

"The Journey of a Lifetime"
Facilitator: Bishop Kevin Chambers
Book of Numbers
Chapter Notes

The Forty Years in the Wilderness
Israel's Journey to the Promised Land

The reader who approaches the Book of Numbers under the influence of its common Hebrew name *Bemidbar* translated as "*In the Wilderness*" will logically expect a narrative account of the wanderings of the Israelites before they reach the Promised Land. But this book is a great deal more than just that. To be sure, it contains stories of the long journey from Egypt to Canaan, with moments of triumph and difficulty, obedience and rebellion. Some of the greatest narratives of the Pentateuch are found within its contents; from the account of Korah's revolt (chapter 16) and one of my favorite stories called in our journey "The Balaam Incident". Not long ago at Redeeming's World Church, I preached a sermon entitled "Are you Looking Down the Road – Or Just Here for the Ride" from Numbers 22:21-35. Numbers also features census and sacrificial donation lists; details of the setup of Israel's camp; the duties of the Levites in the traveling sanctuary; laws regarding wives suspected of adultery and those who take on extraordinary vows; a complicated and mysterious ritual for removing the extreme ritual pollution carried by death; a doubled tale about daughters inheriting land; and a host of others rules and regulations.