. Dear Reader, are you wandering off the path of God's will, which alone is good, acceptable and perfect? (Ro 12:2+).

**They journeyed from the wilderness of Sinai and camped at [Kibroth-hattaavah](#)** - The location of the camp is unknown but the name means " the graves of lust (or longing)." The reason for this name is because here the people demanded meat and received plague-carrying quail that caused many deaths.

Numbers 11:4+ The rabble who were among them had greedy desires; and also the sons of Israel wept again and said, "Who will give us meat to eat?... 33 While the meat was still between their teeth, before it was chewed, the anger of the LORD was kindled against the people, and the LORD struck the people with a very severe plague. 34 So the name of that place was called [Kibroth-hattaavah](#), because there they buried the people who had been greedy.

### Related Resources:

- American Tract Society [Kibroth-Hattaavah](#)
- Easton's Bible Dictionary [Kibroth-Hattaavah](#)
- Fausset Bible Dictionary [Kibroth Hattaavah](#)
- Holman Bible Dictionary [Kibroth-Hattaavah](#)
- Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible [Kibroth-Hattaavah](#)
- International Standard Bible Encyclopedia [Kibroth-Hattaavah](#)
- Kitto Biblical Cyclopedia [Kibroth-hattaavah](#)
- The Jewish Encyclopedia [Kibroth-Hattaavah](#)

**Numbers 33:17 They journeyed from Kibroth-hattaavah and camped at Hazeroth.**

### Kibroth Hattaavah to Hazeroth (#3)

**The Wilderness Wanderings are chronicled in Nu 33:16-36.**

**They journeyed from [Kibroth-hattaavah](#) and camped at [Hazeroth](#)** - Parallel passage Nu 11:35 From Kibroth-hattaavah the people set out for Hazeroth, and they remained at Hazeroth.

### Related Resources:

- American Tract Society [Hazeroth](#)
- Easton's Bible Dictionary [Hazeroth](#)
- Fausset Bible Dictionary [Hazeroth](#)
- Holman Bible Dictionary [Hazeroth](#)
- Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible [Hazeroth](#)
- International Standard Bible Encyclopedia [Hazeroth](#)
- Kitto Biblical Cyclopedia [Hazeroth](#)
- McClintock and Strong's Bible Encyclopedia [Hazeroth](#)
- The Jewish Encyclopedia [Hazeroth](#)

**Numbers 33:18 They journeyed from Hazeroth and camped at Rithmah.**

- [Numbers 33 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

**The Wilderness Wanderings are chronicled in Nu 33:16-36.**

**They journeyed from Hazeroth and camped at Rithmah** - The parallel passage in Nu 12:16 says "Afterward, however, the people moved out from Hazeroth and camped in the wilderness of Paran." [Ritman](#) is from a word (rethem) which means Spanish broom (from its pole-like stems) describing the juniper tree.

**Related Resources:**

- Fausset Bible Dictionary [Rithmah](#)
- Holman Bible Dictionary [Rithmah](#)
- Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible [Rithmah](#)
- International Standard Bible Encyclopedia [Rithmah](#)
- McClintock and Strong's Bible Encyclopedia [Rithmah](#)

**Numbers 33:19 They journeyed from Rithmah and camped at Rimmon-perez.**

- [Numbers 33 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- **The Wilderness Wanderings are chronicled in Nu 33:16-36.**

**They journeyed from Rithmah and camped at [Rimmon-perez](#).**

**Related Resources:**

- Holman Bible Dictionary [Rimmon-Perez](#)
- Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible [Rimmon-Perez](#)
- International Standard Bible Encyclopedia [Rimmon-Perez](#)

**Numbers 33:20 They journeyed from Rimmon-perez and camped at Libnah.**

- [Numbers 33 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- **The Wilderness Wanderings are chronicled in Nu 33:16-36.**

**They journeyed from Rimmon-perez and camped at [Libnah](#).** - Mentioned 17x - Num. 33:20; Num. 33:21; Jos. 10:29; Jos. 10:31; Jos. 10:32; Jos. 10:39; Jos. 12:15; Jos. 15:42; Jos. 21:13; 2 Ki. 8:22; 2 Ki. 19:8; 2 Ki. 23:31; 2 Ki. 24:18; 1 Chr. 6:57; 2 Chr. 21:10; Isa. 37:8; Jer. 52:1

**Related Resources:**

- American Tract Society [Libnah](#)
- Easton's Bible Dictionary [Libnah](#)
- Fausset Bible Dictionary [Libnah](#)
- Holman Bible Dictionary [Libnah](#)
- Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible [Libnah](#)
- International Standard Bible Encyclopedia [Libnah](#)
- Kitto Biblical Cyclopedia [Libnah](#)
- McClintock and Strong's Bible Encyclopedia [Libnah \(2\)](#) [Libnah](#)

**Numbers 33:21 They journeyed from Libnah and camped at Rissah.**

- [Numbers 33 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries**The Wilderness Wanderings are chronicled in Nu 33:16-36.**

**They journeyed from Libnah and camped at [Rissah](#).**



#### Related Resources:

- Easton's Bible Dictionary [Rissah](#)
- Fausset Bible Dictionary [Rissah](#)
- Holman Bible Dictionary [Rissah](#)
- Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible [Rissah](#)
- International Standard Bible Encyclopedia [Rissah](#)
- McClintock and Strong's Bible Encyclopedia [Rissah](#)

**Numbers 33:22 They journeyed from Rissah and camped in Kehelathah.**

- [Numbers 33 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries **The Wilderness Wanderings are chronicled in Nu 33:16-36.**

**They journeyed from Rissah and camped in [Kehelathah](#).**

#### Related Resources:

- Easton's Bible Dictionary [Kehelathah](#)
- Fausset Bible Dictionary [Kehelathah](#)
- Holman Bible Dictionary [Kehelathah](#)
- Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible [Kehelathah](#)
- International Standard Bible Encyclopedia [Kehelathah](#)
- McClintock and Strong's Bible Encyclopedia [Kehelathah](#)

**Numbers 33:23 They journeyed from Kehelathah and camped at Mount Shepher.**

**The Wilderness Wanderings are chronicled in Nu 33:16-36.**

**They journeyed from Kehelathah and camped at [Mount Shepher](#).**

#### Related Resources:

- Easton's Bible Dictionary [Shapher](#)
- Fausset Bible Dictionary [Shapher, Mount](#)
- Holman Bible Dictionary [Shapher](#)
- Morrish Bible Dictionary [Shapher, Mount](#)
- International Standard Bible Encyclopedia [Shapher](#)
- McClintock and Strong's Bible Encyclopedia [Shapher](#)

**Numbers 33:24 They journeyed from Mount Shepher and camped at Haradah.**

- [Numbers 33 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- **The Wilderness Wanderings are chronicled in Nu 33:16-36.**

**They journeyed from Mount Shepher and camped at [Haradah](#).**

#### Related Resources:

- Easton's Bible Dictionary [Haradah](#)
- Holman Bible Dictionary [Haradah](#)
- Hitchcock Bible Names [Haradah](#)
- Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible [Haradah](#)
- Morrish Bible Dictionary [Haradah](#)
- International Standard Bible Encyclopedia [Haradah](#)

- Kitto Biblical Cyclopedia [Haradah](#)
- McClintock and Strong's Bible Encyclopedia [Haradah](#)
- The Jewish Encyclopedia [Haradah](#)

#### Numbers 33:25 They journeyed from Haradah and camped at Makheloth.

- [Numbers 33 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- **The Wilderness Wanderings are chronicled in Nu 33:16-36.**

They journeyed from Haradah and camped at [Makheloth](#).

#### Related Resources:

- Easton's Bible Dictionary [Makheloth](#)
- Fausset Bible Dictionary [Makheloth](#)
- Holman Bible Dictionary [Makheloth](#)
- Hitchcock Bible Names [Makheloth](#)
- Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible [Makheloth](#)
- International Standard Bible Encyclopedia [Makheloth](#)
- McClintock and Strong's Bible Encyclopedia [Makheloth](#)

#### Numbers 33:26 They journeyed from Makheloth and camped at Tahath.

- [Numbers 33 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- **The Wilderness Wanderings are chronicled in Nu 33:16-36.**

They journeyed from Makheloth and camped at [Tahath](#).

#### Related Resources:

- Fausset Bible Dictionary [Tahath \(1\)](#) [Tahath \(2\)](#)
- Holman Bible Dictionary [Tahath](#)
- Hitchcock Bible Names [Tahath](#)
- Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible [Tahath](#)
- Morrish Bible Dictionary [Tahath](#)
- International Standard Bible Encyclopedia [Tahath \(2\)](#) [Tahath \(1\)](#)
- McClintock and Strong's Bible Encyclopedia [Tahath](#)

#### Numbers 33:27 They journeyed from Tahath and camped at Terah.

- [Numbers 33 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- **The Wilderness Wanderings are chronicled in Nu 33:16-36.**

They journeyed from Tahath and camped at [Terah](#).

#### Related Resources:

- American Tract Society [Terah](#)
- Easton's Bible Dictionary [Terah](#)
- Fausset Bible Dictionary [Terah](#)
- Holman Bible Dictionary [Terah](#)
- Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible [Terah](#)
- International Standard Bible Encyclopedia [Terah \(2\)](#)
- Kitto Biblical Cyclopedia [Terah](#)

- McClintock and Strong's Bible Encyclopedia [Terah](#)
- The Jewish Encyclopedia [Terah](#)

#### Numbers 33:28 They journeyed from Terah and camped at Mithkah.

- [Numbers 33 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- **The Wilderness Wanderings are chronicled in Nu 33:16-36.**

They journeyed from Terah and camped at [Mithkah](#).

#### Related Resources:

- Holman Bible Dictionary [Mithkah](#)
- Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible [Mithkah](#)
- International Standard Bible Encyclopedia [Mithkah](#)

#### Numbers 33:29 They journeyed from Mithkah and camped at Hashmonah.

- [Numbers 33 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- **The Wilderness Wanderings are chronicled in Nu 33:16-36.**

They journeyed from Mithkah and camped at [Hashmonah](#).

#### Related Resources:

- Easton's Bible Dictionary [Hashmonah](#)
- Fausset Bible Dictionary [Hashmonah](#)
- Holman Bible Dictionary [Hashmonah](#)
- Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible [Hashmonah](#)
- Morrish Bible Dictionary [Hashmonah](#)
- International Standard Bible Encyclopedia [Hashmonah](#)
- McClintock and Strong's Bible Encyclopedia [Hashmonah](#)
- The Jewish Encyclopedia [Hashmonah](#)

#### Numbers 33:30 They journeyed from Hashmonah and camped at Moseroth.

- [Numbers 33 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- **The Wilderness Wanderings are chronicled in Nu 33:16-36.**

They journeyed from Hashmonah and camped at [Moseroth](#).

#### Related Resources:

- Easton's Bible Dictionary [Moseroth](#)
- Holman Bible Dictionary [Mosera\(h\)](#), [Moseroth](#)
- Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible [Moserah](#), [Moseroth](#)
- Morrish Bible Dictionary [Mosera](#), [Moseroth](#)
- International Standard Bible Encyclopedia [Moseroth](#)
- McClintock and Strong's Bible Encyclopedia [Moseroth](#)

#### Numbers 33:31 They journeyed from Moseroth and camped at Bene-jaakan.

- [Numbers 33 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

- **The Wilderness Wanderings are chronicled in Nu 33:16-36.**

They journeyed from Moseroth and camped at [Bene-jaakan](#).

**Related Resources:**

- Holman Bible Dictionary [Beeroth-Bene-Jaakan](#)
- Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible [Beeroth-Bene-Jaakan](#)
- International Standard Bible Encyclopedia [Beeroth Bene-Jaakan](#)
- McClintock and Strong's Bible Encyclopedia [Beeroth-Bene-Jaakan](#)

**Numbers 33:32 They journeyed from Bene-jaakan and camped at Hor-haggidgad.**

- [Numbers 33 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- **The Wilderness Wanderings are chronicled in Nu 33:16-36.**

They journeyed from Bene-jaakan and camped at Hor-haggidgad.

**Related Resources:**

- Holman Bible Dictionary [Hor-Haggidgad](#)
- Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible [Hor-Haggidgad](#)
- International Standard Bible Encyclopedia [Hor-Haggidgad](#)

**Numbers 33:33 They journeyed from Hor-haggidgad and camped at Jotbathah.**

- [Numbers 33 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- **The Wilderness Wanderings are chronicled in Nu 33:16-36.**

They journeyed from Hor-haggidgad and camped at [Jotbathah](#).

**Related Resources:**

- Fausset Bible Dictionary [Jotbathah](#)
- Holman Bible Dictionary [Jotbathah](#)
- Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible [Jotbathah](#)
- Morrish Bible Dictionary [Jotbath , Jotbathah](#)
- International Standard Bible Encyclopedia [Jotbathah](#)
- McClintock and Strong's Bible Encyclopedia [Jotbathah](#)

**Numbers 33:34 They journeyed from Jotbathah and camped at Abronah.**

- [Numbers 33 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- **The Wilderness Wanderings are chronicled in Nu 33:16-36.**

They journeyed from Jotbathah and camped at [Abronah](#).

**Related Resources:**

- Easton's Bible Dictionary [Abronah](#)
- Fausset Bible Dictionary [Abronah](#)
- Holman Bible Dictionary [Abronah](#)
- Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible [Abronah](#)
- International Standard Bible Encyclopedia [Abronah](#)
- McClintock and Strong's Bible Encyclopedia [Abronah](#).

## Numbers 33:35 They journeyed from Abronah and camped at Ezion-geber.

- [Numbers 33 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- **The Wilderness Wanderings are chronicled in Nu 33:16-36.**

**They journeyed from Abronah and camped at [Ezion-geber](#)** - ([Wikipedia](#)) This is the last station during the exodus of the Israelites before they came to the wilderness of Zin; located near Elath at the head of the Gulf of Akaba

### Related Resources:

- American Tract Society [Ezion-Geber or Ezion-Gaber](#)
- Bridgeway Bible Dictionary [Ezion-geber](#)
- Easton's Bible Dictionary [Ezion-Geber](#)
- Fausset Bible Dictionary [Ezion Geber](#)
- Holman Bible Dictionary [Ezion-Geber Ezion-Geber](#)
- Hitchcock Bible Names [Ezion-Geber](#)
- Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible [Ezion-Geber](#)
- International Standard Bible Encyclopedia [Ezion-Geber](#)
- Kitto Biblical Cyclopedia [Ezion-geber](#)
- McClintock and Strong's Bible Encyclopedia [Ezion-Geber](#)
- The Jewish Encyclopedia [Ezion - Geber](#)

## Numbers 33:36 They journeyed from Ezion-geber and camped in the wilderness of Zin, that is, Kadesh.

- Nu 13:21 20:1 27:14 De 32:51
- [Numbers 33 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

**SPIES INTO THE LAND - SEE #5 ([Another Map](#))**

## THE FAITH FAILURE AT KADESH

**The Wilderness Wanderings are chronicled in Nu 33:16-36.**

**They journeyed from Ezion-geber and camped in the [wilderness of Zin](#), that is, [Kadesh](#).** - Numbers 13:21 So they went up and spied out the land from the wilderness of Zin as far as Rehob, at Lebo-hamath. Read the record of their faith failure in Nu 14:1-45 (commentary). **Kadesh** is referred to as **Kadesh** in Nu 13:26; 20:1, 14, 16, 22; 27:14 and **Kadesh-barnea** in Nu 32:8; Dt 1:2; 1:19; 2:14; 9:23).

### At Kadesh

Numbers 13:21; 26 So they went up and spied out the land from the wilderness of Zin as far as Rehob, at Lebo-hamath....26 they proceeded to come to Moses and Aaron and to all the congregation of the sons of Israel in the wilderness of Paran, at Kadesh; and they brought back word to them and to all the congregation and showed them the fruit of the land.

**CBC** - This area is now the largest oasis in the northern Sinai and has a spring that produces about 40 cubic meters of water per hour”

Recall that Moses' sister Miriam died at Kadesh (Nu. 20:1+)

**Wilderness of Zin** - 7x - Num. 13:21; Num. 20:1; Num. 27:14; Num. 33:36; Num. 34:3; Deut. 32:51; Jos. 15:1

**Kadesh** - 15x - Gen. 14:7; Gen. 16:14; Gen. 20:1; Num. 13:26; Num. 20:1; Num. 20:14; Num. 20:16; Num. 20:22; Num. 27:14; Num. 33:36; Num. 33:37; Deut. 1:46; Jdg. 11:16; Jdg. 11:17; Ps. 29:8

**Kadesh-Barnea** - Num. 32:8; Num. 34:4; Deut. 1:2; Deut. 1:19; Deut. 2:14; Deut. 9:23; Jos. 10:41; Jos. 14:6; Jos. 14:7; Jos. 15:3

#### Related Resources:

- American Tract Society [Zin](#)
- Bridgeway Bible Dictionary [Zin](#)
- Easton's Bible Dictionary [Zin](#)
- Fausset Bible Dictionary [Zin, Wilderness of](#)
- Holman Bible Dictionary [Zin](#)
- Hitchcock Bible Names [Zin](#)
- Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible [Zin](#)
- Smith Bible Dictionary [Zin](#)
- International Standard Bible Encyclopedia [Zin](#)
- Kitto Biblical Cyclopedia [Zin](#)
- McClintock and Strong's Bible Encyclopedia [Zin](#)
- The Jewish Encyclopedia [Zin](#)
- American Tract Society [Kadesh or Kadesh-Barnea](#)
- Bridgeway Bible Dictionary [Kadesh-barnea](#)
- Easton's Bible Dictionary [Kadesh](#)
- Fausset Bible Dictionary [Kadesh Barnea](#)
- Holman Bible Dictionary [Kadesh-Meribah](#) [Kadesh-Barnea](#) [Kadesh](#)
- Hitchcock Bible Names [Kadesh-Barnea](#) [Kadesh](#)
- Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible [Meriboth-Kadesh](#) [Kadesh](#)
- International Standard Bible Encyclopedia [Kadesh on the Orontes](#) [Kadesh in Galilee](#) [Kadesh-Barnea](#)
- Kitto Biblical Cyclopedia [Kadesh](#)
- McClintock and Strong's Bible Encyclopedia [Kadesh-Barnea](#) [Kadesh](#)
- The Jewish Encyclopedia [Kadesh](#)

**Numbers 33:37** They journeyed from Kadesh and camped at Mount Hor, at the edge of the land of Edom.

#### CAMPING AT MT HOR AT THE EDGE OF EDOM

The journey from Kadesh to Moab is chronicled in Nu 33:37-49.

**They journeyed from Kadesh and camped at Mount Hor, at the edge of the land of Edom**- Earlier Moses recorded "Now when they set out from Kadesh, the sons of Israel, the whole congregation, came to [Mount Hor](#)." (Nu 20:22+)

Nu 33:37-49 takes Israel from Kadesh to "the Jordan, from [Beth-jeshimoth](#) as far as [Abel-shittim](#) in the [plains of Moab](#)." (Nu 33:49)

- [Click here for excellent map](#) of Kadesh to plains of Moab.
- [Map of Events from Kadesh-Barnea](#)

#### Related Resources:

- American Tract Society [Kadesh or Kadesh-Barnea](#)
- Bridgeway Bible Dictionary [Kadesh-barnea](#)
- Fausset Bible Dictionary [Kadesh Barnea](#)
- Holman Bible Dictionary [Kadesh-Barnea](#)
- Hitchcock Bible Names [Kadesh-Barnea](#)
- International Standard Bible Encyclopedia [Kadesh-Barnea](#)
- McClintock and Strong's Bible Encyclopedia [Kadesh-Barnea](#)
- American Tract Society [Hor](#)
- Easton's Bible Dictionary [Hor](#)
- Holman Bible Dictionary [Hor](#)
- Hitchcock Bible Names [Hor](#)

- Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible [Hor](#)
- 1911 Encyclopedia Britannica [Mount Hor](#)
- International Standard Bible Encyclopedia [Hor, Mount](#)
- Kitto Biblical Cyclopedia [Hor](#)
- McClintock and Strong's Bible Encyclopedia [Hor](#)
- The Jewish Encyclopedia [Hor](#)

**Numbers 33:38** Then Aaron the priest went up to Mount Hor at the command of the LORD, and died there in the fortieth year after the sons of Israel had come from the land of Egypt, on the first day in the fifth month.

- Nu 20:24-28 De 10:6 32:50
- [Numbers 33 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passage:

Nu 20:24-28+ Aaron will be gathered to his people; for he shall not enter the land which I have given to the sons of Israel, because you rebelled against My command at the waters of Meribah. 25“Take Aaron and his son Eleazar and bring them up to Mount Hor; 26and strip Aaron of his garments and put them on his son Eleazar. So Aaron will be gathered to his people, and will die there.” 27 So Moses did just as the LORD had commanded, and they went up to Mount Hor in the sight of all the congregation. 28 After Moses had stripped Aaron of his garments and put them on his son Eleazar, Aaron died there on the mountain top. Then Moses and Eleazar came down from the mountain.

### DEATH OF AARON ON MT HOR

The journey from Kadesh to Moab is chronicled in Nu 33:37-49.

**Then Aaron the priest went up to Mount Hor at the command of the LORD, and died there in the fortieth year after the sons of Israel had come from the land of Egypt, on the first day in the fifth month** - Notice Aaron was commanded to go up and dies and Aaron obeyed. It is a good way to go home by obeying the last command of the Lord! May we all do the same! (cf 1 Jn 2:28+)

**Numbers 33:39** Aaron was one hundred twenty-three years old when he died on Mount Hor.

### AARON'S RIPE OLD AGE

The journey from Kadesh to Moab is chronicled in Nu 33:37-49.

**Aaron was one hundred twenty-three years old when he died on Mount Hor**- Aaron was 3 years older than his brother Moses.

**Ronald Allen** comments that Aaron's "death came at a great age—a mark of God's blessing in his life. By the mercy of the Lord, his time was extended to the very last year of Israel's desert experience; his own sin (Nu 20:23-24+) kept him from living into the time of the conquest of the land. (EBC- Nu)

**Numbers 33:40** Now the Canaanite, the king of Arad who lived in the Negev in the land of Canaan, heard of the coming of the sons of Israel.

### ATTACK BY ARAD

The journey from Kadesh to Moab is chronicled in Nu 33:37-49.

**Now the Canaanite, the king of Arad who lived in the Negev in the land of Canaan, heard of the coming of the sons of**



**Israel** - For Israel's battle with Arad see comments on Numbers 21:1-9 which describes one of the first of Israel's victories on the military field (cf Amalekites in Ex 17:8-16+).

**Related Resources:**

- American Tract Society [Arad](#)
- Easton's Bible Dictionary [Arad](#)
- Fausset Bible Dictionary [Arad](#)
- Holman Bible Dictionary [Arad](#)
- Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible [Arad](#)
- 1911 Encyclopedia Britannica [Arad](#)
- International Standard Bible Encyclopedia [Arad](#)
- Kitto Biblical Cyclopedia [Arad](#)
- McClintock and Strong's Bible Encyclopedia [Arad](#)
- The Nuttall Encyclopedia [Arad](#)
- The Jewish Encyclopedia [Arad](#)

**Numbers 33:41** Then they journeyed from Mount Hor and camped at Zalmonah.

**FROM MT HOR THEY WENT SOUTH, THEN NORTH (#7)**

The journey from Kadesh to Moab is chronicled in Nu 33:37-49.

**Then they journeyed from Mount Hor and camped at Zalmonah** - Nu 21:4+ gives additional detail "Then they set out from Mount Hor by the way of the Red Sea, to go around the land of Edom; and the people became impatient because of the journey."

**Related Resources:**

- Easton's Bible Dictionary [Zalmonah](#)
- Fausset Bible Dictionary [Zalmonah](#)
- Holman Bible Dictionary [Zalmonah](#)
- Hitchcock Bible Names [Zalmonah](#)
- Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible [Zalmonah](#)
- Morrish Bible Dictionary [Zalmonah](#)
- International Standard Bible Encyclopedia [Zalmonah](#)
- McClintock and Strong's Bible Encyclopedia [Zalmonah](#)

**Numbers 33:42** They journeyed from Zalmonah and camped at Punon.

- [Numbers 33 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- **The journey from Kadesh to Moab is chronicled in Nu 33:37-49.**

They journeyed from [Zalmonah](#) and camped at Punon.

**Related Resources:**

- Fausset Bible Dictionary [Punon](#)
- Holman Bible Dictionary [Punon](#)
- Hitchcock Bible Names [Punon](#)
- Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible [Punon](#)
- Morrish Bible Dictionary [Punon](#)
- International Standard Bible Encyclopedia [Punon](#)
- Kitto Biblical Cyclopedia [Punon](#)
- McClintock and Strong's Bible Encyclopedia [Punon](#)

## Numbers 33:43 They journeyed from Punon and camped at Oboth.

- [Numbers 33 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- **The journey from Kadesh to Moab is chronicled in Nu 33:37-49.**

**They journeyed from Punon and camped at Oboth** - Nu 21:10-11 says 'Now the sons of Israel moved out and camped in Oboth. They journeyed from Oboth and camped at Iye-abarim, in the wilderness which is opposite Moab, to the east.'

### Related Resources:

- Easton's Bible Dictionary [Oboth](#)
- Fausset Bible Dictionary [Oboth](#)
- Holman Bible Dictionary [Oboth](#)
- Hitchcock Bible Names [Oboth](#)
- Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible [Oboth](#)
- Morrish Bible Dictionary [Oboth](#)
- International Standard Bible Encyclopedia [Oboth](#)
- Kitto Biblical Cyclopedia [Oboth](#)
- McClintock and Strong's Bible Encyclopedia [Oboth](#)

## Numbers 33:44 They journeyed from Oboth and camped at Iye-abarim, at the border of Moab.

### OBOTH TO IYE ABARIM

**The journey from Kadesh to Moab is chronicled in Nu 33:37-49.**

**They journeyed from Oboth and camped at Iye-abarim, at the border of Moab.**

### Related Resources:

- Holman Bible Dictionary [Iye-Abarim](#)
- Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible [Iye-Abarim](#)
- International Standard Bible Encyclopedia [Iye-Abarim](#)

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**Norman Geisler - When Critics Ask** - NUMBERS 33:44–49—Why is the list of places Israel stopped different here from the ones stated earlier (in Numbers 21)?

**PROBLEM:** Numbers 21 speaks of the Israelites stopping off at Oboth, Ije Abarim, Zered, Arnon, Beer, Mattanah, Nahaliel, Bamoth, and Mt. Pisgah in Moab. But the Numbers 33 list of stop offs includes Oboth, Ije Abarim, Dibon Gad, Almon Diblathaim, mountains of Abarim near Mt. Nebo, and the Plains of Moab.

**SOLUTION:** Understanding several factors helps to reconcile the apparent discrepancy. First, both lists **begin** with the exact same names and **end** in the exact same place (east of Jordan near Jericho). Second, since both lists are in the same book the author saw no contradiction between them. Third, some places may have had more than one name. Ije Abarim, for example, is also called Ijim (Num. 33:44–45). Fourth, neither list may be complete, listing only the names that the author wished to stress at that time. Numbers 21 lists six places in between Ije Abarim and Moab, whereas Numbers 33 lists only three. The more complete list may be a statistic account and the smaller one a historical perspective. Fifth, the list in Numbers 33 may be the head quarters of Moses and the tabernacle. Sixth, since there were millions of people who covered a broad stretch of land, more than one city may have been occupied at the same time. Seventh, in their wandering Israel may have covered the same ground twice, first the more circuitous one and then a more direct route (cf. Num. 33:30–33).

## Numbers 33:45 They journeyed from Iyim and camped at Dibon-gad.

- [Numbers 33 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

- **The journey from Kadesh to Moab is chronicled in Nu 33:37-49.**

**They journeyed from Iyim and camped at Dibon-gad** - **Dibon** means wasting and was a town in Moab on the east side of the Jordan River which was taken over by the Israelites and rebuilt by the children of Gad (Nu 32:34).

**Related Resources:**

- Hitchcock Bible Names [Dibon-Gad Dibon](#)
- International Standard Bible Encyclopedia [Dibon; Dibon-Gad](#)
- McClintock and Strong's Bible Encyclopedia [Dibon of Gad Dibon-Gad Dibon](#)
- American Tract Society [Dibon](#)
- Easton's Bible Dictionary [Dibon](#)
- Fausset Bible Dictionary [Dibon](#)
- Holman Bible Dictionary [Dibon](#)
- Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible [Dibon](#)
- Kitto Biblical Cyclopedia [Dibon](#)
- The Jewish Encyclopedia [Dibon](#)

**Numbers 33:46 They journeyed from Dibon-gad and camped at Almon-diblathaim.**

- [Numbers 33 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- **The journey from Kadesh to Moab is chronicled in Nu 33:37-49.**

**They journeyed from Dibon-gad and camped at Almon-diblathaim.**

**Related Resources:**

- American Tract Society [Almon-Diblathaim](#)
- Fausset Bible Dictionary [Almon-Diblathaim](#)
- Holman Bible Dictionary [Almon-Diblathaim](#)
- Hitchcock Bible Names [Almon-Diblathaim](#)
- Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible [Almon-Diblathaim](#)
- International Standard Bible Encyclopedia [Almon-Diblathaim](#)
- Kitto Biblical Cyclopedia [Almon-diblathaim](#)
- McClintock and Strong's Bible Encyclopedia [Almon-Diblathaim](#)

**Numbers 33:47 They journeyed from Almon-diblathaim and camped in the mountains of Abarim, before Nebo.**

- [Numbers 33 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

**Related Passage:**

Nu 21:18-20+ "The well, which the leaders sank, Which the nobles of the people dug, With the scepter and with their staffs." And from the wilderness they continued to Mattanah, 19 and from Mattanah to Nahaliel, and from Nahaliel to Bamoth, 20 and from Bamoth to the valley that is in the land of Moab, at the top of Pisgah which overlooks the wasteland.

## **THE FORTIETH STATION IN NUMBERS 33**

**The journey from Kadesh to Moab is chronicled in Nu 33:37-49.**

**They journeyed from Almon-diblathaim and camped in the [mountains of Abarim](#), before Nebo** - The [mountains of Abarim](#) were a ridge of rugged hills east of Jordan, and north and west of the Arnon. **Nebo** (Moses surveyed Promised Land - Nu 27:12-13+), **Pisgah** (Baalim blessed Israel - Nu 23:14-24+), and **Peor**, were different names of the hills in the mountains of Abarim.

## Related Resources:

- American Tract Society [Nebo](#)
- Bridgeway Bible Dictionary [Nebo](#)
- Easton's Bible Dictionary [Nebo](#)
- Fausset Bible Dictionary [Nebo \(2\)](#) [Nebo \(1\)](#)
- Holman Bible Dictionary [Nebo](#)
- Hitchcock Bible Names [Nebo](#)
- Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible [Nebo \(1\)](#) [Nebo](#)
- 1911 Encyclopedia Britannica [Nebo](#)
- International Standard Bible Encyclopedia [Nebo \(2\)](#) [Nebo \(1\)](#)
- Kitto Biblical Cyclopedia [Nebo](#)
- McClintock and Strong's Bible Encyclopedia [Nebo \(2\)](#) [Nebo](#), [Mount](#)
- American Tract Society [Pisgah](#)
- Bridgeway Bible Dictionary [Pisgah](#)
- Easton's Bible Dictionary [Pisgah](#)
- Fausset Bible Dictionary [Pisgah](#)
- Holman Bible Dictionary [Pisgah](#)
- Hitchcock Bible Names [Pisgah](#)
- Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible [Pisgah](#)
- International Standard Bible Encyclopedia [Pisgah](#)
- Kitto Biblical Cyclopedia [Pisgah](#)
- McClintock and Strong's Bible Encyclopedia [Pisgah](#)
- American Tract Society [Peor](#)
- Easton's Bible Dictionary [Peor](#)
- Fausset Bible Dictionary [Peor](#)
- Holman Bible Dictionary [Peor](#)
- Hitchcock Bible Names [Peor](#)
- International Standard Bible Encyclopedia [Peor](#)
- Kitto Biblical Cyclopedia [Peor](#)
- McClintock and Strong's Bible Encyclopedia [Peor](#)
- The Jewish Encyclopedia [Peor](#)

**Numbers 33:48** They journeyed from the mountains of Abarim and camped in the plains of Moab by the Jordan opposite Jericho.

- [Numbers 33 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Journey to Canaan  
(see Plains of Moab at top of map) ([Source](#))

## ENCAMPMENT AT MOAB

The journey from Kadesh to Moab is chronicled in Nu 33:37-49.

They journeyed from the mountains of Abarim ("The Mountains Beyond,") and camped in the [plains of Moab](#) by the Jordan opposite Jericho - After 40 years Israel has finally arrived for the assault of the land of Canaan.

Nu 22:1+ says "Then the sons of Israel journeyed, and camped in the [plains of Moab](#) beyond the Jordan opposite Jericho."

- [Click here for excellent map](#) of Kadesh to plains of Moab.
- International Standard Bible Encyclopedia [Moab; Moabites](#)
- Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible [Moab, Moabites](#)
- Morrish Bible Dictionary [Moab, Moabites](#)

- [Numbers 33 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- **The journey from Kadesh to Moab is chronicled in Nu 33:37-49.**

**They camped by the Jordan, from [Beth-jeshimoth](#) as far as [Abel-shittim](#) in the [plains of Moab](#).**

**Ronald Allen** notes that "The encampments of the thousands of Israel stretched from Beth Jeshimoth (Bêṭ hayešimōt, "Place of Desolation"; see Josh 12:3; 13:20) to Abel Shittim (ʿāḇēl haššitṭīm, "Field of Acacias"; see Num 25:1, where it is called Shittim; Mic 6:5), in the lowlands of Moab. The distance from these two sites, north to south, was over five miles—a suitable spread for the thousands of the tribes of Israel." (EBC)

**PLAINS OF MOAB** - עֲרֻבוֹת מוֹאָב, Arboth' Moab', Deserts of Moab), a plain east of the Jordan, opposite Jericho (Numbers 22:1; Numbers 26:13; Joshua 13:32), where the Israelites under Moses pitched their encampment on their way into 'Canaan (Numbers 31:12; Numbers 33:48 sq.; Deuteronomy 1:1; Deuteronomy 1:5), in the vicinity of Nebo (Deuteronomy 34:1; Deuteronomy 34:8). It is the level spot in the great depression of the Ghar into which Wady Hesban opens, between Wadys Kefrein and Jerifeh, a part of it being called the Valley of Shettim (q.v.). It then belonged to the Amorites (Numbers 21:22 sq.), but earlier to the Moabites; whence it had its name. In the division of the country it fell to the Gadites and Reubenites (Numbers 32:33 sq.; Joshua 13:32). (Cyclopedia of Biblical, Theological and Ecclesiastical Literature)

**PLAINS OF MOAB** - In Deuteronomy 1:1; Deuteronomy 2:8 , "plain" is translated in the Revised Version (British and American) "Arabah," and explained, "the deep valley running North and South of the Dead Sea." It was here that Moses delivered his last addresses. Usually the word is plural (ערבות , 'arebhōth ), the "plains" or steppes of Moab (Numbers 22:1 , etc.; Deuteronomy 34:1 , Deuteronomy 34:8 ). An interesting description is given in an article on "The Steppes of Moab" by Professor G. B. Gray in The Expositor , January, 1905. (ISBE)

**John Currid** - Numbers 33 describes Israel's journey from the escape out of Egypt to the encampment in the plains of Moab. Part of this rehearsal is to remind Israel of her recent past, where she had come from, and how God had richly and abundantly cared for her—even in the difficult circumstances of traversing a barren wasteland. God says to them in the book of Deuteronomy, 'And I led you forty years in the wilderness. Your clothes did not wear out on you and your sandal did not wear out on your foot.' (Dt 29:5) And in Numbers 33, the people are reminded of the incidents of the Passover, the plagues, the Red Sea and other important events of the Exodus and wanderings. **As the Israelites get ready to invade the land of promise, they are not to forget that they have come this far by the grace and mercy of God to them. It is good for Christians to be reminded of their spiritual pilgrimage. How is it that we have arrived at where we are today? It is a right thing for us to look back and to see how God has been so gracious to us. It is a proper exercise for us to consider our days before we became Christians, and how God redeemed us from the land of death and darkness—and, indeed, how he has led us, by his providence, in every aspect and time of our lives. And, so, no matter what we face in the days to come, we realize that God is with us and he will never abandon his people.** (EPSC-Nu)

**Allen** sums up the listing of the preceding itinerary...We now may make some concluding observations about this listing of the massā'im ("staging areas") of Israel in the desert:

1. That there are forty places may be significant as a mnemonic device; as the people dwelled in the desert for forty years, so there are forty sites of their journeys.
2. Most of the "places" were very temporary abodes; we should not be surprised that they are not easily located on modern maps. They are not made-up places, just encampments in the desert.
3. The principal story line was omitted from this listing; here just the names of the places are important. There is an assumption that one would know the basic associations as the places were listed.
4. The intrusion of the account of the death of Aaron (vv.38–40) is remarkable. This travel account is something of an obituary for Moses, as he was about to die. But in the midst of it he memorializes his brother.
5. The fact that many of the names are not sites that can be located, or that are not found in other passages, is an indication that this is a very ancient text; the notice that Moses was commanded by the Lord to write it (v.2) is more credible because of our uncertainty over locations.
6. Most significantly, the document talks, not of rebellion, but only of continuity. Were one only to read this list of staging places, he would conclude that Israel marched faithfully from one place to another in an orderly progression from Egypt to Moab. This is the point: the new generation has become the replacement for the old. It is as though there had never been a first generation. The people who arrive at Moab are regarded as

the people who left Egypt. The plan and purpose of God will be realized, despite the loss (and disappearance!) of an entire generation. (EBC)

#### Related Resources:

- American Tract Society [Beth-Jeshimoth](#)
- Easton's Bible Dictionary [Beth-Jeshimoth](#)
- Fausset Bible Dictionary [Beth-Jeshimoth](#)
- Holman Bible Dictionary [Beth-Jeshimoth](#)
- Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible [Beth-Jeshimoth](#)
- International Standard Bible Encyclopedia [Beth-Jeshimoth](#)
- McClintock and Strong's Bible Encyclopedia [Beth-Jeshimoth](#)
- The Jewish Encyclopedia [Beth-Jeshimoth](#)

#### Numbers 33:50 Then the LORD spoke to Moses in the plains of Moab by the Jordan opposite Jericho, saying,

- [Numbers 33 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

While Nu 33:1-48 reviews the past, the LORD now changes the focus to the future.

**Then the LORD spoke to Moses in the plains of Moab by the Jordan opposite Jericho, saying** - Before Israel actually goes in to possess the Promises, in this section (Nu 33:50-56) God gives the nation a "prescriptive injunction," describing what they are to do to the Canaanites and their abominable cultic paraphernalia! The key words are drive out and destroy.

Phrase "**Jordan opposite Jericho**" = 7x - Num 22:1 Num 31:12 Num 33:48 Num 33:50 Num 34:15 Num 35:1 Num 36:13

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#### James Smith - Handfuls of Purpose - HOW TO INHERIT GOD'S LAND OF PROMISE Numbers 33:50-56

"The way is long by which I hie,  
Flags my spirit wearily;  
Let Thy gracious hand me grasp,  
Let my trembling hand Thine clasp;  
We are tired, my heart and I,  
Ah! but, Jesus, Thou art nigh."

As the children of Israel were often "discouraged because of the way," so there are still many who are weary and tired seeking the better land of promise offered in Jesus Christ His Son. It is a land of rest and refreshing that can only be entered into by faith. Let us think again of—

#### 1. The character of the land. The land of Canaan is not so much a type of Heaven as it is of our present inheritance in Christ Jesus. It was—

1. A LAND OF PLENTY. "The Lord thy God bringeth thee into a good land. A land of brooks, of fountains, and depths. A land of wheat, barley, and vines, of oil, olive, and honey. A land wherein thou shalt eat bread without scarceness, thou shalt not lack anything in it" (Deut. 8:7-9). What a figurative description of the fulness of Christ! O the depths of His riches (Phil. 4:19).

2. A GOD-GIVEN LAND. "The land which the Lord thy God giveth thee" (Deut. 8:10). "God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son." He has given us His Son, and in Him all the riches of His grace. The unsearchable riches of Christ. What a gift! "All are yours, and ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's" (1 Cor. 3:23).

3. A LAND OFFERED TO ALL HIS PEOPLE. The land of promise was for every Israelite. There was in it an ample portion for every individual. There is enough in Christ for every Christian, yea, for every creature under Heaven. Whosoever will may take the water of life freely.

#### 2. The way to possess the land. There had to be—

1. A BELIEVING OF THE PROMISE. It is called the land of promise. The promise of God had to be accepted, His word must be trusted. This is the promise which He hath promised us, eternal life, and this life is in His

Son. This is the work of God that ye believe. They could not enter in because of unbelief.

2. AN ENTERING INTO IT. The land could not be inherited by them until they were in it. They had to claim it with their feet (Joshua 1:3). We must be in Christ before we can become heirs of God. We are accepted in Christ, and here Christ is made of God unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. Ye are complete in Him, perfectly filled up, abundantly satisfied. "The Lord is my portion," saith my soul. He is the lot of mine inheritance. My cup runneth over (Psa. 16:5; 23:6).

3. A DRIVING OUT OF THE ENEMY. "Then shall ye drive out all the inhabitants of the land" (vs. 52, 53). The enemies that would hinder our souls from entering into the full possession of our inheritance in Christ are very numerous and subtle, often feigning to be friendly. No quarter was to be given. Every native had to be driven out. Every thought must be brought into captivity to Christ, and every desire of the flesh subdued.

### 3. The warning against failure.

1. FAILURE IS POSSIBLE. "If ye will not drive out the inhabitants" (v. 55). It is to be feared that multitudes of the Lord's people fail here. They enter the land, that is, they accept the Lord Jesus Christ as their Saviour, but they fail to drive out the old man with his lusts.

2. COMPROMISE IS DANGEROUS. "Those which ye let remain shall be pricks in your eyes, and thorns in your sides" (v. 55). The enemy must have no place in the camp of the saints. Give no heed to the reasoning of the carnal mind, let not your eye spare them. These questionable things that at times act as thorns in the conscience, bringing discomfort, or as pricks in the eye, hindering from seeing things in their true light, drive them out. Bring out the Agags. Compromising with the evil within, or with the world without, mars the soul from enjoying its possessions in Christ.

3. DISOBEDIENCE IS FATAL. "If ye will not drive them out, moreover it shall come to pass that I shall do unto you as I thought to do unto them" (v. 56). That is, if you will not put away every evil thing out of your life, and be obedient to the word and will of the Lord after you have come to Him for justification and life, the joy of salvation and the blessings that are in Christ will lose all their preciousness and attractiveness to you. You will be driven out of the enjoyment of spiritual things in heavenly places. Ye cannot serve God and mammon. If ye be willing and obedient ye shall eat the good of the land, but if ye refuse and rebel ye shall be devoured.

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### Brian Bell - ANTICIPATING THE FUTURE! (50-56)

1. They needed to create their own (positive) history, & the book of Joshua proves they did just that.
2. (51) When you have crossed the Jordan into the land of Canaan - was a word of **promise** (again) & **assurance** that would encourage the nation in their new venture of faith.
3. (52-54) God also gave them **responsibilities**:
  1. **Drive** out the enemy; **Destroy** the idols; **Dispossess** the people; & then **Divide** the land.
  2. Mr. Spurgeon once made a parable. He said, "There was once a tyrant who summoned one of his subjects into his presence, and ordered him to **make a chain**. The poor blacksmith - that was his occupation - had to go to work and **forge the chain**. When it was done, he brought it into the presence of the tyrant, and was ordered to take it away and **make it twice the length**. He brought it again to the tyrant, and again he was **ordered to double it**. Back he came when he had obeyed the order, and the tyrant looked at it, and then commanded the servants to **bind the man hand and foot with the chain he had made and cast him into prison**.
    1. That is what the sin does with men.
    2. It's like **the wealthy contractor** who had finished building the **Tombs Prison** in *New York*, was found guilty of **forgery** and sentenced to several years in the very prison that he built!
  3. First you must **conquer**, then you can **claim**! First the **obedience**, then the **blessing**!
4. Q: Why be **so extreme**? Why not just conquer, **without extirpating** (destroying)? Why weary ourselves about small points of **moral excellence**? Why not enough to **possess** the best of the land, without laboring to **clear all the corners**? **What harm** could feeble remnants of heathen do?...Couldn't they make them useful?
  1. Story: A man purchased a **white mouse** to use as food for his **pet snake**. He dropped the unsuspecting mouse into the snake's glass cage, where the snake was sleeping in a bed of sawdust. The tiny mouse had a serious problem on his hands. At any moment he could be swallowed alive. Obviously, the mouse needed to come up with a brilliant plan. What did the terrified creature do? **He quickly set up work covering the snake with sawdust chips until it was completely buried**. With that, the mouse apparently **thought he had solved his problem**. [We must **clear all corners** not just cover the enemy/sin]
    1. The mouse solution, however, came from outside. The man took pity on the silly little mouse and removed him



from the cage. No matter how hard we try to cover or deny our sinful nature, it's fool's work. **Sin will eventually awake from sleep and shake off its cover.** Were it not for the saving grace of the Master's hand, sin would eat us alive.

2. **Christians** should make **no compromise with**, and **show no toleration for**, what is **sinful** and **selfish**.
5. A: When something's **rotten** in your refrigerator, how many of them do you throw away? If you don't want your **bread to rise**, how much yeast should you leave out of the dough? When you **wash your hands**, do you wash all 10 fingers? When you get a **root canal** how much of the puss do you want your dentist to take out?
  1. "Ma'am, you have 10 **mice** in your attic." Ok, get rid of 8??? No!
6. **Augustine's 3 Stages with Sin:**
  - [1] Lord make me good, **but not yet**.
  - [2] Lord make me good, **but not entirely**.
  - [3] Lord make me good.
7. We never see sin right until we see it **as against God**...All sin is against God in this sense: It is **His law** that is broken, **His authority** that is despised, **His government** that is set at naught.
  1. *Pharaoh and Balaam, Saul and Judas* each said, 'I have sinned'; but the returning prodigal said, '*I have sinned against heaven and against you*'; and David said, 'Against You, You only, have I sinned.'
8. **Irritants** in your eyes & **Thorns** in your side & **Harassed** in the land - they would be constant and dangerous annoyances to them.
9. No compromise with idolatry:
10. There must be **no complicity with evil**, for if there be, it will eat out the very heart of our character & happiness.
11. It is much better to root out evil with a strong hand than to allow it in any form.
12. Else like a boomerang, our **sinful permissions** will come back on us so quickly
13. Ask a rancher how a cow gets lost, and chances are he will reply, 'Well, **the cow starts nibbling** on a tuft of green grass, and when it finishes, it **looks ahead to the next tuft of green grass** and starts nibbling on that one, and then it nibbles on a tuft of grass right next to a hole in the fence. It then sees another tuft of green grass on the other side of the fence, so it nibbles on that one and then goes on to the next tuft. **The next thing you know, the cow has nibbled itself into being lost'** (*Mike Yaconelli wrote in the Wittenburg Door*.)
14. **End:** Mt Pinatubo in the Philippines, roared back to life after 600 years of quiet slumber
  1. When asked to account for the incredible destruction, caused by this volcano, **aresearch scientist** from the Philippine department of volcanology observed, "When a volcano is silent for many years, our people forget that it's a volcano and begin to treat it like a mountain."
    2. **What have you started to treat as only a mountain in your life?**

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## Chuck Smith - "A CLEAN SWEEP."

### I. COMMANDMENTS FOR WHEN THEY CAME INTO THE LAND. GOD TOLD MOSES TO TELL THE PEOPLE: SPEAK UNTO THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL, AND SAY UNTO THEM, WHEN YE ARE PASSED OVER JORDAN INTO THE LAND OF CANAAN...

A. I love this positive assertion.

1. It is not if you pass over Jordan into the land.
2. It is when you pass over Jordan into the land
3. There is a certainty to the promises of God.
4. This can bring comfort or terror; it all depends on where you are in your relationship with Him.
  - a. John 3:16.
  - b. Psa. 9:17: "The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all..."

B. These are the things they were to do.

1. They were to drive out all of the inhabitants.
  - a. This seems very severe, until you understand the practices of the people.
  - b. These people had no morals, they lived like animals.
  - c. Their major gods were the pleasure god of Molech, and the goddess of sex, Ashtoreth.
  - d. Their worship involved all types of orgies.

e. Naturally, there were many unwanted babies born in a culture that was given over to unbridled sexual passions.

f. These babies would be tossed alive into the bonfires that were ignited for the god Molech.

2. They were to destroy all of the pictures.

a. The pictures were pornographic and designed to arouse the sexual passions. Thus, God ordered them destroyed.

b. When the archeologists were uncovering the ruins of Pompeii, it was necessary to cover the art on the walls of the common homes to keep the workers from being totally debased.

3. Destroy all of the molten images.

a. These too were made to be sexually arousing.

b. If you have ever seen pictures of Ashtarte, or Aphrodite, you know what I mean.

c. When the archeologists were excavating the city of David that was destroyed by Babylon, in the homes they discovered hundreds of these little pornographic idols. They were a mute confirmation to the book of Jeremiah who continually warned them to turn from their idolatry.

4. Completely destroy their high places. These were their places of worship.

a. They would build their temples at the tops of the hills, or at the prominent end of the city.

b. A tell usually looks like a mesa with one end higher than the other.

c. The reason why the one end is higher, that is where the temple to their god was built.

5. You shall dispossess the inhabitants of the land.

C. Some question how God, who is love, could command such an utter destruction of nations and people.

1. Often you will find people using these commands as an argument against God and the Bible.

2. It was God's love for his children that prompted such rash actions.

3. No culture or sub-culture could survive very long living as they lived. It was only a matter of time until they would have destroyed themselves.

4. Living in a society where sex is considered as only a sport to be engaged in for pleasure. Where the taboos have been removed. Where you go out into the streets or bars at night just for the purpose of finding someone to spend the night with, is to live in a society that is on a free fall to destruction.

5. Think it through. God created this powerfully strong sex drive in us. What was His purpose?

a. To cause us to be attracted to someone of the opposite sex.

b. To cause us to desire them so much that we are willing to leave our fathers and mothers that we might be united as one with them.

c. That through our love for each other we might provide a loving, supportive atmosphere for the raising of our children than shall be created by our union.

d. God is interested in the perpetuating of the human race. He told Adam and Eve to be fruitful and multiply.

6. What happens when people begin to have sex, just for sex' sake?

a. There is no real commitment to each other.

b. No interest in creating a loving home environment.

c. If you are having sex for the sake of a thrill, you might as well have sex with another man if you are a man, if that is what gives you the excitement you seek.

d. However you can never prove that that is normal, until you can produce a baby by that relationship.

7. The people that God was calling to dispossess were just in that condition. They were in the final stages of destroying themselves.

8. Often when a nation sinks that low, God intervenes and hastens the destruction of that nation. A quick death is more merciful than a slow, tortuous death.

D. What we need to realize is that God is setting forth principles here. They are in the context, national principles, but they also apply on an individual level.

1. Pornography is a destructive element in a nation, but also in an individual life.
2. It creates heightened sexual arousal. You begin to fantasize, then you seek to actualize your fantasy.
3. The problem is that reality can never measure up to fantasy.
4. Thus, reality is always in the end disappointing.
5. At the end of a big meal, when you have eaten a few more mouth's full than you knew you should, have you ever said, "I'm so full, I'll never eat again as long as I live."
  - a. Did you get to eat again?
  - b. Jesus made a remarkable statement to the Samaritan woman at the well, He said, "Drink of this water and you will thirst again."
  - c. Put that over your dream today, over every ambition, over every goal.
6. When fantasies are realized, they are often so disappointing that you have a complete reversal of emotions, you go from lusting to hating. The story of Amnon the son of David:

2 Samuel 13:1-15 Now it was after this that Absalom the son of David had a beautiful sister whose name was Tamar, and Amnon the son of David loved her. 2Amnon was so frustrated because of his sister Tamar that he made himself ill, for she was a virgin, and it seemed hard to Amnon to do anything to her. 3But Amnon had a friend whose name was Jonadab, the son of Shimeah, David's brother; and Jonadab was a very shrewd man. 4He said to him, "O son of the king, why are you so depressed morning after morning? Will you not tell me?" Then Amnon said to him, "I am in love with Tamar, the sister of my brother Absalom." 5Jonadab then said to him, "Lie down on your bed and pretend to be ill; when your father comes to see you, say to him, 'Please let my sister Tamar come and give me some food to eat, and let her prepare the food in my sight, that I may see it and eat from her hand.'" 6So Amnon lay down and pretended to be ill; when the king came to see him, Amnon said to the king, "Please let my sister Tamar come and make me a couple of cakes in my sight, that I may eat from her hand." 7Then David sent to the house for Tamar, saying, "Go now to your brother Amnon's house, and prepare food for him." 8So Tamar went to her brother Amnon's house, and he was lying down. And she took dough, kneaded it, made cakes in his sight, and baked the cakes. 9She took the pan and dished them out before him, but he refused to eat. And Amnon said, "Have everyone go out from me." So everyone went out from him. 10Then Amnon said to Tamar, "Bring the food into the bedroom, that I may eat from your hand." So Tamar took the cakes which she had made and brought them into the bedroom to her brother Amnon. 11When she brought them to him to eat, he took hold of her and said to her, "Come, lie with me, my sister." 12But she answered him, "No, my brother, do not violate me, for such a thing is not done in Israel; do not do this disgraceful thing! 13"As for me, where could I get rid of my reproach? And as for you, you will be like one of the fools in Israel. Now therefore, please speak to the king, for he will not withhold me from you." 14However, he would not listen to her; since he was stronger than she, he violated her and lay with her. 15Then Amnon hated her with a very great hatred; for the hatred with which he hated her was greater than the love with which he had loved her. And Amnon said to her, "Get up, go away!"

**II. GOD'S WARNING: BUT IF YE WILL NOT DRIVE OUT THE INHABITANTS OF THE LAND FROM BEFORE YOU; THEN IT SHALL COME TO PASS, THAT THOSE WHICH YE LET REMAIN OF THEM SHALL BE PRICKS IN YOUR EYES, AND THORNS IN YOUR SIDES, AND SHALL VEX YOU IN THE LAND WHEREIN YE DWELL. MOREOVER IT SHALL COME TO PASS, [THAT] I SHALL DO UNTO YOU, AS I THOUGHT TO DO UNTO THEM.**

- A. Sin is destructive. Everything that destroys, God classified as sin.
  1. Everything that is beneficial to you and others, God encourages.
  2. It is only the destructive things that God has forbidden.
- B. Ultimately sin will blind you (Pricks in your eyes).
- C. It will bring pain (Thorns in your side).

D. It will torment you (Vex you).

E. It will destroy you (I will do to you as I have planned to do to them).

F. What is the sad testimony of history?

1. They did not do what God said for them to do.

2. God did for them what He said He would do. They were cast out of the land.

G. The Greeks had a saying, "The dice of the gods are loaded." If you try to go against God, you cannot possibly win, but will ultimately be destroyed.

**Numbers 33:51 "Speak to the sons of Israel and say to them, 'When you cross over the Jordan into the land of Canaan,**

- [Numbers 33 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## MOSES COMMANDED TO SPEAK TO ISRAEL

**Speak to the sons of Israel and say to them, 'When you cross over the Jordan into the land of Canaan-** Speak is a command which Moses obeys even though he knows he will not cross over into the land of Canaan. Notice the time phrase **When** (not "if") **you cross over**, indicating that it was not a doubtful possibility that they would cross over but a definite probability, ultimately a fulfillment of God's covenant promise to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob (Ge 15:18-20+). God always keeps His promises. Notice that Moses was to speak these words of assurance to the sons of Israel and this would have encouraged them to undertake the task at hand, the conquest of the land.

**Matthew Henry** writes (on vv 50-56) that "Now that they were to pass over Jordan, they were entering again into temptation to follow idols; and they are threatened that, if they spared either the idols or the idolaters, their sin would certainly be their punishment. They would foster vipers in their own bosoms. The remnant of the Canaanites, if they made any peace with them, though but for a time, would be pricks in their eyes, and thorns in their sides. **We must expect trouble and affliction from whatever sin we indulge; that which we are willing should tempt us, will vex us.** It was intended that the Canaanites should be put out of the land; but if the Israelites learned their wicked ways, they also would be put out.

Let us hear this and fear. If we do not drive out sin, sin will drive us out.

If we are not the death of our lusts, our lusts will be the death of our souls.

**Land of Canaan - 65x in 63v - Note prevalence in Numbers 32-35** - Gen. 11:31; Gen. 12:5; Gen. 13:12; Gen. 16:3; Gen. 17:8; Gen. 23:2; Gen. 23:19; Gen. 31:18; Gen. 33:18; Gen. 35:6; Gen. 36:5; Gen. 36:6; Gen. 37:1; Gen. 42:5; Gen. 42:7; Gen. 42:13; Gen. 42:29; Gen. 42:32; Gen. 44:8; Gen. 45:17; Gen. 45:25; Gen. 46:6; Gen. 46:12; Gen. 46:31; Gen. 47:1; Gen. 47:4; Gen. 47:13; Gen. 47:14; Gen. 47:15; Gen. 48:3; Gen. 48:7; Gen. 49:30; Gen. 50:5; Gen. 50:13; Exod. 6:4; Exod. 16:35; Lev. 14:34; Lev. 18:3; Lev. 25:38; Num. 13:2; Num. 13:17; Num. 26:19; Num. 32:30; Num. 32:32; Num. 33:40; Num. 33:51; Num. 34:2; Num. 34:29; Num. 35:10; Num. 35:14; Deut. 32:49; Jos. 5:12; Jos. 14:1; Jos. 21:2; Jos. 22:9; Jos. 22:10; Jos. 22:11; Jos. 22:32; Jos. 24:3; Jdg. 21:12; 1 Chr. 16:18; Ps. 105:11; Acts 13:19

**Numbers 33:52 then you shall drive out **all** the inhabitants of the land from before you, and destroy **all** their figured stones, and destroy **all** their molten images and demolish **all** their high places;**

- Dt 7:1-2; Dt 9:1; Josh 3:17 2Co 6:17
- Ex 23:24,31-33 34:12-17 De 7:2-5,25,26 12:2,3,30,31 20:16-18 Jos 11:11,12 23:7 Jdg 2:2
- [Numbers 33 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### Related Passages:

Deuteronomy 7:1-2 "When the LORD your God brings you into the land where you are entering to possess it, and clears away many nations before you (**GOD'S SOVEREIGNTY**), the Hittites and the Girgashites and the Amorites and the Canaanites and the Perizzites and the Hivites and the Jebusites, seven nations greater and

stronger than you, 2 and when the LORD your God delivers them before you and you defeat them, then you shall utterly destroy them (**MAN'S RESPONSIBILITY**). You shall make no covenant with them and show no favor to them.

Deuteronomy 12:2-3 "You shall utterly destroy all the places where the nations whom you shall dispossess serve their gods, on the high mountains and on the hills and under every green tree. 3 "You shall tear down their altars and smash their sacred pillars and burn their Asherim with fire, and you shall cut down the engraved images of their gods and **obliterate their name from that place**

## **GOD IS CALLING FOR TOTAL CONQUEST OF CANAAN**

**Then** - [expression of time](#) - [then](#). First cross over, **THEN** drive out and dispossess.

Don't miss the "key word" in this passage. Did you see it? It is the word **ALL**! God knew that partial eradication would never suffice and called repeatedly for ALL of the Canaanite idolatry to be obliterated. He calls for the same radical obedience in our lives today as Christians so that we can possess all of our possessions in Christ!

Compromise will always curtail God's blessings!

**Constable** - God wanted to clean up the land spiritually and to make it a "holy land."

**Wiersbe** -The Lord gave His people a large land and a good land, but they didn't defeat their enemies and claim it all by faith (Josh. 15:63; 16:10; 17:11-13; Jdg. 1:21-35).

**you shall drive out all the inhabitants of the land from before you** - Note that the parallel in Deuteronomy 7:1-2 (ABOVE) says Israel is not just to **drive** them **out** but to **utterly destroy them**, ([charam](#)), make no covenant with them and show them no favor. Once again we see the juxtaposition of God's sovereignty (His promise) and Man's responsibility, in this case to **drive out** and destroy all remnants of paganism and pagan idolatry. The Hebrew verb shall drive out (*yarash*) means to take possession, to inherit, to dispossess, to drive out in the sense of conquering the land. **Baker** adds that **drive out** ([yarash](#)) is "a theme of Deuteronomy in particular where God's promise of covenantal relationship is directly related to Israelite possession (and thereby foreign dispossession) of the land of Israel. This theme continued throughout Israel's history and prophetic message. Possession of the land was directly connected to a person's relationship with the Lord; breaking the covenantal relationship led to dispossession. But even in exile, Israelites awaited the day when they would repossess the land (Jer. 30:3)." (WSOT) **Drive out** is the Hebrew verb [yarash](#) is translated here in the [Septuagint](#) with a much "stronger" verb [apollumi](#) which means to destroy, kill and bring to ruin.

**THOUGHT** - The severity of God's instructions are based on the fact that it is a necessity because a **holy people** can have ABSOLUTELY NO communion or fellowship with an **unholy people** (see [Canaanites and their religion](#)). God issues a parallel call (including 4 commands) to believers in 2 Cor 6:14-18

**Do not be bound** ([present imperative with a negative](#) see [our need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey](#) this command for holy behavior!) together with unbelievers; for what **partnership** have righteousness and lawlessness, or what **fellowship** has light with darkness? 15 Or what **harmony** has Christ with Belial, or what has a believer **in common** with an unbeliever? 16 Or what **agreement** has the temple of God with idols? **For** (an important term of explanation) we are the temple of the living God; just as God said, "I WILL DWELL IN THEM AND WALK AMONG THEM; AND I WILL BE THEIR GOD, AND THEY SHALL BE MY PEOPLE. 17 "Therefore, **COME OUT** ([aorist imperative](#) see [our need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey](#)) FROM THEIR MIDST AND **BE SEPARATE** ([aorist imperative](#) see [our need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey](#))," says the Lord. "AND **DO NOT TOUCH** ([present imperative with a negative](#) see [our need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey](#)) WHAT IS UNCLEAN; And I will welcome you. 18 "And I will be a father to you, And you shall be sons and daughters to Me," Says the Lord Almighty.

Then God gives a positive injunction in 2 Cor 7:1+

Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all defilement of flesh and spirit, perfecting (present tense) holiness (aka progressive sanctification) in the fear of God.

**William MacDonald** on **drive out all the inhabitants** - This may seem cruel to people today, but actually these people were among the most corrupt, immoral, depraved creatures whom the world has ever known.

**Wiersbe** reminds that "The **sovereignty** of God doesn't destroy human **individuality** or **responsibility**. God is so great that He can

will us the freedom to choose but still accomplish His purposes. What a mighty God is He! No wonder Paul wrote, "How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out" (Rom. 11:33)." (Be Counted)

Jehovah had given a similar command at Sinai (Ex. 23:20–33; Ex 34:10–17) and it would be repeated in Moses' farewell message to the nation (Deut. 7:1-26, Dt 12:1–3).

**And destroy all their figured stones, and destroy all their molten images and demolish all their high places** - Review these powerful verbs - cross over, drive out (dispossess), destroy, demolish and then (Nu 33:54) divide the land.

The land of Canaan is not so much a type of Heaven as it is of our present inheritance in Christ Jesus.

-- James Smith

**Ronald Allen** comments on the evil nature of the high places writing that "The licentious system of sexually centered worship was particularly exhibitionist in nature. Ba'al and Asherah were regarded as voyeur deities whose own libidos would be "turned on" by viewing orgiastic rites or sacrificial acts of especial brutality or blood-letting (notice the blood-letting of the pagan priests on Mount Carmel, 1 Ki 18:28). The raised platform was an enhancement "to let the gods" see more clearly. As is well known from the reading of the historical books, Israel adapted the use of *bāmōt* for their own local patterns of the worship of the Lord (or for syncretistic systems of worship of the Lord and Ba'al). One of the most resistant of paganisms in Israel's later history, the *bāmōt* were the banes of godly kings who fought desperately to destroy these "high places."

The idea of utterly destroying the idolatrous artifacts speaks of having absolutely no contact with them. Unfortunately they did not utterly destroy the idolatrous images and about 800 years later the apostate religious leaders had actually brought these abominations into the Holy Temple. Ezekiel records a description that if not written in God's Word would not be believable of Israel...

So I entered and looked, and behold, every form of creeping things and beasts and detestable things, with all the idols of the house of Israel, were carved on the wall all around. 11 Standing in front of them were seventy elders of the house of Israel, with Jaazaniah the son of Shaphan standing among them, each man with his censor in his hand and the fragrance of the cloud of incense rising (OVERTLY WORSHIPPING THESE DETESTABLE THINGS!). 12 Then He said to me, "Son of man, do you see what the elders of the house of Israel are committing in the dark, each man in the room of his **carved images** ([maskiyth](#))? For they say, 'The LORD does not see us; the LORD has forsaken the land.'" (Ezekiel 8:10-12+)

**Destroy...destroy** (ruin) ([06](#))([abad](#)) is first of all predicated of God's people under divine judgment for rebellion against him, under the covenant curse. In particular, *abad* constitutes the inevitable fate of the Israelite people, who will perish in the process of being sent into exile (cf. Lev. 26:38; Dt 4:26; 8:20; 30:18; Jos. 23:13; Jer. 4:9; 27:10; Eze. 25: 7). God warned Israel "But you will perish among the nations, and your enemies' land will consume you." (Lev. 26:38) **Abad** is a verb meaning to perish, to be destroyed, to be ruined, to be lost, to in a state of ruin and destruction pertaining to an object, including the death (Ex 10:7). **Abad** can mean literally to die, or, in the case of things, reputation, etc., to pass away. In a causative sense, *abad* means to destroy, to reduce to some degree of disorder. God's destruction of evil, both threatened (Lev. 26:38) and realized (Nu 17:12); Israel's destruction of the Canaanites and their altars (Nu 33:52; Dt. 12:2, 3); the perishing of natural life (Ps. 49:10; 102:26; Eccl. 7:15); the perishing of abstract qualities such as wisdom and hope (Isa. 29:14; Lam. 3:18); and an item or animal being lost (Dt. 22:3; Eccl. 3:6)

**Figured stones** (**carved images**) ([04906](#)) ([maskiyth](#)) means an image, showpiece, something to be displayed. In this verse it is used "of carved figures, idolatrous symbols of the pagan religious practices of the Canaanite peoples. These would include sexual symbols of the fertility deities that were so pervasive in that region. ( Lv 26:11, Ezek 8:12)" (Allen) In the figurative sense it refers to one's imagination (Ps 73:7, Pr 11:11) which is in essence an "image" in one's mind which is unreal and illusory even as are vain, worthless idols (includes the deceitful "idol" of [mammon](#) or money!).

**Maskiyth** - 6x in 6v - carved images(1), figured(1), figured stones(1), imagination(1), imaginations(1), settings(1).

Lev. 26:1; Num. 33:52; Ps. 73:7; Prov. 18:11; Prov. 25:11; Ezek. 8:12

**Molten images** ([04541](#))(**massekah**) is from the root *nasak* mainly used for the "pouring out" of a drink offering or libation, and for the "casting" of metal images. When the word means a libation or drink offering, it is associated with sacrifices that seal a covenant relationship (Isa. 25:7; 28:20; 30:1); however, the word usually signifies an image or molten metal, a cast metal image, molten image, an image of an idol made out of metal. The most glaring use is the **molten** calf in Ex 32:4 and Ex 32:8 (Ps 106:19). God then make it clear " "You

shall make for yourself no molten gods." (Ex 34:17, cf Lev 19:4, Dt 27:15). "Later, when God renews his covenant following this early act of idolatry, he first warns them to not worship any other gods and then explicitly forbids them from making "gods of cast metal" (massēkâ; Exod 34:13–17; compare Deut 27:15). Several other times when massēkâ is used, it refers back to the event at Sinai when Israel worshiped this calf (Deut 9:12, 16; Neh 9:18; Psa 106:19). The word may be used to make explicit that a certain idol was overlaid in metal, especially with the phrase pesel umassēkâ (פֶּסֶל וּמַסֵּכָה), which literally means "image and molten image" but functions as a hendiadys meaning "image of cast metal" (Deut 27:15; Jdg 17:3). The word is also used in general contexts condemning idolatry that frequently pile up multiple synonyms for idolatrous images (Isa 30:22; Hos 13:2)." (Lexham Theological Wordbook)

**Massekah** - 26v - alliance(1), image(2), molten(5), molten image(8), molten images(9), molten metal(1). Exod. 32:4; Exod. 32:8; Exod. 34:17; Lev. 19:4; Num. 33:52; Deut. 9:12; Deut. 9:16; Deut. 27:15; Jdg. 17:3; Jdg. 17:4; Jdg. 18:14; Jdg. 18:17; Jdg. 18:18; 1 Ki. 14:9; 2 Ki. 17:16; 2 Chr. 28:2; 2 Chr. 34:3; 2 Chr. 34:4; Neh. 9:18; Ps. 106:19; Isa. 30:1; Isa. 30:22; Isa. 42:17; Hos. 13:2; Nah. 1:14; Hab. 2:18

**Destroy** (demolish, exterminate) (08045)(**shamad**) is a verb meaning "be destroyed, decimated, perished, overthrown, exterminated, i.e., pertaining to being in a totally ruined state, which can include death of a person or extinction of an entity." (Swanson) The destruction depicted by **shamad** usually involves a rather sudden catastrophe such as warfare or a mass killing. For example in Dt 6:15 God says He will "**wipe**" Israel off the face of the earth, so great was His anger against them!

**High places** (01116)(**bamah**) means a physical high place like a mountain (Ps 18:33, Hab 3:19) or a place of worship, cultic high place. Six activities seem to be related to high places -- burning of incense, sacrificing, eating of sacrificial meals, praying, prostitution, child sacrifice (cf. bama in the valley, Je7:31). The first use in Lev 26:30 is God's declaration to Israel "I will destroy your high places." In Dt 32:13 speaking of Jacob (Israel) He declared "He made him ride on the high places of the earth," so clearly some uses of bamah are not negative. In a similar use God says Israel "you will tread upon their (Israel's enemies') high places." Another positive use is Psalm 18:33 where David declared Jehovah "makes my feet like hinds' feet, And sets me upon my high places." (cp Hab 3:19 - NET Note = David "compares his agility in battle to the ability of a deer to negotiate rugged, high terrain without falling or being injured.", cp Isa 58:14) We see the effect of Israel's high places on Jehovah in Ps 78:58 = "For they provoked Him with their high places and aroused His jealousy with their graven images."

A sad phrase that is repeated again and again (speaking of Israel) is "the high places were not taken away" (1Ki 15:14, 2Chr 15:17 = King Asa but notice he did remove some of them - 2Chr 14:3, 5, 1Ki 22:43, 2Chr 20:33 = King Jehoshaphat, 2Ki 12:3 = King Jehoash, 2Ki 14:4 = King Amaziah, 2Ki 15:4 = King Azariah, 2Ki 15:35 = King Jotham son of Uzziah and look what his son did in 2Ki 16:1-4!, 2Chr 20:33). In many of these passages the context was of a king doing "spiritual house cleaning" so to speak and yet still failing to remove the high places. Isn't sin that way? We confess one or two sins but we have a little pet sin (better a "venomous viper") that we just don't have the heart to kill! God grant us spiritual eyes and hearts to learn from Israel's mistakes. Amen! Some kings like Hezekiah (1Ki 18:4, 2Chr 31:1, Isa 36:7) and Josiah (2Ki 23:4,8, 13, 15, 19-20, 2Chr 34:3 cp prophecy about Josiah 300 years earlier = 1Ki 13:2) did destroy the high places, but in Hezekiah's case his own son Manasseh rebuilt them (2Ki 21:1-2, 3, 2Chr 33:3) and in Josiah's case the people rebuilt them!

We see the spiritual effect of high places on the people when King Jehoram (2Chr 21:5-10) "made high places in the mountains of Judah, and caused the inhabitants of Jerusalem to play the harlot and led Judah astray." (2Chr 21:11)

One of the most incredible (and saddest) verses in the OT (in my opinion) is "Then Solomon built a high place for Chemosh the detestable idol of Moab, on the mountain which is east of Jerusalem, and for Molech the detestable idol of the sons of Ammon." (1Ki 11:7, cp 1Ki 3:3 = Solomon had "half a heart" for God!) This was too much for Jehovah and He declared that the 12 tribes would be split as a result of Solomon's sin! Sin is costly. You may think you are getting away with it, but you are not! You may think you are the wisest man in the world (like Solomon) but you are really the most foolish (as Solomon was)! There was one high place that was not idolatrous (at least not at the outset) - "Then Solomon, and all the assembly with him, went to the high place which was at Gibeon; for God's tent of meeting was there, which Moses the servant of the LORD had made in the wilderness." (2Chr 1:3, cp 1Chr 16:39-40, 21:29).

#### Related Resources:



- [Why did God command the extermination / genocide of the Canaanites, women and children included? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [Why did God command the Israelites to completely destroy the Midianites in Numbers 31:17? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- American Tract Society [High Places](#)
- Bridgeway Bible Dictionary [High places](#)
- Easton's Bible Dictionary [High Place](#)
- Fausset Bible Dictionary [High Places](#)
- Holman Bible Dictionary [High Place](#)
- Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible [High Place, Sanctuary](#)
- Morrish Bible Dictionary [High Place](#)
- Hawker's Poor Man's Dictionary [High places](#)
- Smith Bible Dictionary [High Places](#)
- Watson's Theological Dictionary [High Places](#)
- 1911 Encyclopedia Britannica [High Place](#)
- International Standard Bible Encyclopedia [High Place](#)
- Kitto Biblical Cyclopedia [High places and groves](#)
- McClintock and Strong's Bible Encyclopedia [High Place](#)
- The Nuttall Encyclopedia [High Places](#)
- The Jewish Encyclopedia [High Place](#)
- [Girdlestone - Chapter 19](#) - Idol, Teraphim, Grove, High Place

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### G Campbell Morgan - Num. 33:52

This was the distinct command of God to a people whom He had wondrously led and prepared, by delivering them from Egypt's slavery, and disciplining them for forty years in the wilderness. They were now to come into the possession of the land which He had appointed to them. They were His people, and the purpose of their coming into that land was that of the manifestation of Himself, and that of the carrying out of His programme. While their possession was to be in order to the preservation of the nation until the Deliverer of all the nations should come, it was in the first place in order to the cleansing of that land from a people utterly polluted and corrupt. It was necessary that the latter should be utterly dispossessed, and every trace of their worship swept away, wherever found. This charge was accompanied by warnings, uttered in simple terms, and yet of the most solemn nature. No false pity or selfish motive was to operate in such fashion as to leave any corrupting influence behind. The unequivocal command to drive out all, was based upon the tenderest regard of God for the well-being of the chosen people, and through them, the whole race. To tolerate what God has condemned to destruction, is to retain what in itself will prove to be a source of continual difficulty and suffering. The most solemn words of all are those with which the chapter ends: "And it shall come to pass, that as I thought to do unto them, so will I do unto you." God's elections to blessing are dependent upon obedience to His will

## High Places R A Torrey

- Used for idolatrous worship 1 Kings 11:7,8
- God sometimes worshipped on 1 Samuel 9:12; 1 Kings 3:2,4; 2 Chronicles 33:17

### MENTIONED IN SCRIPTURE

- Gibeon 1 Kings 3:4
- Arnon Numbers 21:28
- Baal Numbers 22:41
- Tophet Jeremiah 7:31
- Bamah Ezekiel 20:29
- Aven Hosea 10:8
- Adorned with tapestry Ezekiel 16:16
- Surrounded with groves 1 Kings 14:23

### BUILT BY

- Solomon 1 Kings 11:7 [Why did Solomon worship at a high place?](#)

- Jeroboam 1 Kings 12:31
- Jehoram 2 Chronicles 21:11
- Ahaz 2 Chronicles 28:25
- Manasseh 2 Kings 21:3; 2 Chronicles 33:3
- People of Judah 1 Kings 14:23
- People of Israel 2 Kings 17:9
- Priests ordained for 1 Kings 12:32; 13:33
- Sacrifices and incense offered to idols upon 2 Kings 12:3; 16:4
- Enchantments used upon Numbers 23:3; 24:1
- Of the Canaanites to be destroyed Numbers 33:52

## THE JEWS

- Built, in their cities 2 Kings 17:9
- Built, in all their streets Ezekiel 16:24,31
- Condemned for building Ezekiel 16:23-35
- Provoked God with 1 Kings 14:22,23; Psalm 78:58
- Threatened with destruction of Leviticus 26:30
- Punished for 2 Kings 17:11,18

## DESTROYED

- Asa, partially 2 Chronicles 14:3,5; 15:17
- Jehoshaphat 2 Chronicles 17:6
- Hezekiah 2 Kings 18:4; 2 Chronicles 31:1
- Josiah 2 Kings 23:8; 2 Chronicles 34:3

## NOT REMOVED

- Jehoash 2 Kings 12:3
- Amaziah 2 Kings 14:4
- Azariah 2 Kings 15:4
- Jotham 2 Kings 15:35

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### Question: [What is the significance of high places in the Bible?](#)

**Answer: High places**, very simply, were places of worship on elevated pieces of ground. High places were originally dedicated to idol worship (Numbers 33:52; Leviticus 26:30), especially among the Moabites (Isaiah 16:12). These shrines often included an altar and a sacred object such as a stone pillar or wooden pole in various shapes identified with the object of worship (animals, constellations, goddesses, and fertility deities). It seems that, at times, high places were set up in a spot that had been artificially elevated; 2 Kings 16:4 seems to differentiate the “high places” from the “hills.”

The Israelites, forever turning away from God, practiced Molech worship and built high places for Baal (Jeremiah 32:35). Although Solomon built the temple of God in Jerusalem, he later established idolatrous high places for his foreign wives outside of Jerusalem and worshiped with them, causing him the loss of the kingdom (1 Kings 11:11). The people were still sacrificing at the pagan high places before the temple was built, and Solomon joined them. After the Lord appeared to him in a dream at Gibeon, the king returned to Jerusalem and sacrificed offerings; however, he continued to waver between the two places of worship.

Not all high places were dedicated to idol worship. They played a major role in Israelite worship, and the earliest biblical mention of a site of worship, later called a “high place,” is found in Genesis 12:6–8 where Abram built altars to the Lord at Shechem and Hebron. Abraham built an altar in the region of Moriah and was willing to sacrifice his son there (Genesis 22:1–2). This site is traditionally believed to be the same high place where the temple of Jerusalem was built. Jacob set up a stone pillar to the Lord at Bethel (Genesis 28:18–19), and Moses met God on Mt. Sinai (Exodus 19:1–3).

Joshua set up stone pillars after crossing the Jordan (Joshua 4:20) and considered this a high place of worship because the Israelites “came up from” the Jordan onto higher ground. The high places were visited regularly by the prophet Samuel (1 Samuel 7:16). High places as sites of Canaanite idol worship (Judges 3:19) extended into the period of Elijah (1 Kings 18:16–40). God would name only one high place where sacrifice was authorized, and that was the temple in Jerusalem (2 Chronicles 3:1). God

commanded that all other high places be destroyed. King Josiah destroyed them in 2 Kings 22—23. [GotQuestions.org](http://GotQuestions.org)

**Numbers 33:53 and you shall take possession of the land and live in it, for I have given the land to you to possess it.**

- De 32:8 Ps 24:1,2 Ps 115:16 Jer 27:5,6 Da 4:17,25,32 Mt 20:15
- [Numbers 33 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passages:

Deuteronomy 32:8 “When the Most High gave the nations their inheritance, When He separated the sons of man, He set the boundaries of the peoples According to the number of the sons of Israel.

### TAKING POSSESSION OF GOD'S GIFT

**And you shall take possession of the land and live in it - Take possession** is the same verb used in Nu 33:52 (drive out), [yarash](#) which means to take possession, to inherit which Israel would do by driving out the Canaanites and conquering the land.

**for** (term of explanation) **I have given the land to you to possess** ([yarash](#)) **it** - This was ultimately the fulfillment of the Abrahamic Covenant, specifically the promise in Genesis 15:18-21+. While the land was a gift, it still had to be possessed by the sons of Israel.

**THOUGHT** - While we have been given all blessings in the heavenly places in Christ (Eph 1:3+), we still must possess those blessings by faith, a faith which obeys. Obedience is the path to blessing!

First you conquer, then you claim.

First the obedience, then the blessing.

-- Warren Wiersbe

**Numbers 33:54 'You shall inherit the land by lot according to your families; to the larger you shall give more inheritance, and to the smaller you shall give less inheritance. Wherever the lot falls to anyone, that shall be his. You shall inherit according to the tribes of your fathers.**

- **You shall inherit the land by lot** Nu 26:52-56
- **give more inheritance:** Nu 26:54
- **give less inheritance:** Jos 15:1-12 16:1-4 17:1-13 18:11-28 19:1-48
- [Numbers 33 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passages:

Proverbs 16:33 The lot is cast into the lap, But its every decision is from the LORD.

Numbers 26:52-56+ (**DISTRIBUTION OF LAND BY CLAN SIZE**) Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, 53“Among these the land shall be divided for an inheritance according to the number of names. 54 “To the larger group you shall increase their inheritance, and to the smaller group you shall diminish their inheritance; each shall be given their inheritance according to those who were numbered of them. 55 “But the land shall be divided by lot. They shall receive their inheritance according to the names of the tribes of their fathers. 56 “According to the selection by lot, their inheritance shall be divided between the larger and the smaller groups.”

**You shall inherit the land by lot according to your families-** See Numbers 26 notation above. Inheritance by lot referred to a cast (e.g., stones) to assign the different plots of land. Through the use of lots, Yahweh gave direction (Pr 16:33, Pr 18:18) in what were often critically important matters. Not surprisingly, therefore, the casting of lots for the division of Canaan (Nu 26:55–56) took place “before the LORD in Shiloh” (Josh 18:8–10),

**To the larger you shall give more inheritance, and to the smaller you shall give less inheritance-** This reiterates Nu 26:54 "To the larger group you shall increase their inheritance, and to the smaller group you shall diminish their inheritance; each shall be given their inheritance according to those who were numbered of them."

**Wherever the lot falls to anyone, that shall be his**- Since the lot was determined by Yahweh, there was to be no arguing over who owned what.

**You shall inherit according to the tribes of your fathers**- The NLT of Nu 26:53+ has "Divide the land among the tribes, and distribute the grants of land in proportion to the tribes' populations, as indicated by the number of names on the list." (Nu 26:53NLT)

**Allen** - The manner of the distribution of the land was to be by lot, with the assurance that the lot would not be by chance but by the disposition of the Lord. In this way the people would be able to take possession (Hithpael of nāḥal, "to possess oneself of something") of the land as a lasting inheritance. As in Nu 35:8, consideration would be given for the size of the clans of Israel (v.54); there was to be no claim of inequity or "influence-peddling"—to use a modern term. Possession would come by the will of God expressed through the fairness of divine lots. (EBC)

**Holman Bible Dictionary on LOTS** - Objects of unknown shape and material used to determine the divine will. Often in the Ancient Near East people, especially priests, made difficult and significant decisions by casting lots on the ground or drawing them from a receptacle. Several times Scripture mentions the practice. We do not know exactly what the lots looked like. Nor do we know how they were interpreted. We do know that people of the Old and New Testaments believed God (or gods in the case of non-Israelites or non-Christians) influenced the fall or outcome of the lots (Proverbs 16:33 ). Thus, casting lots was a way of determining God's will.

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**Question:** [What was the practice of casting lots?](#)

**Answer:** The practice of casting lots is mentioned seventy times in the Old Testament and seven times in the New Testament. In spite of the many references to casting lots in the Old Testament, nothing is known about the actual lots themselves. They could have been sticks of various lengths, flat stones like coins, or some kind of dice; but their exact nature is unknown. The closest modern practice to casting lots is likely flipping a coin.

The practice of casting lots occurs most often in connection with the division of the land under Joshua (Joshua chapters 14-21), a procedure that God instructed the Israelites on several times in the book of Numbers (Numbers 26:55; 33:54; 34:13; 36:2). God allowed the Israelites to cast lots in order to determine His will for a given situation (Joshua 18:6-10; 1 Chronicles 24:5,31). Various offices and functions in the temple were also determined by lot (1 Chronicles 24:5, 31; 25:8-9; 26:13-14). The sailors on Jonah's ship (Jonah 1:7) also cast lots to determine who had brought God's wrath upon their ship. The eleven apostles cast lots to determine who would replace Judas (Acts 1:26). Casting lots eventually became a game people played and made wagers on. This is seen in the Roman soldiers casting lots for Jesus' garments (Matthew 27:35).

The New Testament nowhere instructs Christians to use a method similar to casting lots to help with decision-making. Now that we have the completed Word of God, as well as the indwelling Holy Spirit to guide us, there is no reason to be using games of chance to make decisions. The Word, the Spirit, and prayer are sufficient for discerning God's will today—not casting lots, rolling dice, or flipping a coin. [GotQuestions.org](http://GotQuestions.org)

**Numbers 33:55** 'But if you do not drive out the inhabitants of the land from before you, then it shall come about that those whom you let remain of them will become as pricks in your eyes and as thorns in your sides, and they will trouble you in the land in which you live.

- **pricks:** Ex 23:33 De 7:4,16 Jos 23:12,13 Jdg 1:21-36 Jdg 2:3 Ps 106:34-36 Eze 28:24
- [Numbers 33 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passages:

Judges 2:1-3+ Now the angel of the LORD came up from Gilgal to Bochim. And he said, "I brought you up out of Egypt and led you into the land which I have sworn to your fathers; and I said, 'I will never break My covenant with you, 2 and as for you, you shall make no covenant with the inhabitants of this land; you shall tear down their altars.' But you have not obeyed Me; what is this you have done? 3 "Therefore I also said, 'I will not drive them out before you; but they will become as thorns in your sides and their gods will be a snare to you.'"

Psalms 106:34-36<sup>±</sup> They did not destroy the peoples, As the LORD commanded them, 35 But **they mingled with the nations** And **learned their practices**, 36 And **served their idols**, Which became a snare to them. 37 They even **sacrificed their sons and their daughters to the demons**,

**Spurgeon - They did not destroy the peoples,** They were commissioned to act as executioners upon races condemned for their unnatural crimes, and through sloth, cowardice, or Sinful complacency they sheathed the sword too soon, very much to their own danger and disquietude. It is a great evil with professors that they are not zealous for the total destruction of all sin within and without. We make alliances of peace where we ought to proclaim war to the knife; we plead our constitutional temperament, our previous habits, the necessity of our circumstances, or some other evil excuse as an apology for being content with a very partial sanctification, if indeed it be sanctification at all. We are slow also to rebuke sin in others, and are ready to spare respectable sins, which like Agag walk with mincing steps. The measure of our destruction of sin is not to be our inclination, or the habit of others, but the Lord's command. We have no warrant for dealing leniently with any sin, be it what it may.

**But were mingled among the heathen, and learned their works.** It was not the wilderness which caused Israel's sins; they were just as disobedient when settled in the land of promise. They found evil company, and delighted in it. Those whom they should have destroyed they made their friends. Having enough faults of their own, they were yet ready to go to school to the filthy Canaanites, and educate themselves still more in the arts of iniquity. It was certain that they could learn no good from men whom the Lord had condemned to utter destruction. Few would wish to go to the condemned cell for learning, yet Israel sat at the feet of accursed Canaan, and rose up proficient in every abomination. This, too, is a grievous but common error among professors: they court worldly company and copy worldly fashions, and yet it is their calling to bear witness against these things. None can tell what evil has come of the folly of worldly conformity.

**And they served their idols:** which were a snare unto them. They were fascinated by the charms of idolatry, though it brings misery upon its votaries. A man cannot serve sin without being ensnared by it. It is like birdlime, and to touch it is to be taken by it. Samson laid his head in the Philistine woman's lap, but ere long he woke up shorn of his strength. Dalliance with sin is fatal to spiritual liberty.

**Yea, they sacrificed their sons and their daughters unto devils.** This was being snared indeed; they were spell bound by the cruel superstition, and were carried so far as even to become murderers of their own children, in honour of the most detestable deities, which were rather devils than gods. "And shed innocent blood." The poor little ones whom they put to death in sacrifice had not been partakers of their sin, and God looked with the utmost indignation upon the murder of the innocent. "Even the blood of their sons and of their daughters, whom they sacrificed unto the idols of Canaan." Who knows how far evil will go? It drove men to be unnatural as well as ungodly. Had they but thought for a moment, they must have seen that a deity who could be pleased with the blood of babes spilt by their own sires could not be a deity at all, but must be a demon, worthy to be detested and not adored. How could they prefer such service to that of Jehovah? Did *he* tear their babes from their bosoms and smile at their death throes? Men will sooner wear the iron yoke of Satan than carry the pleasant burden of the Lord; does not this prove to a demonstration the deep depravity of their hearts? If man be not totally depraved, what worse would he do if he were? Does not this verse describe the ne plus ultra of iniquity?

**And the land was polluted with blood.** The promised land, the holy land, which was the glory of all lands, for God was there, was defiled with the reeking gore of innocent babes, and by the blood red hands of their parents, who slew them in order to pay homage to devils. Alas! alas! What vexation was this to the spirit of the Lord.

## **STRONG WARNING FOR FAILURE TO DISPOSSESS**

**But** - Term of contrast, contrasting blessing of possessing versus the cursing for failure to dispossess. In short failure to dispossess would bring disaster to the nation of Israel.

**if you do not drive out the inhabitants of the land from before you**- Note the "if" identifies this as a conditional promise/warning. Sadly the IF became a reality and Jdg 1:28+ gives a good summary of what transpired - "It came about when Israel became strong, that they put the Canaanites to forced labor, but **they did not drive them out completely.**" (Read the entire chapter of Judges 1:1-36+)

**Then** - The consequences for failure to drive out the Canaanites would be two fold.

We have seen an excellent (sad) illustration of the problem that would result from fraternizing with the pagans in Numbers 25

While Israel remained at Shittim, the people **began to play the harlot** (THIS BECAME A "WATCHWORD" FOR THE NATION - SEE CROSS REFERENCES BELOS) with the daughters of Moab. 2 For they invited the people to the **sacrifices of their gods, and the people ate and bowed down to their gods.** 3 So **Israel joined themselves to Baal of Peor**, and the LORD was angry against Israel. 4 The LORD said to Moses, "Take all the leaders of the people and execute them in broad daylight before the LORD, so that the fierce anger of the LORD may turn away from Israel." 5 So Moses said to the judges of Israel, "Each of you slay his men who have joined themselves to Baal of Peor." 6 Then behold, one of the sons of Israel came and brought to his relatives a Midianite woman, in the sight of Moses and in the sight of all the congregation of the sons of Israel, while they were weeping at the doorway of the tent of meeting. 7 When Phinehas the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron the priest, saw it, he arose from the midst of the congregation and took a spear in his hand, 8 and he went after the man of Israel into the tent and pierced both of them through, the man of Israel and the woman, through the body. So the plague on the sons of Israel was checked. 9 Those who died by the plague were 24,000. (Nu 25:1-9+)

**Play the harlot** - 19x in 18v - Exod. 34:15; Exod. 34:16; Lev. 17:7; Lev. 20:5; Lev. 20:6; Num. 25:1; Deut. 31:16; 2 Chr. 21:11; 2 Chr. 21:13; Isa. 23:17; Ezek. 16:17; Ezek. 20:30; Hos. 3:3; Hos. 4:10; Hos. 4:13; Hos. 4:14; Hos. 4:15; Hos. 4:18

**Played the hartot** - 24x in 22v - Gen. 38:24; Num. 15:39; Jdg. 2:17; Jdg. 8:27; Jdg. 8:33; Jdg. 19:2; 1 Chr. 5:25; 2 Chr. 21:13; Ps. 106:39; Ezek. 6:9; Ezek. 16:15; Ezek. 16:16; Ezek. 16:26; Ezek. 16:28; Ezek. 23:3; Ezek. 23:5; Ezek. 23:19; Ezek. 23:30; Hos. 2:5; Hos. 4:12; Hos. 5:3; Hos. 9:1

(FIRST) **it shall come about that those whom you let remain of them will become as pricks in your eyes and as thorns in your sides** - NLT has "but if you fail to drive out the people who live in the land, those who remain will be like splinters in your eyes and thorns in your sides."

As he was passing on Joshua gave a prophetic warning (note verbs cling, intermarry, associate)

"For if you ever go back and cling to the rest of these nations, these which remain among you, and intermarry with them, so that you associate with them and they with you, know with certainty that the LORD your God will not continue to drive these nations out from before you; but they will be a snare and a trap to you, and a whip on your sides and thorns in your eyes, until you perish from off this good land which the LORD your God has given you (**THIS PROPHECY WAS FULFILLED** - NORTHERN KINGDOM EXILED TO ASSYRIA IN 722 bc. SOUTHERN KINGDOM EXILED TO BABYLON IN 586 bc). (Joshua 23:12-13)

**THOUGHT** - As a general rule, a genuine believer should **NEVER** marry an unbeliever. My son married an unbeliever and it was miserable for us all. At least she refrained from her horribly foul mouth when she was in my presence. Nevertheless the mixture of spiritual light and darkness led to continual strife and discord and eventually ended in divorce after 2 sons had been born. I am sure some "mixed" believer/unbeliever marriages have worked (and some unbelievers have become believers), but as a general rule it is a foolish thing for a believer to knowingly and willfully (against advise of godly counsel) marry an unbeliever. I am not the judge in this area, so I refer you to the Perfect Judge's clear word in 2 Cor 6:14 "**Do not be bound** (a command, not a suggestion) together with unbelievers; for what partnership have righteousness and lawlessness, or what fellowship has light with darkness?"

#### **Related Resources:**

- [Is it right for a Christian to date or marry a non-Christian? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [Is it possible to marry the wrong person? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [What should a Christian do if he or she is married to an unbeliever? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [I am engaged to and living with an unbeliever. I am convicted about this. What should I do? | GotQuestions.org](#)

(SECOND) **and they will trouble you in the land in which you live** - NLT has "They will harass you in the land where you live."

**Trouble (distress)** (06887)(**tsarar**) means to be narrow, to be cramped, to be straitened, to be constricted, to hem or be hemmed in. Then it means to be hostile, to be an enemy. It is used most often to describe the action of distress in the presence of an enemy or rival. Figuratively **tsarar** also means to feel hard pressed and thus to be **distressed** (13/36 uses), troubled, oppressed, cramped, anxious or worried. This would be Israel's experience for failing to dispossess the land, and sadly it would come to be their reality because they did not



completely exterminate the wicked pagan influences, either the people or their practices.

**Believer's Study Bible**- Moses gave a solemn warning to the Israelites. If they failed to drive out the Canaanites, these pagan people would continually harass them. These words turned out to be prophetic of Israel's problems in the land. **Far from being an inexplicable and barbarous command from God, it was His judgment on a determinedly wicked nation.** Romans 1:18-23 makes it clear that such judgment assumes a failure to respond to the majesty and mercies of God. The amazing truth from God's Word is not that God destroys some, but that His mercy extends to spare any. A further reason the destruction of the Canaanites was necessary was to protect the purity of Israel, in order to guarantee success of the missionary mandate of Israel.

**Ryrie** - Israel did fail to completely exterminate the Canaanites, whose pernicious influence plagued Israel and eventually resulted in the Assyrian and Babylonian captivities.

**THOUGHT** - Can we not see the message for us today? If we have any "Canaanite practices" that we are refusing to exterminate, beware for they may become pricks and thorns and trouble us! Jensen adds "The lesson is clear as applied to the life of rest in the book of Hebrews. All other conditions for this happy life may have been fulfilled; nevertheless, old habits of sin and persistent idols of the heart will continue to vex the Christian and cause him to forfeit the manifold blessings which would otherwise be his."

#### **THEREFORE**

let us be diligent to enter that rest, so that no one will fall,  
through following the same example of disobedience.  
(Hebrews 4:11+)

**Mattoon** - The Canaanites were to be destroyed by Israel. Why? They were wicked. Their removal would clear the way for Israel's inheritance and it would remove the temptation of Israel to worship idols. Failure to defeat their enemies would lead to God's judgment.

**Wiersbe** - What were the reasons for the extermination of these nations? **For one thing**, this was God's judgment because of their wickedness (Gen. 15:15–16; Lev. 18:24–28). How they became so evil and what happened as a result is described in Romans 1:17–32. God had been long-suffering with them for centuries, but now it was time for judgment to fall. A **second reason** was that the way might be cleared for the tribes of Israel to claim their inheritance (Num. 33:54). Just as a contractor must demolish buildings and clear land to make room for a new structure, so God had to wipe out the pagan societies in Canaan so that His people might move in and build a nation that would glorify God. The Promised Land would be the stage on which God would display His power, pour out His blessings, send His truth, and one day send His Son to die for the sins of the world. A **third reason** for the extermination of the pagan nations was to remove temptation from the people of Israel who were prone to worship idols (vv. 55–56). During their wilderness march, the Jews revealed their appetite for the things of Egypt, and at Baal Peor, they succumbed to the seductions of Baal worship. If the pagan shrines were left standing, it wouldn't take long for Israel to forsake the Lord and start worshipping idols. Unfortunately, Israel didn't obey God's orders and ended up being snared by the practices of the heathen peoples left in the land (Jdg. 2:6–15). (Be Counted)

**What is the application to believers today?** It is simple - **drive out** and/or **come out**. Exterminate, annihilate, obliterate, utterly destroy the sin which so easily entangles you (Heb 12:1+) and come out of the midst of the godless world's abominations, even while still being in the world but not of the world (John 17:16)!

**From Genesis to Revelation** the Bible repeatedly warns believers to **come out, to be separate...**(**RED** = COMMANDS)

Genesis 19:14-15 Lot went out and spoke to his sons-in-law, who were to marry his daughters, and said, "Up, get out of this place, for the LORD will destroy the city." But he appeared to his sons-in-law to be jesting. 15 When morning dawned, the angels urged Lot, saying, "**Up** (NET = "GET GOING!"), **take** your wife and your two daughters who are here, or you will be swept away in the punishment of the city." 16 But he hesitated. So the men seized his hand and the hand of his wife and the hands of his two daughters, for the compassion of the LORD was upon him; and they brought him out, and put him outside the city.

Numbers 16:26-27 and he spoke to the congregation, saying, "**Depart** now from the tents of these wicked men, and touch nothing that belongs to them, or you will be swept away in all their sin." 27 So they got back from around the dwellings of Korah, Dathan and Abiram; and Dathan and Abiram came out and stood at the doorway of their tents, along with their wives and their sons and their little ones.

Isaiah 48:20 (COMPARE WITH REVELATION BELOW) **Go forth** from Babylon! **Flee** from the Chaldeans! Declare with the sound of joyful shouting, proclaim this, Send it out to the end of the earth; Say, "The LORD has redeemed His servant Jacob."

Jeremiah 50:8; (COMPARE WITH REVELATION BELOW) **Wander away** (ESV, NIV = FLEE) from the midst of Babylon (NET = GET OUT OF BABYLON QUICKLY!) And **go forth** from the land of the Chaldeans; Be also like male goats at the head of the flock.

Matthew 24:15+ “Therefore when you see the ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION which was spoken of through Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place (let the reader understand),:16 then those who are in Judea must (ABSOLUTE NECESSITY) flee to the mountains.

2 Corinthians 6:17 “Therefore (READ 2 Cor 6:14-16 and 2 Cor 7:1+), **COME OUT** ([aorist imperative](#) see [our need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey](#)) FROM THEIR MIDST AND **BE SEPARATE**, ([aorist imperative](#) see [our need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey](#))” says the Lord. “AND **DO NOT TOUCH** ([present imperative with a negative](#) see [our need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey](#)) WHAT IS UNCLEAN; And I will welcome you.

Revelation 18:4+ I heard another voice from heaven, saying, “**Come out** ([aorist imperative](#) see [our need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey](#)) of her, my people, so that you will not participate in her sins and receive of her plagues; 5 for her sins have piled up as high as heaven, and God has remembered her iniquities.

## Numbers 33:55 - Eric Hayden

But if ye will not drive out the inhabitants of the land from before you; then it shall come to pass, that those which ye let remain of them shall be pricks in your eyes, and thorns in your sides, and shall vex you in the land wherein ye dwell.

These words are a description of God’s people after they had crossed the Jordan and entered the Promised Land. Does Jordan stand for death, as so many hymns infer? After death comes rest and peace; after Jordan there was more fighting! After Jesus was baptized in Jordan, He had to battle against Satan in the wilderness.

Jordan really stands for a decisive step: conversion, baptism, or some experience of God’s Holy Spirit. But even after such an experience there will be inhabitants to drive out. Though possessed by Christ there must still be the “mopping-up operation” of the remaining enemy. In our text they are likened to pricks, thorns, and vexation, each pointing to a spiritual alternative.

### I. Pricks instead of prosperity

The Hebrew word translated pricks means a tiny thorn, like one from a briar hedge. Christians often live lives that are hedged in or confined. They know nothing of the progressing, developing life: “I press on ...”; “Follow on to know the Lord”; “Grow up into Him....”

The pricks of worldliness prevent the spiritual prosperity that is God’s will for the believer: “This is the will of God for you, even your sanctification.”

### II. Thorns instead of testimony

The word translated “thorns” implies a larger thorn like one from a cactus plant. The word came to be used also for a fishhook and for coldness. What cold, prickly lives some Christians live. No one can get near them. Their feathers are always ruffled. They repel rather than attract. But John said of Jesus Christ: “As He is, even so are we in this world.” Now Jesus was never repellent; He always attracted like a magnet. Old, young, sick, poor, sinful—all came to Him and none were turned away.

The Puritans have been much criticized and maligned for their so-called joyless countenances and their plain manner of dress. But they had Christ and were completely satisfied with Him. They had no time for the world’s fashions and pleasures. So their testimony remains to this day, clear-cut and decisive. Will ours last as theirs has?

### III. Vexation instead of victory

Vex has a variety of meanings; cramp, harass or rout. If we allow the pricks and thorns to remain, we shall experience utter rout or defeat in the Christian life. We shall never know what it is to be an “overcomer.”

First we have to admit that we’ve got these pricks and thorns that vex. We’ve all come from the same mold, but some are more moldy than others, according to a worldly proverb. So some Christians are more worldly than others. Some do have a more clear-cut testimony, but even these are not entirely free from the pricks and thorns. The New Testament knows nothing of a sinless perfection this side of heaven; sanctification is a continual battle.

What can we do then? Keep three basic rules daily:

A. Do not fraternize with the enemy.



"Come out from among them and be ye separate."

B. Make no peace treaty with the enemy.

There must be no coming to terms, no compromise, no unholy alliances.

C. Yield no ground to the enemy.

We must keep pressing forward, always advancing and never retreating.

The Christian is in Christ; but Christ is also in the Christian, so the life and power of Christ are at our disposal.

Note the final warning: "If you will not drive out the inhabitants.... I shall do unto you, as I thought to do unto them."

### Numbers 33:56 'And as I plan to do to them, so I will do to you.'"

- Lev 18:28 Lev 20:23 De 28:63 Dt 29:28 Jos 23:15-16 2Ch 36:17-20 Eze 33:24-29 Lu 21:23-24
- [Numbers 33 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passages:

Lev 18:24-28 'Do not defile yourselves by any of these things; for by all these the nations which **I am casting out before you** have become defiled. 25 'For the land has become defiled, therefore I have brought its punishment upon it, **so the land has spewed out its inhabitants.** 26 'But as for you, you are to keep My statutes and My judgments and shall not do any of these abominations, neither the native, nor the alien who sojourns among you 27 (for the men of the land who have been before you have done all these abominations, and the land has become defiled); 28 **so that the land will not spew you out**, should you defile it, **as it has spewed out the nation** which has been before you.

Deuteronomy 28:63 "It shall come about that as the LORD delighted over you to prosper you, and multiply you, so the LORD will delight over you to make you perish and destroy you; and you will be torn from the land where you are entering to possess it.

## PROPHETIC PROMISE OF PUNISHMENT FOR DISOBEDIENCE

**John Currid** comments that "Yahweh himself will act against Israel if they do not obey. In an ironic reversal, God says that the fate of the Canaanites will become that of Israel if they do not keep God's commands—expulsion from the land of promise!" (EPSC-Nu)

**And as I plan to do to them, so I will do to you**- Israel would reap the consequences of their disobedience. What is interesting is that they did drive out many of the Canaanites, thus partially obeying Yahweh's instructions. However there remained pockets of pagans in the land, and these were like "leaven" which eventually resulted in the destruction of the Northern and Southern kingdoms of Israel. What is the point? **Partial obedience is complete disobedience.** Does this describe your (my) Christian life? We all need to look in the mirror and ask ourselves this important question. And if the answer is yes, then we need to confess, repent and seek the compassionate, merciful, good hand of the LORD to revive us again (Ps 119:25+), in Jesus' Name and for the glory of our Father (Mt 5:16+). Amen.

PROPHECY FROM MOSES - Deuteronomy 28:63 "It shall come about that as the LORD delighted over you to prosper you, and multiply you, so the LORD will delight over you to make you perish and destroy you; and you will be torn from the land where you are entering to possess it.

Joshua 23:15-16 "It shall come about that just as all the good words which the LORD your God spoke to you have come upon you, so the LORD will bring upon you all the threats, until He has destroyed you from off this good land which the LORD your God has given you. 16 "When you transgress the covenant of the LORD your God, which He commanded you, and go and serve other gods and bow down to them, then the anger of the LORD will burn against you, and you will perish quickly from off the good land which He has given you."

It is worth noting that this PROPHETIC PROMISE has not yet been completely fulfilled but it will be fulfilled in the **time of Jacob's Distress** (aka "The Great Tribulation" - Jer 30:7+), for as Jesus prophesied "Jerusalem will be trampled under foot by the Gentiles until the [times of the Gentiles](#) are fulfilled." (Lu 21:24+). The apostle John said it this way "Then there was given me a measuring

rod like a staff; and someone said, "Get up and measure the temple of God and the altar, and those who worship in it. "Leave out the court which is outside the temple (REBUILT JEWISH TEMPLE IN JERUSALEM) and do not measure it, for it has been given to the nations; and they will tread under foot the holy city for forty-two months (THE LAST 3.5 YEARS - The Great Tribulation)." (Rev 11:1-2+).

**Ronald Allen** comments that while the previous warnings (Nu 33:55) "describe constant annoyance (at the least) to terrible pain (at the most)—a constant harassment. The most chilling words, however, are not the troubles that might come from peoples but that which may come from the Lord: And it will happen, Just as I intend to do to them,I will do to you." These words, at the end of the travel itinerary, are most threatening indeed. (EBC)

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## **Vance Havner - Thorns**

The Bible has much to say about thorns and thistles, briars and brambles. A score of different words are used to name them and around two hundred varieties of prickly shrubs grew in Bible countries. We have plenty of them in America as well. We have been scratched and irritated, lacerated and torn, and we have wondered why such pesky pests were created. Thorns and thistles are symbols of troubles, trials, and testings and some of us have so much of such adversity that we feel we could identify with Br'er Rabbit who was "born and bred in a brier patch."

The Scriptures throw much light on this subject; learning the significance of thorns and thistles will help us to understand the prickly problems of our own existence, and will help us make our way through the briars and brambles of our troubled lives.

## **The Thorns of Creation**

It begins with the thorns of creation. In the beginning God put Adam and Eve in Eden where every prospect was pleasing and not even man was vile. But the devil came, followed by the fall, and God said to Adam: "Cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; in the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it thou wast taken; for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return" (Gen. 3:17-19).

We are still under that sentence and the more we try to escape, the more we become entangled with thorns and thistles—physically, morally, spiritually. The evolutionist thinks we are working our way upward through fetishism, totemism, polytheism, and monotheism to the knowledge of God but the Scriptures tell us that we started with a knowledge of God and have been going the other way ever since, not in evolution but in "devilution."

## **The Thorns of Canaan**

After the fall of man, God began a plan of redemption for mankind and the whole creation. He called out the Hebrew nation to be the channel through which the Savior would come. He led them into the Promised Land and when they had conquered much of it and were beginning to settle in, He warned them, "But if ye will not drive out the inhabitants of the land from before you; then it shall come to pass, that those which ye let remain of them shall be pricks in your eyes, and thorns in your sides, and shall vex you in the land wherein ye dwell" (Num. 33:55). Joshua warned them that if they married among the Canaanites, those people would be "snares and traps and scourges in your sides and thorns in your eyes."

These thorns of Canaan must still be dealt with. Christians today, like the Hebrews of old, are a chosen generation, a holy nation. As God's people, He wants us to be separate, not to merge into the world around us, not to squeeze into its mold. "If any man love the world," said Jesus, "the love of the Father is not in him." Since Christianity began, there has never been a world culture in which a Christian can feel at home.

There can be no peaceful coexistence, no detente, between the Christian and Canaan. The friend of the world is the enemy of God. If we mix and mingle with this age it will soil and spoil our lives and ruin our testimony. The Christian lives not in collusion but in collision with this world.

Christians should not marry unbelievers. What looks innocent enough at the outset becomes a thorn in our side. A woman wearing a white dress wanted to explore a coal mine. When told that she was not properly garbed for such a trip, she demanded, "What's to keep me from wearing a white dress into a mine?" The man at the entrance replied, "There's nothing to keep you from wearing a white dress into the mine, but plenty to keep you from wearing a white dress out!"

Separation from the world is almost unheard-of nowadays because this permissive and tolerant generation frowns on it. But we must beware of the thorns of Canaan. "Canaanism" is dangerous, whether you call it "worldliness," "secularism," or some other name, and we are to have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness but rather expose them, not only by reproof but by the contrast of godly living.

## The Thorns of the Christian

Perhaps you have already anticipated what type of thorn comes next. Many Christians and non-Christians alike are familiar with Paul's "thorn in the flesh." What was it? We do not know, and I am glad we do not, for it might have been the same as your thorn or the same as mine. Some think it was eye trouble. Anyway, it was an affliction that God would not remove. This great preacher, this prisoner who set others free, was not healed of whatever plague or infirmity beset him all his days.

Notice that Paul calls his problem not only a "thorn in the flesh" but also "the messenger of Satan" (2 Cor. 12:7). Paul gave the credit where it was due. He gloried in his infirmity but he did not glorify his infirmity. Jesus had spoken of "this woman whom Satan hath bound" and Paul wrote to the Thessalonians that he was prevented from visiting them not because he was "providentially detained" (as we preachers like to put it) but because "Satan hindered me." Sickness, disease, death, and all other thorns are of the devil but may be allowed by God to test and try us and to glorify Himself—as He made clear in the cases of Lazarus and Peter. God may sharpen His axe on Satan's grindstone (it cannot be done on a cake of butter!). Some of the greatest saints have made their way through this world with afflicted bodies, tortured minds, financial distress, domestic difficulties, and tragic circumstances; our pet answers and clever cliches provided no explanation, nor did prayer remove the thorn.

In the twelfth chapter of Second Corinthians Paul goes from height to depth, from his trip to the third heaven to his thorn in the flesh, observing that life's supreme experience is not in height or depth but in knowing that God's grace is sufficient, that His strength is made perfect in weakness, that when we are weak we are strong. It is worth a thorn in the flesh to learn that—and that is the way we usually learn it! It is when endurance flags and strength fails and resources play out that "from His infinite riches in Jesus God giveth and giveth and giveth again."

## The Thorns of Christ

The thorns of creation, the thorns of Canaan, the thorns of the Christian... is there deliverance from all these? Yes, and it is signified by the thorns of Christ, that gruesome crown the Roman soldiers jammed on Jesus' already bruised and battered head. They did not realize what it symbolized any more than they understood his prayer, "Father, forgive them for they know not what they do." That ghastly diadem was emblematic of all the thorns of all time, a thorny creation ruined by sin, a thorny evil society like the Canaanites, all thorns of the flesh that torment the people of God. All the sin, all the suffering, all the disease, death, and heartbreak of all mankind was laid on Him.

See from His head, His hands, His feet,  
Sorrow and love flow mingled down;  
Did e'er such love and sorrow meet,  
Or thorns compose so rich a crown?

One day that Christ who wore the crown of thorns will return to wear the crown of triumph. The creation will be redeemed and its original beauty restored, for God is not going to let the devil get away with the havoc he has wrought. No longer will an evil society like the Canaanites inhabit the earth, for the meek shall inherit it and the saints shall reign over it and for the first time law and order shall prevail. The thorns of all Christians will no longer exist, for the people of God will wear their new Easter outfits—their resurrection bodies—free from pain. And "instead of the thorn shall come up the fir tree, and instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle tree: and it shall be to the Lord for a name, for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off" (Isa. 55:13).

Does Jesus care? That is why He came to this earth—to deal with the thorns of creation, the thorns of Canaan, and the thorns of the Christian, all gathered up in the thorns of Christ. It is time we sing not only with our lips but from our hearts,

King of my life, I crown Thee now,  
Thine shall the glory be,  
Lest I forget Thy thorn-crowned brow,  
Lead me to Calvary.