

Q1: This book begins in the second month of the second year after the Exodus (ch. 12). How well can you piece together the intervening events through a review of the previous two books? Look for more evidence of a chronology as you continue the book of Numbers.

Q2: Compare this census to the one taken in Exodus 31. What can you tell about their different goals based on the way they are recorded?

Q3: The book of Numbers is less focused on the priestly systems of Leviticus and more on the political and psychological dynamics of the Israelite people as a whole. How does a meticulous record of a national census help or hinder that transition?

Q4: Look for the names of important men in these chapters. How many people do they control, in what ways do they control them, and by what authority?

Q5: Chapter Three recounts "the line of Aaron and Moses," but Moses' sons are not mentioned. Who is the closest relative to Moses mentioned in this genealogy?

Q6: We learned a lot about the priestly distinctions in Leviticus - meticulous sacrificial exercises, skin diagnoses, avoidance of death impurity, etc., and how those exclusive roles separate them from the people. What have we learned so far about the Levites and the shape of their distinction?

Q7: In what way do the Levites serve as substitutes for a caste function that would properly have been served by the firstborns of the whole nation? Why was the substitution performed?

Q8: Are the Levites exempt from military service? Is their service a kind of military service?

Q9: The outside flanks of the Israelite formation are exposed to the danger of enemy attack; the inner flanks are exposed to the danger of divine contact. Not a question, just saying that.

Q10: The Kohathites are closest to the danger of the Mishkan. Is it because they are Moses' kin?