



5 bible studies in

Numbers

‘playing for sheep stations’



Numbers... 'playing for sheep stations'

Some preliminary comments – with each question, sometimes there’s a follow up question or two included at the same number. This is to just help draw it out a bit more. You may get it with the first one so don’t panic if you end up saying the same thing in thinking about the follow up question and therefore just move on. Also, don’t panic if you can’t quite see what a question might be driving at. These questions are not the Bible. Feel free to move onto the next one. The questions are just an attempt to help us get into the passage/issue. Let the passage drive things at the end of the day. The questions are of course still meant to be a lead in to what could be very important with what God has in front of us here. So at least think about it before moving on. It’s good to dwell for a bit and often, it then becomes a little more obvious, though it is hoped that the questions are not totally useless!

In terms of this brief look at Numbers itself - we’re obviously not taking in everything about the book—a lot more studies would be necessary for that! But we are looking at incidents that are unique to Numbers.

Exodus and Deuteronomy relate ‘a number’ of the same stories found in Numbers as God’s people made their way to the promised land of Canaan after the great Exodus from Egypt with Moses. But Numbers adds to the picture as they made their way through the desert towards the land God had set aside for them — a bit like how the different Gospels each bring additional information to help us better see who Jesus is.

Numbers helps us see how God was keeping His promises to His people of old, first made to the father of the Israelite or Jewish nation, Abraham... “... go the land I will show you. I will make you into a great nation and I will bless you...” (Genesis 12:1-2).

Numbers particularly brings out the promise to do with land.

God certainly blessed the people with His presence through thick and thin as the pages from Genesis 12:1-3 show. The great Exodus saga develops how God was keeping the people aspect to the promise, how despite ongoing impossible circumstances, there was quite a lot of people heading out of slavery, as Numbers literally reminds us at its beginning.

But a nation also needs a land. Again, seemingly impossible as the people had been up till this point always living in other people’s land. Numbers tells how this was being fulfilled. relating the people’s struggle to trust God for this.

We can learn a lot from their struggles even though the land for us today is very different. We too need to trust God because sometimes it can look unlikely for us as well. And the stakes are equally as high for us as they were for them.



