



A Torah Study Guide
for the Young
& Young at Heart

by
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& his kids

PARASHAT
B'MIDBAR

פרשת במדבר

Numbers 1:1-4:20

Note to the adult teacher: It will be necessary for you to give the scriptural context and background for each of the points listed below.

Great Discoveries in This Week's Parashah (Torah Portion)

- 1:1 Children of Israel Are Counted
- 1:4 The Leaders of the Twelve Tribes; The Total Numbers of the Israelite Warriors
- 1:47 The Levites Not to Be Counted; Their Job Duties and the Placement of Their Camp
- 2:2 The Formation of the Tribal Encampments Around the Tabernacle (Mishkan)
- 2:32 The Total Numbers of the Children of Israel
- 3:1 Aaron's Sons
- 3:5 The Levites Given Their Jobs of Service in the Tabernacle
- 3:11 The Levites Replace the Firstborn as the Priests in Israel
- 3:14 The Levites Counted and Each Clan Is Given a Charge Over a Part of the Tabernacle
- 3:40 The Israelite Firstborn Are Redeemed
- 4:1 The Kohathites Are Organized and Given Jobs in the Tabernacle

Exploring This Week's Parashah: How to Survive in the Wilderness

The English name "Numbers" comes from the fact that in this book the Israelites are counted or numbered on several occasions (see chapters 1, 3, 4, 26), and it ends with YHVH instructing his people to count their flocks for tithe purposes.

The Hebrew name for this book is "B'midbar" meaning "in



The wilderness near the Dead Sea.

the wilderness," which comes from the fact that this book tells the history of Israel's forty years of wandering in the wilderness.

The Book of Exodus, on the other hand, records **how** YHVH took the Israelites out of Egypt as slaves, and then led them to Mount Sinai where he gave them his Torah-laws and chose them as his special and treasured people. There he instructed them to build a tabernacle so that he could dwell among them.

The Book of Leviticus teaches **how** the tabernacle furnishings and ceremonies were used to bring sinful man into a right spiritual relationship with YHVH. This was accomplished through the work of the priests who helped to bring sinful men into a state of righteousness and purity before YHVH.



The children of Israel were acting like a bunch of babies!

The Book of Numbers or B'midbar (its Hebrew name) covers much of Israel's forty years of wandering in the wilderness on their way to the Promised Land, and recounts the early years of this nation under YHVH's rulership. B'midbar records Israel's triumphs and defeats, its obedience and disobedience to YHVH's rule of law (the Torah).

In B'midbar, we see several recurring themes. Like children, the Israelites are continually complaining about things: they're hungry, they're thirsty, they don't like their leaders (or spiritual parents), etc. Because of their constant complaining, like any good parent, YHVH has to discipline them to teach them the right ways. They had to learn to trust YHVH and to be thankful for their blessings, instead of complaining and acting rebellious.

In this book, we see revealed the grace of YHVH, that he is longsuffering and slow to anger (Numbers 14:20-38), but that he is just, and as a father, he disciplines those he loves. We learn that the more his children refuse to obey him and resist him, the stronger the discipline. Eventually, the older generation of Israelites died off in the wilderness. This teaches us that death is

the final judgment against the sin of rebellion and unbelief. There are no eternal rewards or spiritual blessings for those who refuse to take hold of YHVH's promises and to go forward in faith and obedience to him.

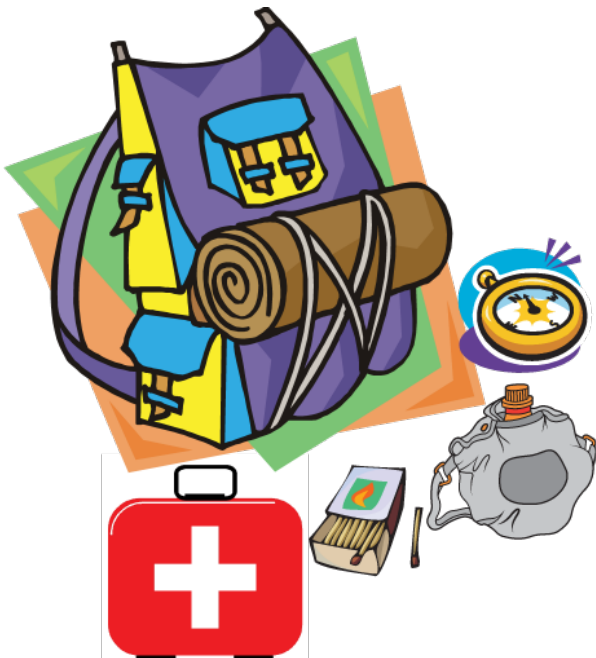
We see the work and person of the future Yeshua the Messiah in the Book of Numbers as well. As Provider, he meets all of Israel's needs both physical and spiritual. Paul reveals that Yeshua was the spiritual Rock that gave them water in the wilderness (1 Corinthians 10:4). Twice, Israel received water from the rock (Exodus 17:1-7 and Numbers 20:1-13). Additionally, the secular prophet, Balaam, prophesied about the Messiah who was to rise out of Israel like a star (Numbers 24:17).

1 A Survival Kit

For anyone who has been in the Boy or Girl Scouts, or who has studied wilderness survival, you know that before going into the great outdoors there are several things you must take with you. These are things that you may need if you get too far from home and become lost. They can actually save your life. We call this a "survival kit."

Having the simple things with you that make up a survival kit may keep you from getting lost in the wilderness, and if you do get lost, they can make the difference between whether you survive or not.

The children of Israel had the same basic needs, as well, when travelling through the



wilderness. The big question we want to ask is this: Like a good Scoutmaster, did YHVH make sure that his people had their survival gear as they trekked through the wilderness wasteland, or did he send them out there without adequate provision only to perish on their way to the Promised Land?

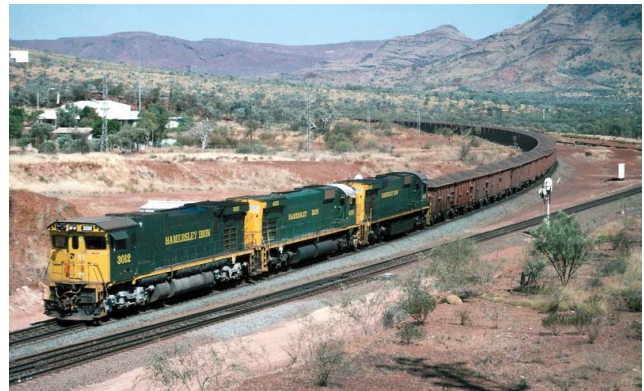
The needs of Israel were tremendous just for food and water alone. For example, if there were 2.5 million Israelites using 1 gallon of water a day for drinking, cooking and very minimal washing, they would need enough water to fill 125 railway tank cars (at 20,000 gallons each). This would not include enough water to bathe the whole body. On a hot day, a man can easily drink a gallon of water.

Each Israelite gathered an omer (about a quart) of manna a day. An omer is about the size of a loaf of bread, which weighs about 1.5 pounds. That is 3.75 million pounds of manna per day to feed the Israelites.

Modern railway boxcars carry an average weight of 75,000 pounds. That much manna would fill 50 modern boxcars. For your information, a mile-long train is about 88 standard boxcars in length.

To take care of the Israelites for forty years in the wilderness, YHVH had a big job on his hands!

The next question we need to ask is that if YHVH did take care of the Israelites, will he take care of us as we walk through our life on the way to our heavenly spiritual rewards? The answer to this question can be found in Malachi 3:6 and Hebrews 13:8.




2 Discovering the Hardships Israel Faced in the Wilderness

- a fearsome, dreadful wilderness (Deuteronomy 8:15)
- lack of water (Exodus 15:24; Deuteronomy 8:15; Hosea 13:5)
- lack of food (Exodus 16:3, 8, 12, 13)
- attacking enemies (Exodus 17:8-16; Deuteronomy 1:27)
- fiery serpents (Deuteronomy 8:15)
- the need for instructions of where to go and where to camp


3 YHVH's Wilderness Survival Kit

Let's go down our survival list and check each item off to see how good of a Heavenly "Scoutmaster" YHVH was. Did he lead his Israelite "scouts" into the wilderness to die, or did he teach them how to survive? Below is the list of items in a good survival kit. How did YHVH meet the needs of the Israelites in this regard? Let's see what Scripture says.

✓ a compass and map


-  (a) Israel needed directions on where to camp and how to get to the Promised Land. How did YHVH meet this need? (Read Exodus 13:21; Deuteronomy 1:33;

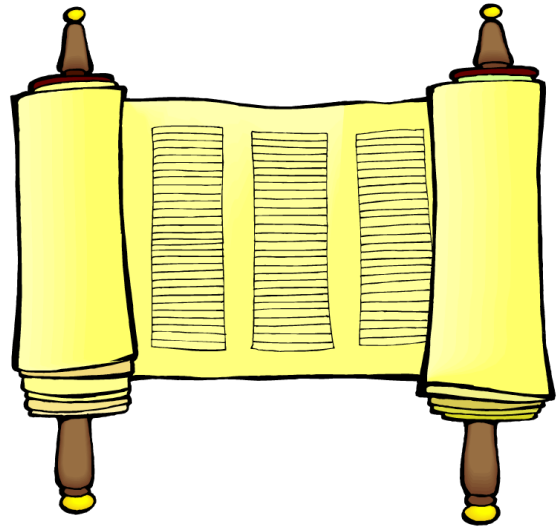
Nehemiah 9:19.)

-  (b) YHVH not only provided them with physical directions, but he also showed them how to walk spiritually. What did he give them to help them in this regard? (Look at Ezekiel 20:11-13; Psalm 119:105.)


✓ **matches** to start a fire to stay warm

No mention is made of YHVH giving the Israelites any matches. Probably matches weren't invented 3500 years ago. We do know, however, that Israel knew how to start fires, for we read that they cooked and baked food. (Read Exodus 16:23; 35:3.)



-  (c) Scripture also tells us that the Israelites did not lack for spiritual fire. For example, read Leviticus 9:23 to see how YHVH supernaturally lit the altar of sacrifice. Also, what protected them from their enemies and led them by day and night? (Read Exodus 13:21 and 14:19-20.)




✓ **a whistle**

-  (d) When in the wilderness, if one becomes lost or hurt he can blow a whistle to signal for help. What did the Israelites in the wilderness use to signal for help? (Read Numbers 10:1-10.)


✓ **a flashlight**

-  (e) What did YHVH give Israel each night as a giant "street light"? (See Exodus 13:21; Nehemiah 9:12.)
-  (f) What does YHVH give to each of us as a spiritual light to show us how to walk righteously in the spiritual darkness of this world? (Read Psalm 119:105; Proverbs 6:23; John 1:1-9; 8:12.)


✓ **food**

-  (g) Did YHVH make sure that Israel had plenty of food? (Note Exodus 16:35; Deuteronomy 8:16; Nehemiah 9:15, 20, 21.)



✓ **water**

-  (h) Did YHVH provide his people with water? (Examine Exodus 17:6; Numbers 20:8-11; Deuteronomy 8:15; Nehemiah 9:15, 20, 21; Psalms 78:15-16; 105:41; 114:8.)

✓ **good clothes**

-  (i) Did YHVH provide the Israelites with clothing? (Read Deuteronomy 8:4; Nehemiah 9:21.)

✓ **a first aid kit**


-  (j) Did YHVH teach the Israelites how to have a healthy diet so that they wouldn't get sick? (Read Leviticus 11.)
-  (k) Did he teach them about good personal hygiene (cleanliness) and how to keep from getting sick? (Read Exodus 29:14, 34; Deuteronomy 23:10-14; Leviticus

5:2-3; 7:19,21; 13:2-59; 14:1-57; 15:2-33; 22:4-6,8; Numbers 5:2-4; 9:6,10; 19:11-16,22; 21:8-9.)

✓ **good boots**


 (l) Did YHVH make sure that the Israelites had good hiking footwear for their trek through the wilderness? (Look at Deuteronomy 8:4; Nehemiah 9:21.)

Was YHVH a good Heavenly "Scoutmaster" who led his Israelite "scouts" safely through the wilderness?


 (m) Did he show them where to camp and help them from getting lost? (Read Exodus 23:20; Deuteronomy 1:33; 2:7; Nehemiah 9:19.)


 (n) Did he provide them with good leadership? (See Deuteronomy 1:18; Jeremiah 2:6.)

 (o) Did he lead them successfully to their destination? (Read Deuteronomy 1:22.)

 (p) Did YHVH help to carry Israel when, like a child, it was weak and tired? (Look at Deuteronomy 1:31.)

 (q) Did YHVH make sure that all of Israel's needs were met? (Read Deuteronomy 2:7; Nehemiah 9:21.)

 (r) Did he even give them some spending money for their wilderness trip? (Note Psalm 105:37.)

 (s) YHVH promised to take care of all their needs, AND HE DID—for forty years, but did they really believe his promises to do so? (Read Hebrews 3:8-11.)

Learning to trust YHVH was the big test Israel needed to pass as he was preparing them for the Promised Land. We must pass that same test as we go through the wilderness called life on our way to the Promised Land of eternal life in the New Jerusalem.



Let us remember what Philippians 4:19 says,

But my Elohim shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Messiah Yeshua.

