

# A Study in the Book of Numbers



*By Cecilia Perh*



Entrusting the Word  
to the Faithful



<b>Book</b>	<b>Genesis</b>	<b>Exodus</b>	<b>Leviticus</b>	<b>Numbers</b>	<b>Deuteronomy</b>
<b>Key Idea</b>	<b>Beginnings</b>	<b>Redemption</b>	<b>Worship</b>	<b>Wandering</b>	<b>Renewed Covenant</b>
<b>The Nation</b>	<b>Chosen</b>	<b>Delivered</b>	<b>Set Apart</b>	<b>Directed</b>	<b>Made Ready</b>
<b>The People</b>	<b>Prepared</b>	<b>Redeemed</b>	<b>Taught</b>	<b>Tested</b>	<b>Re-taught</b>
<b>God's Character</b>	<b>Powerful, Sovereign</b>	<b>Merciful</b>	<b>Holy</b>	<b>Just</b>	<b>Loving Lord</b>
<b>God's Role</b>	<b>Creator</b>	<b>Deliverer</b>	<b>Sanctifier</b>	<b>Sustainer</b>	<b>Rewarder</b>
<b>God's Command</b>	<b>"Let there be!"</b>	<b>"Let My people go!"</b>	<b>"Be holy"</b>	<b>"Go in!"</b>	<b>"Obey!"</b>

# Numbers in the Pentateuch

Genesis	Exodus	Leviticus	Numbers	Deuteronomy
<b>ORIGINS</b> of the nation	<b>DELIVERANCE</b> of the nation	<b>LIFE</b> of the nation	<b>TEST</b> of the nation	<b>REMINDERS</b> to the nation
<b>THEOCRACY BORN</b>	<b>THEOCRACY ESTABLISHED</b>		<b>THEOCRACY TESTED AND PREPARED FOR THE NEW HOME</b>	
	<p><b><u>COVENANT</u></b> <b>IS AMPLIFIED</b> “Keep my covenant to be a peculiar treasure: “Kingdom of priests” “holy nation” (Exo. 19:5-6)</p>	<p><b><u>LAWS</u></b> <b>ARE PRESCRIBED</b> “which if a man do, he shall live in them: I am the <b>LORD</b>” (Lev. 18:5)</p>	<p>Irvin L. Jensen, p 102 (Jensen’s Survey of the OT)</p>	

**Numbers is the story of God leading His people, Israel, through wildernesses on their way to Canaan, the rest land He promised.**

**The journey moves from Mount Sinai to the plains of Moab, opposite Jericho.**

- It was a brief journey in the dark unknown, demanding the utmost in trust and patience (Numbers 1:1-10:10).**
- It is a long, aimless wandering in judgment for unbelief, consuming all but two of first census, 20 years and above (Numbers 10:11-20:29).**
- It is a new and swift journey by the next generation with a few of the old leaders, to enter into the land of rest and blessing (Numbers 21:1-36:13)**

## **Numbers: Journey to God's Rest**

# The Generation of Those Who Had Come Out of Egypt

## Preparation

- organization
- consecration
- instruction

## The Test

- of faith
- of obedience

## The Judgment

- wandering
- death

Wilderness



SINAI

KADESH

# A New Generation

## Reorganisation

- repair

Plains of Moab

MOAB

**The theme of Numbers is the consequence of disbelief and disobedience to the holy God. The Lord disciplined His people but remained faithful to His covenant promises in spite of their fickleness.**

**Numbers displays the patience, holiness, justice, mercy, and sovereignty of God toward His people.**

**It teaches that there are no shortcuts to His blessings – He uses trials and tests for specific purposes.**

**Numbers was written to trace the history of Israel's wanderings from Sinai to Moab. But the fact that there was almost no record of the 38 years of wandering shows that Numbers is a very thematic history. It selects those events that are important to the development of God's redemptive program. The sins of the first generation were written as a reminder and a warning to the second generation. They must implicitly trust God before they can possess the land of blessing.**

## Theme and Purpose

The Old Generation			The Tragic Transition			The New Generation											
Counting and Ordering of the People	Cleansing of the People	Complaints and Disbelief of the People	Instructions for Life in Canaan	The Rebellion of Korah	Aaron, the Levites and Moses	Serpent of Brass and Story of Balaam	Second Census and Laws of Israel	Settling east of Jordan	Preparations for Settling in Canaan								
1	4	5	10:10	10:11	14	15	16	17	20	21	25	26	30	31	33	34	36
Preparation			Postponement			Promise											
Waiting			Wandering			Waiting											
Census, Instruction, Travel			-			Travel, Census, Instruction											
At Sinai			To Moab			At Moab											
Sinai to Kadesh			Wilderness			Kadesh to Moab											
Preparation for the Journey			The Journey			At the Gate of the Land											
About 2 months (39%)			38 years (17%)			A few months (44%)											
Mobilizing the People Numbers 1-9		Displeased with His People Numbers 10-19				Reading a New Generation Numbers 20-36											
Getting Ready to Possess the land		Steps to Disqualify Self from Serving the ORD				An Examination of their Readiness to enter the Lord's Land											
Structuring		Testing				Enduring											

# Detailed Outline of the Book of Numbers

## **I. Preparations for Travel (Numbers 1:1-10:10)**

- A. The First Census (chapter 1)
- B. The Order of the Tribes (chapter 2)
- C. The Census and Duties of the Levites (chapters 3-4)
- D. Cleansing and Consecration (chapters 5-6)
- E. The Tabernacle Service (chapters 7-8)
- E. The Supplementary Passover (chapter 9:1-14)
- F. The Fiery Cloud and the Silver Trumpets (chapters 9:15-10:10)

## **II. The Journey to Kadesh Barnea (Numbers 10:11-14:45)**

- A. The Departure from Sinai (chapters 10:11-36)
- B. The Rebellion of the People (chapter 11)
- C. The Rebellion of Miriam and Aaron (chapter 12)
- D. Spying out the Promised Land (chapter 13)
- E. God's Judgment on Unbelief (chapter 14)

## **III. The Journey to the Plains of Moab (Numbers 15:1-22:1)**

- A. Covenant Statutes Reviewed (chapter 15)
- B. The Rebellion of Korah (chapter 16)

- C. The Budding of Aaron's Rod (chapter 17)
- D. The Responsibility of Priests and Levites (chapter 18)
- E. The Red Heifer Sacrifice (chapter 19)
- F. The Waters of Meribah, Edom, Aaron's death (chapter 20)
- G. Journey to Moab (chapters 21:1-22:1)
- F. Balak and Balaam (chapters 22:2-24:25)
- G. The Idolatry of Israel (chapter 25)

## **IV. Final Preparations for Entering Canaan (Numbers 26:1-36:13)**

- A. The Second Census (chapter 26)
- B. Daughters of Zelophehad (chapter 27:1-11)
- C. Joshua appointed as Moses' Successor (chapter 27:12-23)
- D. Laws concerning Offerings and Vows (chapters 28-30)
- E. The War against Midian (chapter 31)
- F. Inheritance of Eastern Tribes (chapter 32)
- G. Resume of the journey from Egypt (chapter 33:1-49)
- H. Final Instructions about Conquest and Inheritance (chapters 33:50-36:13)





## Marching in Victory and Defeat (Numbers 21)

### A. The Power of God (v1-3)

### B. The Grace of God (v4-9)

v4-5 Their Sin

v6 Their Punishment

v7 Their Repentance

v8-9 Their Deliverance

### C. The Goodness of God (v10-20)

### The Victory of God (v21-35)

v21-32 Victory over the Amorites

v33-35 Victory over Bashan



## Balaam and the Moabites (Num 22-25)

### Balaam and God's Will (22:1-35)

- The King's Request (22:1-20)
- The Donkey's Resistance (22:21-30)
- The Angel's Revelation (22:31-35)

### Balaam and God's Message (22:36-24:25)

- The First Oracle (22:26-23:12) – a separated people
- The Second Oracle (23:13-26) – a conquering people
- The Third Oracle (23:27-24:14) – a prosperous people
- The Fourth Oracle (24:15-19) – a royal people

### Balaam and God's People (25:1-18)

- The Sin of Israel (25:1-9)
- The Courage of Phinehas (25:10-15)
- The Judgment of Midian (25:16-18)

### Balaam and the Church Today

- The Way of Balaam (2 Peter 2:15)
- The Error of Balaam (Jude 11)
- The Teaching of Balaam (Revelation 2:14)



## Final Preparations for Entering Canaan (26:1-36:13)

### A New Beginning (Numbers 26-30)

#### The Second Census (ch 26)

- The Tribal Inheritance (26:52-56)
- The Levitical Inheritance (26:57-62)

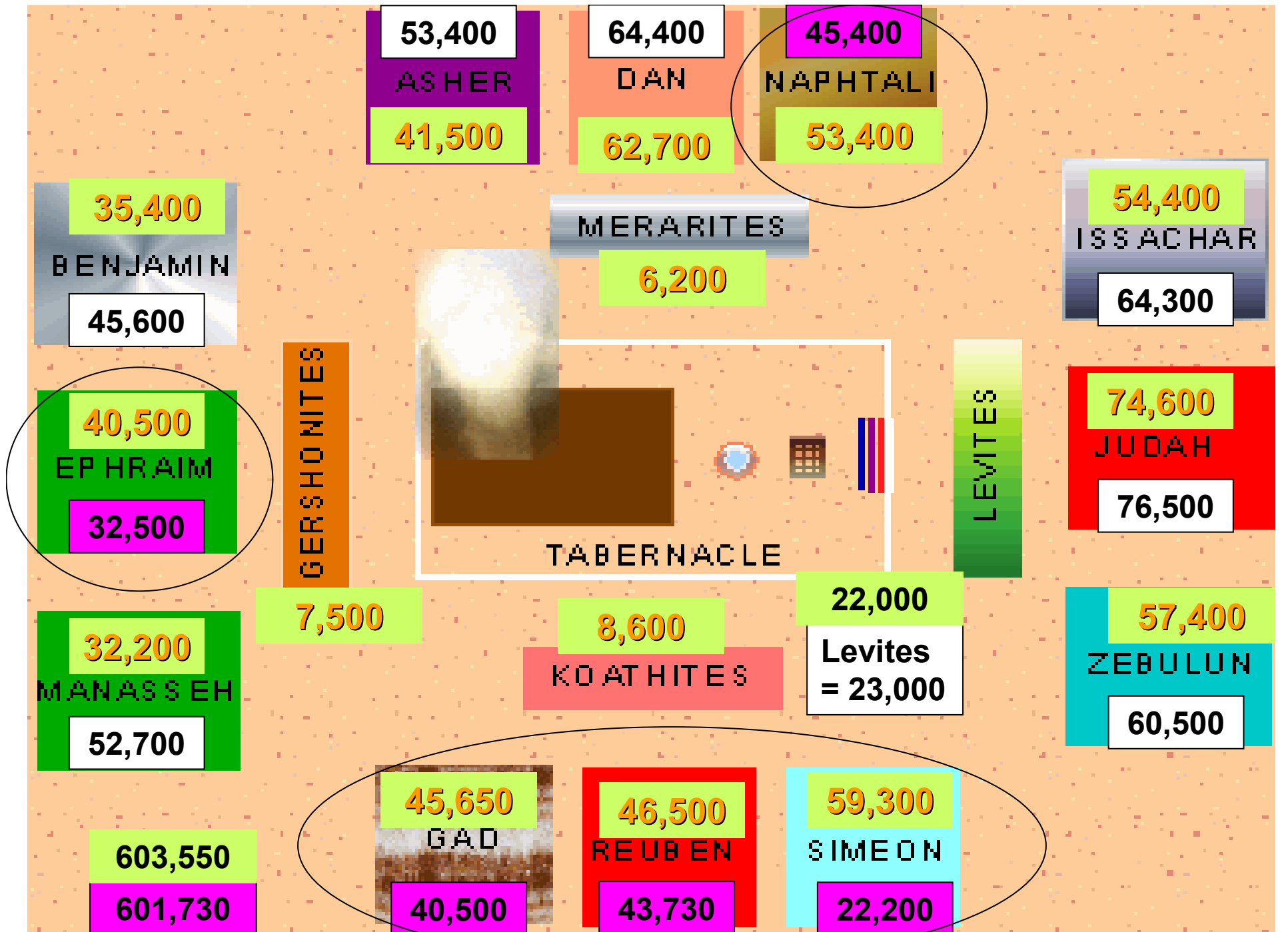
### Daughters of Zelophehad (27:1-11) / The Family Inheritance/ Joshua appointed as Moses' Successor (27:12-23)

- Moses and the Land (v12-14)
- Joshua the New Leader (v15-23)

### Laws concerning Offerings & Vows (ch 28-30)

- Daily Offerings (28:1-10)
- Monthly Offerings (v11-15)
- Offerings for the Annual Fasts (28:16-29:40)
- Passover (v16)
- The Feast of Unleavened Bread (v17-25)
- The Feast of Weeks (v26-30)
- The Feast of Trumpets (29:1-6)
- The Day of Atonement (v7-11)
- The Feast of Tabernacles (v12-40)
- The Sanctity of Words (30:1-16)
  - The Vow of a Man (v1-2)
  - The Vow of a Single Woman (v3-8)
  - The Vow of the Widow or a Divorcee (v9)
  - The Vow of a Married Woman (v10-16)





**Numbers 30** - In this chapter we have a law concerning vows, which had been mentioned in the close of the foregoing chapter.

- I. Here is a general rule laid down that all vows must be carefully performed (Num\_30:1, Num\_30:2).
- II. Some particular exceptions to this rule.
  1. That the vows of daughters should not be binding unless allowed by the father (Num\_30:3-5). Nor,
  2. The vows of wives unless allowed by the husband (Num\_30:6, etc.).

## Matthew Henry on Numbers 30

## v1-2 The Vow of a Man

**1 Then** Moses spoke to the heads of the tribes of the sons of Israel, saying, "This is the word which the LORD has commanded.

**K & D** - The rules by which vows were to be legally regulated, so far as their objects and their discharge were concerned, has been already laid down in Lev (ch 27); but the chapter before us contains instructions with reference to the force of vows and renunciations. These are so far in place in connection with the general rules of sacrifice, that vows related for the most part to the presentation of sacrifices; and even vows of renunciation partook of the character of worship. The instructions in question were addressed (Num\_30:1) to "the heads of the tribes," because they entered into the sphere of civil rights, namely, into that of family life.

**Clarke - Num 30:2 - If a man vow a vow** - A vow is a religious promise made to God. Vows were of several kinds: - 1. Of abstinence or humiliation, see Num\_30:13; 2. Of the Nazarite, see Numbers 6; 3. Of giving certain things or sacrifices to the Lord, Lev\_7:16; 4. Of alms given to the poor, see Deu\_23:21. The law in this chapter must have been very useful, as it both prevented and annulled rash vows, and provided a proper sanction for the support and performance of those that were rationally and piously made. Besides, this law must have acted as a great preventive of lying and hypocrisy. If a vow was properly made, a man or woman was bound, under penalty of the displeasure of God, to fulfill it.

## Laws Concerning Offerings & Vows (Numbers 28-30)

## v1-2 The Vow of a Man

2 “**If** a man makes a vow to the LORD, or takes an oath to bind himself with a binding obligation, he shall not violate his word; he shall do according to all that proceeds out of his mouth.”

**BKC** - As was pointed out in regard to the Nazirite custom (Num\_6:1-12), an individual could make a vow to the Lord to do something or perhaps to abstain from something for a designated period of time (see...Lev\_27:1-34). The purpose of Num\_30:1-16 was not to specify what kinds of vows might be made or how they were to be undertaken or abrogated but only to teach how important it was that they be kept. If an individual made a vow (*neder*, a promise to do something) or a pledge (*'issār*, a promise not to do something), he must keep it without equivocation (Num\_30:1-2).

**K & D** - נָדָר is a positive vow, or promise to give or sanctify any part of one's property to the Lord. אָסַר, from אָסַר, to bind or fetter, the negative vow, or vow of abstinence. עַל-נַפְשׁוֹ אָסַר, to take an abstinence upon his soul. In what such abstinence consisted is not explained, because it was well understood from traditional customs; in all probability it consisted chiefly in fasting and other similar abstinence from lawful things. The Nazirite's vow, which is generally reckoned among the vows of abstinence, is called *neder* in Num\_6:2., not *issar*, because it consisted not merely in abstinence from the fruit of the vine, but also in the positive act of permitting the hair to grow freely in honour of the Lord. The expression “swear an oath” (Num\_30:2; cf. v13) shows that, as a rule, they bound themselves to abstinence by an oath.

## Laws Concerning Offerings & Vows (Numbers 28-30)

- **Num 30:2 - If a man vow a vow unto the Lord** — A mere secret purpose of the mind was not enough to constitute a vow; it had to be actually expressed in words; and though a purely voluntary act, yet when once the vow was made, the performance of it, like that of every other promise, became an indispensable duty - all the more because, referring to a sacred thing, it could not be neglected without the guilt of prevarication and unfaithfulness to God.

**Ecclesiastes 5:1-2** – 1 Guard your steps as you go to the house of God, and draw near to listen rather than to offer the sacrifice of fools; for they do not know they are doing evil. 2 Do not be hasty in word or impulsive in thought to bring up a matter in the presence of God. For God is in heaven and you are on the earth; therefore let your words be few.

- **he shall not break his word** — literally, “profane his word” - render it vain and contemptible (Psa\_55:20; 89:34). But as it would frequently happen that parties would vow to do things which were neither good in themselves nor in their power to perform, the law ordained that their natural superiors should have the right of judging as to the propriety of those vows, with discretionary power to sanction or interdict their fulfilment. Parents were to determine in the case of their children, and husbands in that of their wives - being, however, allowed only a day for deliberation after the matter became known to them; and their judgment, if unfavorable, released the devotee from all obligation [Num\_30:3-8].
- **Barnes - Num 30:2** - The “vow” was positive; the “bond” negative or restrictive. By a vow a man engaged to dedicate something to God, or to accomplish some work for Him: by a bond he debarred himself from some privilege or enjoyment. A vow involved an obligation to do: a bond, an obligation to forbear doing.

## JFB on Numbers 30:2

## Vows of Persons (Leviticus 27:1-8)

1 **Again**, the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, 2 "Speak to the sons of Israel, and say to them, 'When a man makes a difficult vow, he shall be valued according to your valuation of persons belonging to the LORD. 3 **If your valuation is of the male from twenty years even to sixty years old**, then your valuation shall be fifty shekels of silver, after the shekel of the sanctuary. 4 **Or if it is a female**, then your valuation shall be thirty shekels. 5 **And if it be from five years even to twenty years old then** your valuation for the male shall be twenty shekels, and for the female ten shekels. 6 **But if they are from a month even up to five years old**, then your valuation shall be five shekels of silver for the male, and for the female your valuation shall be three shekels of silver. 7 **And if they are from sixty years old and upward**, if it is a male, then your valuation shall be fifteen shekels, and for the female ten shekels. 8 **But if he is poorer than your valuation**, then he shall be placed before the priest, and the priest shall value him; according to the means of the one who vowed, the priest shall value him.

Since the 50-shekel evaluation placed on an adult male was equivalent to about 50 months' wages, this system tended to discourage rash vows! (F. Duane Lindsey, Bible Knowledge Commentary)

## Vows Pertaining to People & Animals (Lev 27:1-13)

 Entrusting the Word to the Faithful

## Vows of Animals (Leviticus 27:9-13)

9 'Now **if** it is an animal of the kind which men can present as an offering to the LORD, **any such that one gives to the LORD shall be holy**. 10 He shall not replace it or exchange it, a good for a bad, or a bad for a good; **or if** he does exchange animal for animal, **then both it and its substitute shall become holy**. 11 **If, however**, it is any unclean animal of the kind which men do not present **as** an offering to the LORD, **then** he shall place the animal before the priest. 12 And the priest shall value it **as** either good or bad; **as** you, the priest, value it, **so** it shall be. 13 **But if** he should ever *wish to* redeem it, **then** he shall add one-fifth of it to your valuation.

**Ecclesiastes 5:4-6** - 4 **When** you make a vow to God, do not be late in paying it, **for** *He takes* no delight in fools. Pay what you vow! 5 It is better that you should not vow than that you should vow and not pay. 6 Do not let your speech cause you to sin and do not say in the presence of the messenger of God that it was a mistake. **Why should God be angry on account of your voice and destroy the work of your hands?**

Some Vows Today: 1) Conversion (the New Covenant), 2) Marriage, 3) Baptism, 4) Vows (e.g. if You help me pass my exam, I will....)

## Vows Pertaining to People & Animals (Lev 27:1-13)

 Entrusting the Word to the Faithful

Vow - To be taken voluntarily; but when taken to be conscientiously fulfilled ([Deut. 23:21-23](#); [Eccl. 5:5](#); [Neh. 1:15](#); [Ps. 1.14](#); [Prov. 20:25](#)). The NAZARITE (which see) however was often dedicated from infancy by the parent. For instances see JACOB ([Gen. 28:20-22](#) with [31:13](#); [35:1-4](#)). Vows were of three kinds: (1) vow of devotion, *neder*; (2) of abstinence, *'esar* (see CORBAN); (3) of destruction, *cherem* ([Ezra 10:8](#); [Micah 4:13](#)) (see ANATHEMA). A man could not devote to sacred uses the firstborn of man or beast, as being devoted already ([Lev. 27:26](#)). The law of redeeming vowed land is given ([Lev. 27:15,24](#); [25:27](#)). An animal fit for sacrifice could not be redeemed; any attempting it had to bring both the animal and its changeling ([Lev. 27:9,10,33](#)). An animal unfit for sacrifice, adding a fifth ([Lev. 27:12,13](#)). A devoted person became a servant of the sanctuary ([2 Sam. 15:8](#)). The vow of a daughter or a wife was void if disallowed by the father or husband, otherwise it was binding ([Num. 30:3-16](#)). The wages of impurity was excluded from vows ([Deut. 23:17,18](#)); "dog" means "Sodomite" ([Micah 1:7](#)). In Ashtoreth's and the Babylonian Mylitta's worship prostitution for hire devoted to the idol was usual ([Lev. 19:29](#); [2 Kings 23:7](#)). The head was shaven after a vow ([Acts 18:18](#); [21:24](#)).

## A R Fausset on "Vows"

Vow (Heb: *nedher*; Grk: *euche*; Heb: *'iccar*, found only in [Nu 30:6,8,10](#) and translated Grk: *horismos*, by the Septuagint: A vow could be positive (Heb: *nedher*) and included all promises to perform certain things for, or bring certain offerings to, God, in return for certain benefits which were hoped for at His hand ([Gen 28:20-22](#), Jacob; [Lev 27:2,8](#); [Nu 30](#); ; [Jdg 11:30](#), Jephthah; [1 Sam 1:11](#), Hannah; [2 Sam 15:8](#), Absalom; [Jon 1:16](#), vows of heathen); or negative (Heb: *'iccar*), and included promises by which a person bound himself or herself to abstain from certain things ([Nu 30:3](#)). Nowhere in the Old Testament do we find the making of vows regarded as a religious duty ([Dt 23:22](#)), but the fulfilling of a vow was considered as a sacred and binding duty ([Dt 23:21-23](#); [Jdg 11:35](#); [Eccl 5:4](#); compare [Ps 22:25](#); [66:13](#); [76:11](#); [116:18](#)). A vow was as binding as an oath (see OATH) and therefore to be kept to the letter; and it was not to be lightly made ([Prov 20:25](#)). A father could veto a daughter's vow, and a husband a wife's. If a husband did not veto a wife's vow, and then caused her to break it, the sin was his and not hers ([Nu 30](#), *passim*). It seems that vows were considered binding only when actually uttered ([Dt 23:23](#)).

Persons, including one's self, animals, land and other possessions, could be vowed, but all these could be redeemed with money (see JEPHTHAH), which money was to be estimated by the priest, except in the case of a clean animal. In the case of land, houses and unclean animals a fifth part of the estimated value was to be added to make up the redemption money. In the case of land the sum was greater or smaller as the coming year of Jubilee was far off or near ([Lev 27](#), *passim*). Nothing which was by nature holy could be made the object of a vow, e.g. firstlings, tithes, etc. ([Lev 27:26,28,30](#)); and, on the other hand, an abomination, e.g. the hire of a prostitute, could not be made the object of a vow ([Dt 23:18](#)). In [Mal 1:14](#) the offering of what was of less value than what had been vowed is vigorously condemned.

In the New Testament Jesus refers to vows only to condemn the abuse of them ([Mt 15:4-6](#) ; [Mk 7:10-13](#); compare Talmud, *Nedharim*, and see CORBAN). In [Acts 18:18](#) (compare [Acts 21:23,24](#)) Paul desires to show his Jewish brethren that he is willing to keep the forms of Jewish piety so long as they do not clash with his Christian conscience (compare [1 Cor 9:21](#))....

## Paul Levertoff on “Vows”

## Dedication of Houses (Leviticus 27:14-15)

14 'Now if a man consecrates his house as holy to the LORD, then the priest shall value it as either good or bad; as the priest values it, so it shall stand. 15 Yet if the one who consecrates it should wish to redeem his house, then he shall add one-fifth of your valuation price to it, so that it may be his.

## Dedication of Lands (Leviticus 27:16-25)

16 'Again, if a man consecrates to the LORD part of the fields of his own property, then your valuation shall be proportionate to the seed needed for it: a homer of barley seed at fifty shekels of silver. 17 If he consecrates his field as of the year of jubilee, according to your valuation it shall stand. 18 If he consecrates his field after the jubilee, however, then the priest shall calculate the price for him proportionate to the years that are left until the year of jubilee; and it shall be deducted from your valuation. 19 'And if the one who consecrates it should ever wish to redeem the field, then he shall add one-fifth of your valuation price to it, so that it may pass to him. 20 Yet if he will not redeem the field, but has sold the field to another man, it may no longer be redeemed; 21 and when it reverts in the jubilee, the field shall be holy to the LORD, like a field set apart; it shall be for the priest as his property. 22 Or if he consecrates to the LORD a field which he has bought, which is not a part of the field of his own property, 23 then the priest shall calculate for him the amount of your valuation up to the year of jubilee; and he shall on that day give your valuation as holy to the LORD. 24 In the year of jubilee the field shall return to the one from whom he bought it, to whom the possession of the land belongs. 25 Every valuation of yours, moreover, shall be after the shekel of the sanctuary. The shekel shall be twenty gerahs.

## Dedication of Houses and Lands (Lev 27:14-25)

## The Dues of the Firstborn (Leviticus 27:26-27)

26 **'However**, a first-born among animals, which **as** a first-born belongs to the LORD, no man may consecrate it; whether ox or sheep, it is the LORD's. 27 **But if** *it is* among the unclean animals, **then** he shall redeem it according to your valuation, and add to it one-fifth of it; and if it is not redeemed, then it shall be sold according to your valuation.

## The Dedication to Destruction (Leviticus 27:28-29)

28 **'Nevertheless**, anything which a man sets apart to the LORD out of all that he has, of man or animal or of the fields of his own property, shall not be sold or redeemed. **Anything devoted to destruction is most holy to the LORD.** 29 No one who may have been set apart among men shall be ransomed; he shall surely be put to death.

## The Dues of Tithes (Leviticus 27:30-33)

30 **'Thus** all the tithe of the land, of the seed of the land or of the fruit of the tree, is the LORD's; it is holy to the LORD. 31 **If, therefore**, a man wishes to redeem part of his tithe, he shall add to it one-fifth of it. 32 And for every tenth part of herd or flock, whatever passes under the rod, **the tenth one shall be holy to the LORD.** 33 He is not to be concerned whether *it is* good or bad, nor shall he exchange it; **or if** he does exchange it, **then** both it and its substitute shall become holy. It shall not be redeemed."

## Conclusion (Leviticus 27:34)

34 These are the commandments which the LORD commanded Moses for the sons of Israel at Mount Sinai.

# Other Dues and Gifts (Lev 27:26-34)

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## v3-8 The Vow of a Single Woman

3 Also **if** a woman makes a vow to the LORD, and binds herself by an obligation in her father's house in her youth, 4 and her father hears her vow and her obligation by which she has bound herself, and her father says nothing to her, **then** all her vows shall stand, and every obligation by which she has bound herself shall stand. 5 **But if** her father should forbid her **on the day** he hears *of it*, none of her vows or her obligations by which she has bound herself shall stand; **and the LORD will forgive her because** her father had forbidden her.

**JFB - Num 30:3 - If a woman also vow a vow unto the Lord, and bind herself by a bond, being in her father's house in her youth** — Girls only are specified; but minors of the other sex, who resided under the parental roof, were included, according to Jewish writers, who also consider the name "father" as comprehending all guardians of youth. We are also told that the age at which young people were deemed capable of vowing was thirteen for boys and twelve for girls. The judgment of a father or guardian on the vow of any under his charge might be given either by an expressed approval or by silence, which was to be construed as approval. But in the case of a husband who, after silence from day to day, should ultimately disapprove or hinder his wife's vow, the sin of non-performance was to be imputed to him and not to her [Num\_30:15].

## Laws Concerning Offerings & Vows (Numbers 28-30)

**6 "However, if she should marry while under her vows or the rash statement of her lips by which she has bound herself,**

Barnes - Num 30:6 - Rather, And if she shall at all be an husband's, and her vows shall be upon her, or a rash utterance of her lips, wherewith she hath bound her soul, etc. The "at all" intimates that the case of a girl betrothed but not yet actually married is here especially contemplated. After betrothal, a woman continued to reside, until the period of her marriage arrived, in her father's house; but her property was from that time forward vested in her husband, and she was so far regarded as personally his, that an act of faithlessness to him was, like adultery, punishable with death Deu\_22:23-24. Hence, his right to control her vows even before he actually took her home as his wife.

**7 and her husband hears of it and says nothing to her on the day he hears it, then her vows shall stand and her obligations by which she has bound herself shall stand. 8 But if on the day her husband hears of it, he forbids her, then he shall annul her vow which she is under and the rash statement of her lips by which she has bound herself; and the LORD will forgive her.**

## Laws Concerning Offerings & Vows (Numbers 28-30)

## v9 The Vow of the Widow or a Divorcee

9 "But the vow of a widow or of a divorced woman, everything by which she has bound herself, shall stand against her.

JFB - every vow of a widow — In the case of a married woman, who, in the event of a separation from her husband, or of his death, returned, as was not uncommon, to her father's house, a doubt might have been entertained whether she was not, as before, subject to paternal jurisdiction and obliged to act with the paternal consent. The law ordained that the vow was binding if it had been made in her husband's lifetime, and he, on being made aware of it, had not interposed his veto [Num\_30:10, 11]; as, for instance, she might have vowed, when not a widow, that she would assign a portion of her income to pious and charitable uses, of which she might repent when actually a widow; but by this statute she was required to fulfil the obligation, provided her circumstances enabled her to redeem the pledge. The rules laid down must have been exceedingly useful for the prevention or cancelling of rash vows, as well as for giving a proper sanction to such as were legitimate in their nature, and made in a devout, reflecting spirit.

## Laws Concerning Offerings & Vows (Numbers 28-30)

## v10-15 The Vow of a Married Woman

10 “**However, if** she vowed in her husband's house, or bound herself by an obligation with an oath, 11 and her husband heard *it*, **but** said nothing to her *and* did not forbid her, **then** all her vows shall stand, and every obligation by which she bound herself shall stand.

12 **But if** her husband indeed annuls them **on the day** he hears *them*, **then** whatever proceeds out of her lips concerning her vows or concerning the obligation of herself, shall not stand; her husband has annulled them, **and the LORD will forgive her.**

**Laws Concerning Offerings & Vows (Numbers 28-30)**

13 "Every vow and every binding oath to humble herself, her husband may confirm it or her husband may annul it. 14 **But if** her husband **indeed** says nothing to her **from day to day, then** he confirms all her vows or all her obligations which are on her; he has confirmed them, **because** he said nothing to her **on the day** he heard them. 15 **But if** he **indeed** annuls them **after** he has heard them, **then** he shall bear her guilt."

## Laws Concerning Offerings & Vows (Numbers 28-30)

Num 30:3-15 contain the rules relating to positive and negative vows made by a woman, and four different examples are given. **The first case (Num\_30:3-5)** is that of a woman in her youth, while still unmarried, and living in her father's house. If she made a vow of performance or abstinence, and her father heard of it and remained silent, it was to stand, i.e., to remain in force. But if her father held her back when he heard of it, i.e., forbade her fulfilling it, it was not to stand or remain in force, and Jehovah would forgive her because of her father's refusal. **Obedience to a father stood higher than a self-imposed religious service.** - **The second case (Num\_30:6-8)** was that of a vow of performance or abstinence, made by a woman before her marriage, and brought along with her (עָלֶיהָ, “upon herself”) into her marriage. In such a case the husband had to decide as to its validity, in the same way as the father before her marriage. In the day when he heard of it he could hold back his wife, i.e., dissolve her vow; but if he did not do this at once, he could not hinder its fulfilment afterwards. מִבֶּטֶא שְׂפָתֶיהָ, gossip of her lips, that which is uttered thoughtlessly or without reflection (cf. Lev\_5:4). This expression implies that **vows of abstinence were often made by unmarried women without thought or reflection.** - **The third case (Num\_30:9)** was that of a vow made by a widow or divorced woman. **Such a vow had full force, because the woman was not dependent upon a husband.** - **The fourth case (Num\_30:10-12)** was that of a vow made by a wife in her married state. Such a vow was to remain in force if her husband remained silent when he heard of it, and did not restrain her. On the other hand, it was to have no force if her husband dissolved it at once. After this there follows the general statement (Num\_30:13-16), that **a husband could establish or dissolve every vow of performance or abstinence made by his wife.** If, however, he remained silent “from day to day,” he confirmed it by his silence; and **if afterwards he should declare it void, he was to bear his wife's iniquity.** עֲוֹנָהּ, the sin which the wife would have had to bear if she had broken the vow of her own accord. This consisted either in a sin-offering to expiate her sin (Lev\_5:4.); or if this was omitted, in the punishment which God suspended over the sin (Lev\_5:1).

## Keil & Delitzsch on Numbers 30:3-15

## v16 The Summary

**16 These are the statutes which the LORD commanded Moses, *as* between a man and his wife, and *as* between a father and his daughter, *while she is* in her youth in her father's house.**

**Clarke - Num 30:16** - These are the statutes - It is very probable that this law, like that concerning the succession of daughters, (Numbers 27)., rose from the exigency of some particular case that had just then occurred.

Making vows, in almost any case, is a dangerous business; they seldom do any good, and often much evil. He who does not feel himself bound to do what is fit, right, and just, from the standing testimony of God's word, is not likely to do it from any obligation he may lay upon his own conscience. If God's word lack weight with him, his own will prove lighter than vanity. Every man who professes the Christian religion is under the most solemn obligation to devote body, soul, and spirit to God, not only to the utmost extent of his powers, but also as long as he exists. Being baptized, and receiving the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, are additional ratifications of the great, general, Christian vow; but every true follower of Christ should always remember, and frequently renew, his covenant with God.

**Laws Concerning Offerings & Vows (Numbers 28-30)**

## The Power of Speech

To make a promise is to obligate oneself to the Lord, whether the people realize this or not. The foundations of society today are eroding because of unkept promises, whether they be official contracts, marriage vows, political pledges, or words spoken on the witness stand. We expect the Lord to keep His promises and He expects us to keep ours. Truth is the cement that holds society together.

## The importance of authority and subordination in society and in the home

While all people are created equal before God and the Law, there are still levels of authority and responsibility that must be respected (Eph 5:18-6:9). The unmarried maiden in her father's home is subject to her father's will and the married woman to her husband's will. Relationships bring responsibilities, and to rush into unwise commitments is to incur penalties that can be costly.

### Proverbs 20:25

It is a snare for a man to say rashly, "It is holy!"  
And after the vows to make inquiry.

# The Sanctity of Words (Numbers 30:1-16)

 Entrusting the Word to the Faithful

## Ecclesiastes 5:1-6

1 Guard your steps as you go to the house of God, and draw near to listen rather than to offer the sacrifice of fools; for they do not know they are doing evil. 2 Do not be hasty in word or impulsive in thought to bring up a matter in the presence of God. For God is in heaven and you are on the earth; therefore let your words be few. 3 For the dream comes through much effort, and the voice of a fool through many words. 4 When you make a vow to God, do not be late in paying it, for He takes no delight in fools. Pay what you vow! 5 It is better that you should not vow than that you should vow and not pay. 6 Do not let your speech cause you to sin and do not say in the presence of the messenger of God that it was a mistake. Why should God be angry on account of your voice and destroy the work of your hands?

## The Sanctity of Words (Numbers 30:1-16)

 Entrusting the Word to the Faithful

## Marching in Victory and Defeat (Numbers 21)

### A. The Power of God (v1-3)

### B. The Grace of God (v4-9)

v4-5 Their Sin

v6 Their Punishment

v7 Their Repentance

v8-9 Their Deliverance

### C. The Goodness of God (v10-20)

### The Victory of God (v21-35)

v21-32 Victory over the Amorites

v33-35 Victory over Bashan



## Balaam and the Moabites (Num 22-25)

### Balaam and God's Will (22:1-35)

- The King's Request (22:1-20)
- The Donkey's Resistance (22:21-30)
- The Angel's Revelation (22:31-35)

### Balaam and God's Message (22:36-24:25)

- The First Oracle (22:26-23:12) – a separated people
- The Second Oracle (23:13-26) – a conquering people
- The Third Oracle (23:27-24:14) – a prosperous people
- The Fourth Oracle (24:15-19) – a royal people

### Balaam and God's People (25:1-18)

- The Sin of Israel (25:1-9)
- The Courage of Phinehas (25:10-15)
- The Judgment of Midian (25:16-18)

### Balaam and the Church Today

- The Way of Balaam (2 Peter 2:15)
- The Error of Balaam (Jude 11)
- The Teaching of Balaam (Revelation 2:14)



## Final Preparations for Entering Canaan (26:1-36:13)

### A New Beginning (Numbers 26-30)

#### The Second Census (ch 26)

- The Tribal Inheritance (26:52-56)
- The Levitical Inheritance (26:57-62)

### Daughters of Zelophehad (27:1-11) / The Family Inheritance/ Joshua appointed as Moses' Successor (27:12-23)

- Moses and the Land (v12-14)
- Joshua the New Leader (v15-23)

### Laws concerning Offerings & Vows (ch 28-30)

- Daily Offerings (28:1-10)
- Monthly Offerings (v11-15)
- Offerings for the Annual Fasts (28:16-29:40)
- Passover (v16)
- The Feast of Unleavened Bread (v17-25)
- The Feast of Weeks (v26-30)
- The Feast of Trumpets (29:1-6)
- The Day of Atonement (v7-11)
- The Feast of Tabernacles (v12-40)
- The Sanctity of Words (30:1-16)
  - The Vow of a Man (v1-2)
  - The Vow of a Single Woman (v3-8)
  - The Vow of the Widow or a Divorcee (v9)
  - The Vow of a Married Woman (v10-16)



## Numbers: Man's Failure and God's Faithfulness (Num 14:8-9) (Wiersbe)

### I. At Sinai: Obeying the Lord (1:1-9:14)

1. Numbering the Soldiers (1:1-54)
2. Organizing the Tribes (2:134)
3. Assigning the Duties (ch 3-4)
4. Purifying the People (ch 5-6)
5. Dedicating the Tabernacle (ch 7-8)
6. Celebrating the Passover (9:1-14)

### II. To Kadesh: Tempting the Lord (9:15-12:16)

1. The Camp Marches (9:15-10:36)
2. The People Complain (ch 11)
3. Aaron and Miriam Criticize Moses (ch 12)

### III. At Kadesh: Rebelling Against the Lord (ch 13-14)

1. Exploring the Promised Land (ch 13)
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1. About Sacrifices (15:1-31)
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### V. In Moab: A New Beginning from the Lord (20:14-36:13)

1. New Victories (20:14-21; 21:1-35)
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5. New Regulations (27:1-11)
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9. New Laws for the New Land (ch 33-36)



