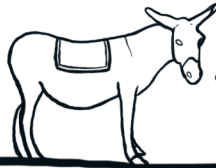


NUMBERS

CHAPTER

16



CHARACTERS

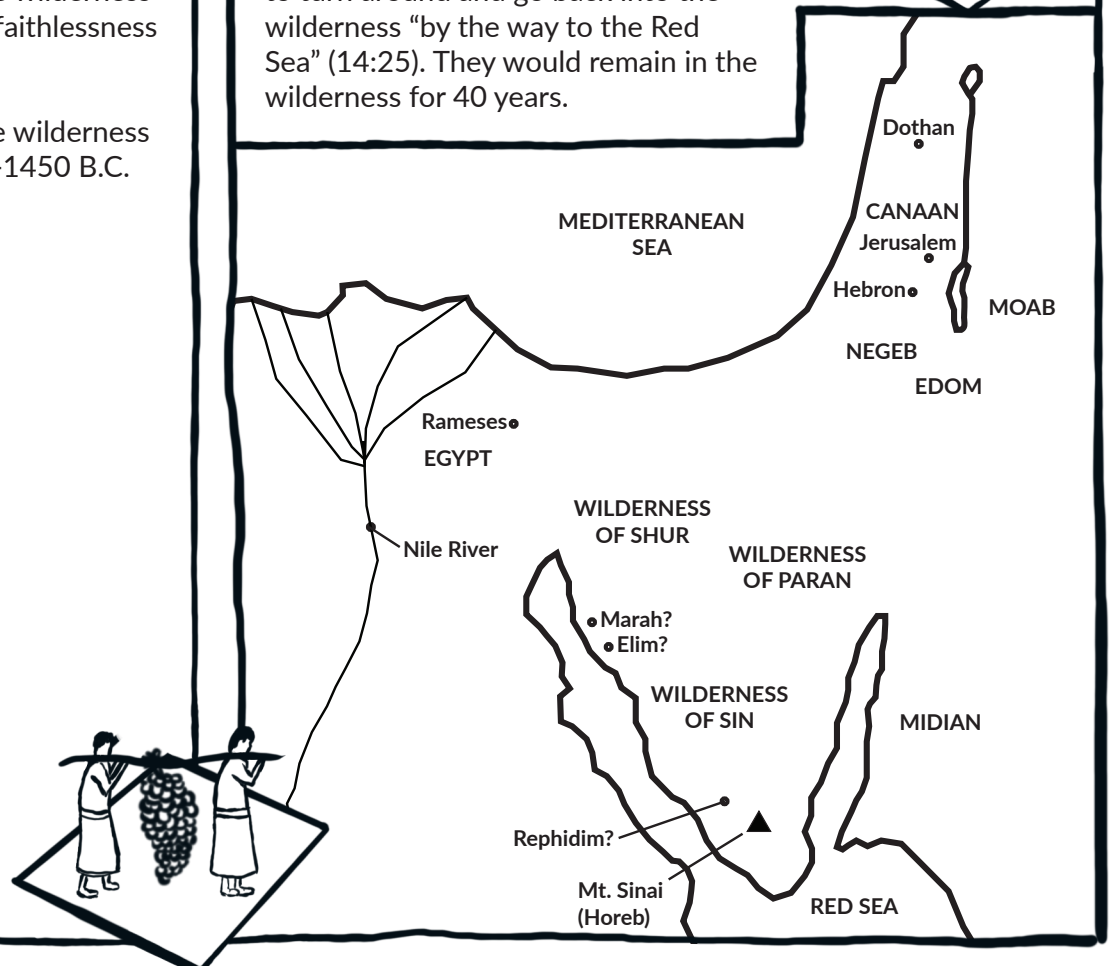
- Moses – Moses was selected by God to lead the Israelites to Canaan. God spoke directly to Moses and Moses communicated God's words to the people.
- Aaron – Moses' brother and the High Priest of Israel.
- Korah, Dathan, and Abiram – Men who led a rebellion against Moses and Aaron.

WHEN

- The events recorded in Numbers 16 took place during the 40 years the Israelites were living in the wilderness as a punishment for their faithlessness (14:33-35).
- The Israelites were in the wilderness from approximately 1490-1450 B.C.

WHERE

- The Israelites were camped in Paran at Kadesh (13:26), but God told them to turn around and go back into the wilderness "by the way to the Red Sea" (14:25). They would remain in the wilderness for 40 years.





OUTLINE

- KORAH LEADS A REBELLION IN ISRAEL (16:1-40):

- + Korah, a Levite, two Reubenites named Dathan and Abiram, and 250 chiefs of the people rebelled against Moses and Aaron's authority.
- + They argued Moses and Aaron had no right to claim they were superior in authority to any other Israelite and that the camp of Israel should be led collectively by all the people.
- + They accused Moses of trying to make himself a prince and accused him of leading them out of a land of abundance (Egypt) to kill them in the wilderness.
- + Moses told the rebels to appear before God the next morning with censors of incense and God would make His selection for who should lead Israel.
- + The next day, Moses, Aaron, the rebels, and all the Israelites met at the Tabernacle.
- + Many of the Israelites sided with Korah and wanted Moses and Aaron removed.
- + God's glory appeared and God spoke to Moses, telling him to stand back from the people because He was going to destroy them.
- + Moses plead with God not to destroy all the people on account of Korah.
- + So God told all the people to stand back from the tents of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram.
- + As a sign of his authority from God, Moses predicted the ground would open and kill these men.
- + "As soon as he had finished speaking all these words, the ground under them split apart. And the earth opened its mouth and swallowed them up, with their households and all the people who belonged to Korah and all their goods. So they and all that belonged to them went down alive into Sheol, and the earth closed over them, and they perished from the midst of the assembly (16:31-33)."
- + God sent fire into the camp, and it killed the 250 chiefs who allied with Korah.
- + Eleazar, Aaron's son, was told to collect the 250 censers and hammer them into plates to be used as a covering for the bronze altar and a memorial for the people.

- THE PEOPLE COMPLAIN AND GOD SENDS A PLAGUE (16:41-50):

- + The following day, the people grumbled against Moses and Aaron and accused them of killing "the people of God."
- + God sent a plague into the camp of Israel.
- + Moses told Aaron to rush into the Tabernacle, get fire from the altar, and burn incense in the camp to appease God's wrath and make atonement for the people.
- + Aaron ran into congregation of Israel with the burning incense and God stopped the plague, but not before it had killed 14,700 people.

APPLICATION

- God's judgements are generally harsher on those who lead others astray.
- We observed this lesson in the story of the 10 spies and we see it again here with Korah.
- This is also observable in the ministry of Jesus. He was harsher of the Pharisees, scribes, and Sadducees because they misguided the people.
- In Mark 9:42, Jesus said it would be better for a person to have a stone tied around their neck and to be thrown into the sea than for that person to lead others into sin.
- James (James 3:1) warns that not everyone should become a teacher because teachers will be "judged with greater strictness."
- Before we consider becoming a guide to others, we need to take these verses to heart and seriously evaluate our motives.