

INTRODUCTION TO B'MIDBAR (Numbers)

The book of Numbers contains the history and lessons of the time when Israel camped and travelled in the Sinai Peninsula.

The Hebrew word b'midbar (meaning "in the wilderness") comes from the first verse, "ADONAI spoke to Moshe in the Sinai Desert," and is fitting for Isra'el's wilderness wanderings.

This book is a historical overview and a brief summary of the main events that formed Isra'el during its time in Sinai when Moshe and Aharon led the people through dangers, trials, and blessings. With the bigger picture of the first five books of Moshe in mind (the Torah), the reader sees how God continues to watch over, bless, and bring the descendants of Ya'akov to their homeland, the Land of Isra'el.

This book is a bridge between the covenant promises of Genesis and Exodus and the entrance of the people into the Promised Land. While we read about the promise in Deuteronomy and the fulfillment of that promise in Joshua, Numbers gives us insight into the time period before Isra'el's entrance, chronicling their travel eastward and southward across the Sinai Peninsula.