

The Bible Jesus Used

A Gospel-Centered Glance at the Old Testament

Bethlehem Baptist Church, 2011–2012
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Numbers at a Glance

	Time Frame	<i>1st Census</i> —Over 1 Year after Exodus (Num. 1:1)
Geography		<i>From Sinai</i> (1:1–10:10)—Community Formed & Tabernacle Constructed
		<i>Through the Wilderness</i> (10:11–22:1)—Internal Focus & Threats
		<i>To the Plains of Moab</i> (22:2–36:13)—External Focus & Threats
	Time Frame	<i>2nd Census</i> —Over 38 Years Later (26:64–65)

To the Plains of Moab: The Balaam Oracles (chs. 22–24)

❖ Background

- ❖ Israel's mission and the Abrahamic promises
 - ❖ Num. 22:6. He whom you bless is blessed, and he whom you curse is cursed.
 - ❖ Num. 24:9. Blessed are those who bless you, and cursed are those who curse you.
 - ❖ Gen. 12:2–3. And you shall be a blessing, and I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.

To the Plains of Moab: The Balaam Oracles (chs. 22–24)

❖ Background

- ❖ Israel's mission and the Abrahamic promises
- ❖ Balaam's bad heart
 - ❖ A “perverse” way (Num. 22:32)
 - ❖ 2 Pet. 2:15–16. Forsaking the right way, they have gone astray. They have followed the way of Balaam, the son of Beor, who loved gain from wrongdoing, ¹⁶but was rebuked for his own transgression; a speechless donkey spoke with human voice and restrained the prophet's madness.

To the Plains of Moab: The Balaam Oracles (chs. 22–24)

❖ Background

- ❖ Israel's mission and the Abrahamic promises
- ❖ Balaam's bad heart
 - ❖ A “perverse” way (Num. 22:32)
 - ❖ A deceptive guide (Num. 31:16)
 - ❖ Rev. 2:14. But I have a few things against you: you have some there who hold the teaching of Balaam, who taught Balak to put a stumbling block before the sons of Israel, so that they might eat food sacrificed to idols and practice sexual immorality.

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❖ Background

- ❖ Israel's mission and the Abrahamic promises
- ❖ Balaam's bad heart
 - ❖ A “perverse” way (Num. 22:32)
 - ❖ A deceptive guide (Num. 31:16)
- ❖ The great reversal
 - ❖ Neh. 13:1–2. [The Ammonites and Moabites] did not meet the people of Israel with bread and water, but hired Balaam against them to curse them—yet our God turned the curse into a blessing.

- ❖ Oracle 1 (23:7–10): **God's faithfulness** in multiplying Israel into a great nation as promised
- ❖ Oracle 2 (23:18–24): **God's constancy** in his reigning, victorious presence with and for Israel
- ❖ Oracle 3 (24:3–9): **God's superiority** as Israel's provider and protector into and in the Promised Land with an earthly king

- ❖ **Oracle 4 (24:15–19): God’s global sovereignty through his earthly king**
- ❖ Concerns the “latter days” (24:14; cf. Gen. 49:1)
- ❖ The “seer” sees rightly the Most High (24:15–16)

- ❖ **Messianic hope (24:17–19):**
 - ❖ **Images of the future: “But not now” (24:17)**
 - ❖ **Sovereign over all: “his enemies, shall be dispossessed.... And one from Jacob shall exercise dominion” (24:18–19)**
 - ❖ **Gen. 22:17b–18. And your offspring shall possess the gate of his enemies, ¹⁸and in your offspring shall all the nations of the earth be blessed, because you have obeyed my voice.”**
 - ❖ **Gen. 24:60. And they blessed Rebekah and said to her, “Our sister, may you become thousands of ten thousands, and may your offspring possess the gate of those who hate him!”**

- ❖ **A King and Deliverer:** “a scepter shall rise out of Israel; it shall crush the forehead of Moab” (24:17)
- ❖ **Gen. 49:10.** The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor the ruler’s staff from between his feet.”
- ❖ **Gen. 3:15.** I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel.
- ❖ **Ps. 72:4.** May he defend the cause of the poor of the people, give deliverance to the children of the needy, and crush the oppressor!

- ❖ **Ps. 89:10**. You crushed Rahab like a carcass; you scattered your enemies with your mighty arm.
- ❖ **Rom. 16:20**. The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet.

- ❖ **A Light in the darkness:** “A star shall come out of Jacob” (24:17)
- ❖ **OT Escalation:**
 - ❖ **Gen. 15:5. Number the stars.... So shall your offspring be.**
- ❖ **NT Fulfillment:**
 - ❖ **Matt. 2:2. Where is he who has been born king of the Jews? For we saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him.**
 - ❖ **John 8:12. I am the light of the world.**
 - ❖ **Rev. 22:16. [Jesus Messiah] the root and descendant of David, the bright and morning star.**

❖ **Significance for us:**

❖ **In Christ, the light has dawned**

❖ **Matt. 4:15–17. “The land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, the way of the sea, beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles—¹⁶the people dwelling in darkness have seen a great light, and for those dwelling in the region and shadow of death, on them a light has dawned.”
¹⁷From that time Jesus began to preach, saying, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.”**

- ❖ With the dawn, new levels of love are possible.
- ❖ **1 John 2:8**. It is a new commandment that I am writing to you, which is true in [Jesus] and in you, because the darkness is passing away and the true light is already shining.
- ❖ Take heart, noon is coming!
- ❖ **Rev. 21:22–25**. And I saw no temple in the city, for its temple is the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb. ²³And the city has no need of sun or moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and its lamp is the Lamb. ²⁴By its light will the nations walk, and the kings of the earth will bring their glory into it, ²⁵and its gates will never be shut by day—and there will be no night there.

To the Plains of Moab: The Second Census (ch. 26)

❖ **Observations:**

“Numbers” in Numbers

<i>Tribal Name</i>	<i>1st (Num 1)</i>	<i>2nd (Num 26)</i>	<i>Change</i>
<i>Reuben</i>	46,500	43,730	-2,770
Simeon	59,300	22,200	-37,100
Gad	45,650	40,500	-5,150
<i>Judah</i>	74,600	76,500	+1,900
Issachar	54,400	64,300	+9,900
Zebulun	57,400	60,500	+3,100
<i>Ephraim</i>	40,500	32,500	-8,000
Manasseh	32,200	52,700	+20,500
Benjamin	35,400	45,600	+10,200
<i>Dan</i>	62,700	64,400	+1,700
Asher	41,500	53,400	+11,900
Naphtali	53,400	45,500	-8,000
SUB-TOTALS	603,550	601,730	-1,820
Levites	22,000	23,000	+1,000
TOTALS	625,550	624,730	-820

To the Plains of Moab: The Second Census (ch. 26)

❖ **Significance**

- ❖ **God takes sin seriously.**
 - ❖ **75 year life expectancy (Ps. 90:10), so all 20–37 years old would never have been expected to die within the next 38 years (Deut. 2:14).**
 - ❖ **The death rate was substantially higher, all because of sin!**
- ❖ **God does what he promises whether to bless or curse.**
- ❖ **The new generation were recipients of God's grace.**
 - ❖ **God sustained Israel through the wilderness.**
 - ❖ **God maintained Israel's growth rate.**

**Lam. 3:22–23. The steadfast love of
Yahweh never ceases; his mercies
never come to an end; ²³they are new
every morning. Great is your
faithfulness.**