

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

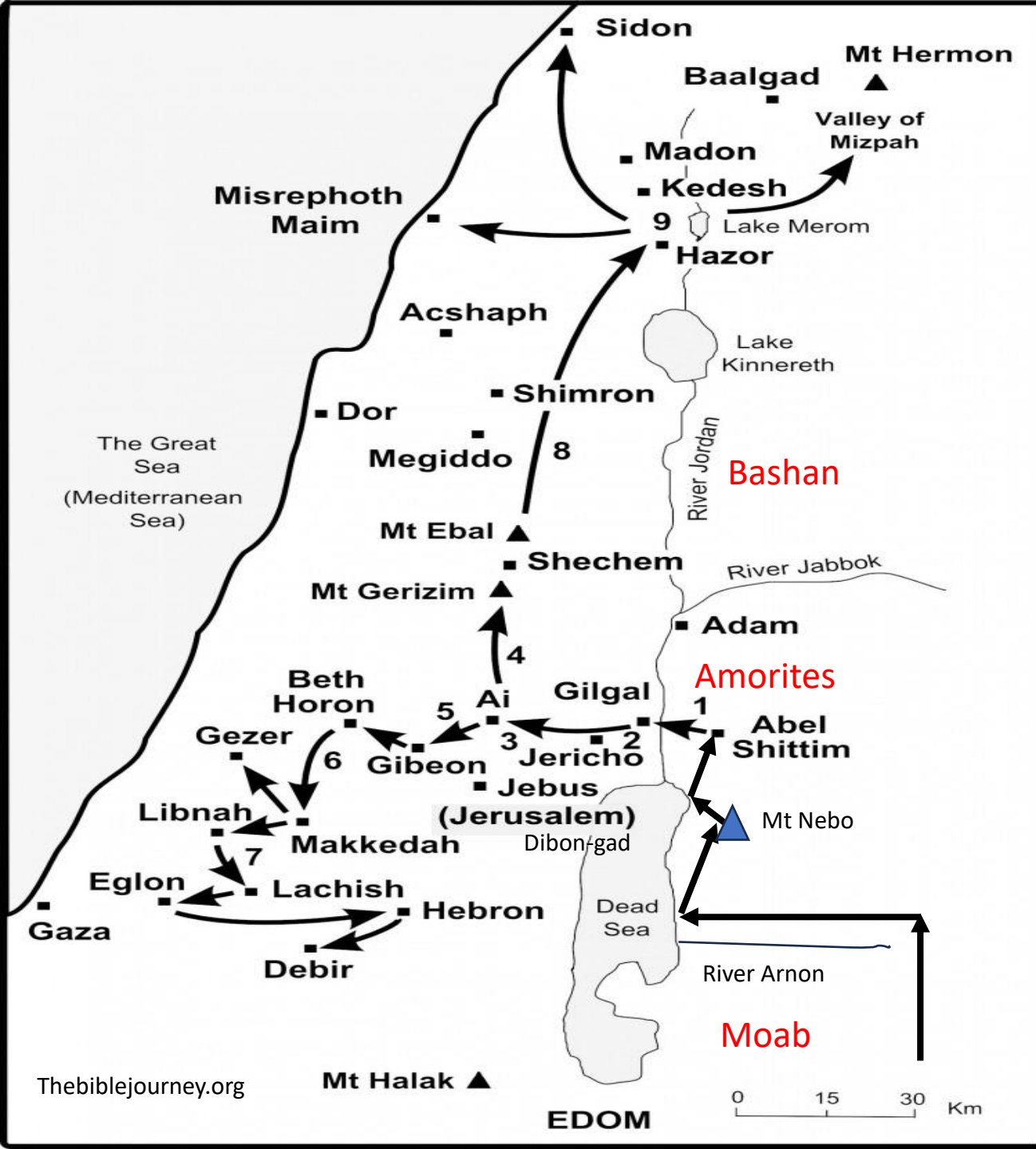


Spiritual
Lessons from
the Life of
Moses

Lesson 24 -
King Balak and
Balaam

Num 22-27

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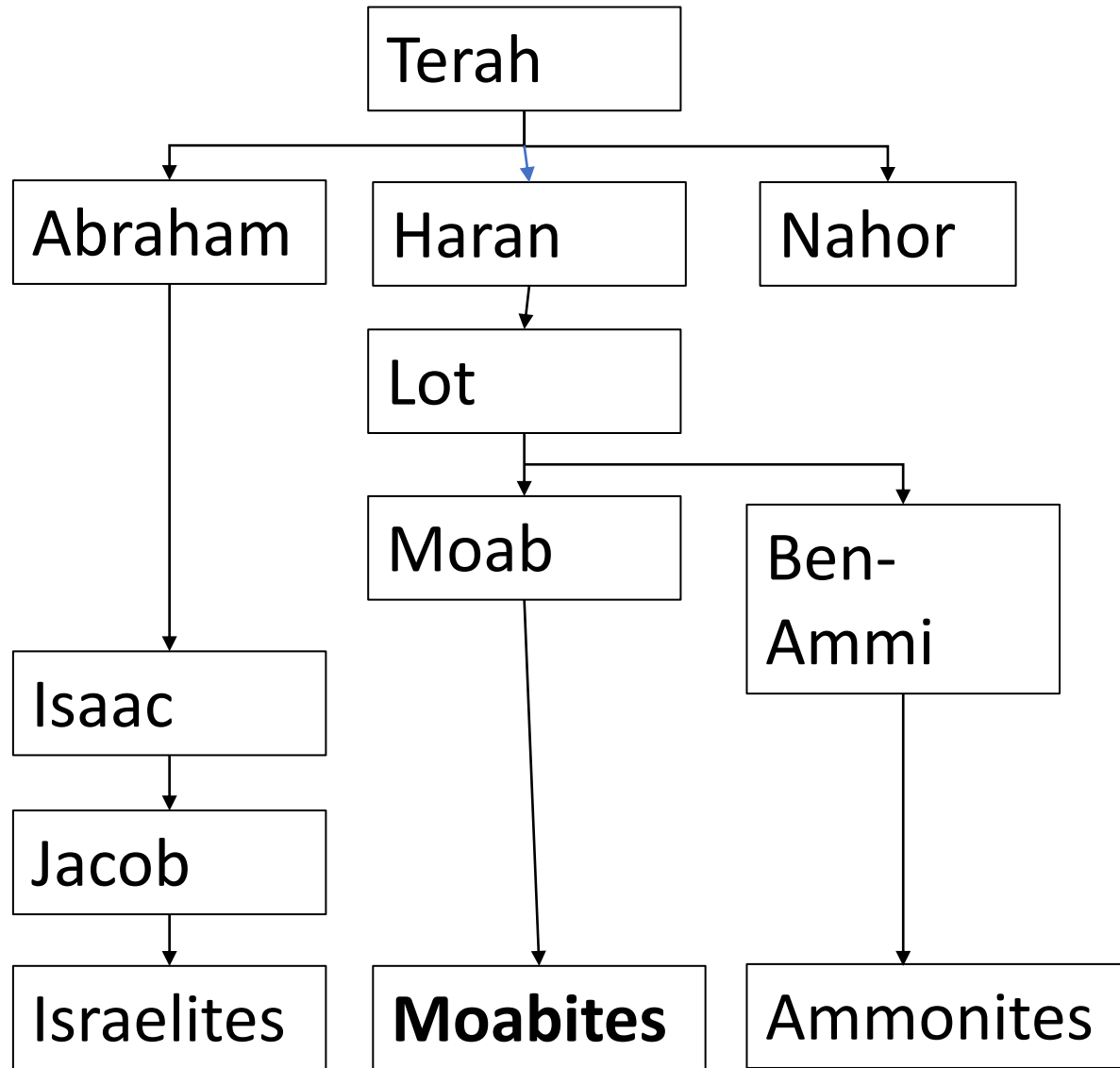


(1) Background: God gave Sihon (Amorites) and Og (Bashan) to the Israelites.

(2) The Israelites camped on the east of the Jordan River across Jericho (around Abel Shittim). (Num 22:1)

(3) Balak, king of Moab, saw the Israelites defeating the Amorites. He was terrified of the Israelites as there were many of them. (Num 22:2-3)

(4) Balak, king of Moab, summoned for Balaam. (Num 22: 5)



How are the Moabites related to the Israelites?

Who was Balaam?

- A non-Israelite prophet.
- Little is known about his background and the city he came from, which was Pethor.



The King of Moab summons Balaam. Numbers 22:1-20 (v16-17) They came to Balaam with this message: 'King Balak pleads with you to come. He promises you great honours plus any payment you ask. Name your own figure! Only come and curse these people for us.'

But, God refused to allow Balaam to go and curse the Israelites. (Num 22:12)

After much persistence from King Balak, God relented but Balaam may only do what God tells him to do (Num 22:20)

(3) Spiritual Lessons

A vertical wooden post stands on a sandy beach. The background shows a calm blue ocean meeting a clear blue sky at the horizon. The text is overlaid on the right side of the image.

WHEN GOD SAYS NO

Why and
How Do I
respond?

https://www.google.com/imgres?q=when%20god%20says%20no&imgurl=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.pastorjonlee.com%2Fwp-content%2Fuploads%2F2019%2F02%2FWhen-God-Says.jpg&imgrefurl=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.pastorjonlee.com%2F2019%2F02%2F06%2Fwhen-god-says-no%2F&docid=b-JmGvLElvBszM&tbnid=IdV1tinEdngK3M&vet=12ahUKEwid_luS68GHAXU9oGMGHUsDBRYQM3oECEsQAA..i&w=820&h=312&hcb=2&ved=2ahUKEwid_luS68GHAXU9oGMGHUsDBRYQM3oECsQAA

What we should do

- (i) God said “No” to Balaam to go to King Balak to curse the Israelites (Num 22:12).
- (ii) Balaam already had God’s answer not to go to curse the Israelites. But he persisted because of King Balak’s repeated requests and promise of rewards. (Num 22:16, 17)
- (iii) Sometimes, we behave like Balaam. God tells us not to do certain things, but we persist.
- (iv) We persist in doing things objected to by God because of **self-interest**: there is expectation of wealth, reputation and good things for us.

(v) For example:

- We lie to protect ourselves or others
- We make risky investments out of greed, expecting high returns
- bad-mouth or put down others to elevate ourselves

(vi) How does God tell us His will in our lives?

- Prayer, the Bible, counsel of godly Christians, guidance of the Spirit, and circumstances.

(vii) Due to King Balak's persistence, God allowed Balaam to go to King Balak. But the result was not favourable to King Balak and Balaam.

(viii) Sometimes, we too persist in what we want to do, in opposition to God. In which event, we find that we will suffer the consequences of our disobedience.



Balaam and his donkey. Numbers 22:20-35 (v23-v28) Then the Lord caused the donkey to speak! 'What have I done that deserves your beating me these three times?' she asked.

v33- The donkey saw me (angel) and turned away, if not, I would certainly have killed you.

(4) Spiritual Lessons

- (i) Balaam's journey was not smooth, as evidenced by the angel of the Lord obstructing the passage of the donkey.

- (ii) Sometimes, we also must be alert to hindrances and obstructions in what we have set out to do. These hindrances/obstructions may be indications from God that our pursuit is against the will of God.

For example: Repeated unsuccessful job applications for a position in a particular dubious industry may be God's way of stopping you to work in that industry.

(iii) Eventually, Balaam was killed in a battle against the Midianites. (Num 31:8)

(iv) Persisting against God's will may end in greater trouble. Examples: adversely affecting our health, spiritual walk, time with family etc.



Balaam's prophecy.
Numbers 23:5-23:13

God controlled the
speech of Balaam.

Instead of cursing
the Israelites,
Balaam blessed
them. This angered
Balak.

Eventually, Balak
dismissed Balaam.
Balaam went away
without being paid.
(Num 24:11)

- Though God disapproved of Balaam and Balak of Moab cursing the Israelites, God also did not allow the Israelites to attack Moab.
- Deut 2:9 – God told the Israelites not to provoke the Moabites to war.

(4) Spiritual Lessons

(i) King Balak and Balaam's objective was defeated. Instead of cursing the Israelites, the Spirit of God came upon Balaam and he blessed the Israelites.

God's blessing shows the sovereignty of God which prevailed over King Balak's evil plan for the Israelites.

If we pursue objectives in God's will, God will help us to overcome any trouble along the way. Remember that God is in control and source of all our blessings.

Heb 11:6: But without faith it is impossible to please Him: for He that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.

Worshipping Baal at Peor. Numbers 25:1-9

(v6-8) At Shittim, the Israelite men began to indulge in sexual immorality with Moabite women. They also began to worship the gods of the Moabites.

God was angered by the Israelites and punished them with a plague. 24,000 Israelites died.

What is sexual immorality?

Ans: Any sexual activity and thought that happen outside of marriage.

(5) Spiritual Lessons

God judged the immoral Israelite man and the Midianite woman. Their sin:

- (i) Sexual immorality
- (ii) Idolatry

We must also heed our own sins, for example:

- (i) Sexual lust (Matt 5:28-29 - Looking at a woman with lust)
- (ii) Pornography: in-flight movies, internet porn.
- (iii) Living together without being married

- Social media, movies, novels and the worldly culture make sleeping together before/outside marriage acceptable and normal. But this is sexual immorality and a sin.

1 Corinthians 6:9

*⁹ Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God?
Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor
effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind,*

Num 26: The Second Census (the first census was in Numbers 1).



Joshua chosen as
Moses' successor.
Numbers 27:12-23
(v18)
The Lord told
Moses, 'Go and get
Joshua who has the
Spirit of God in him,
and take him to
Eleazar the priest,
and as all the people
watch, charge him
with the
responsibility of
leading the people.'

Mt Nebo

Map of the Exodus:

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**The 42 Camp Sites:
Organized and Illustrated
for the First Time in History**

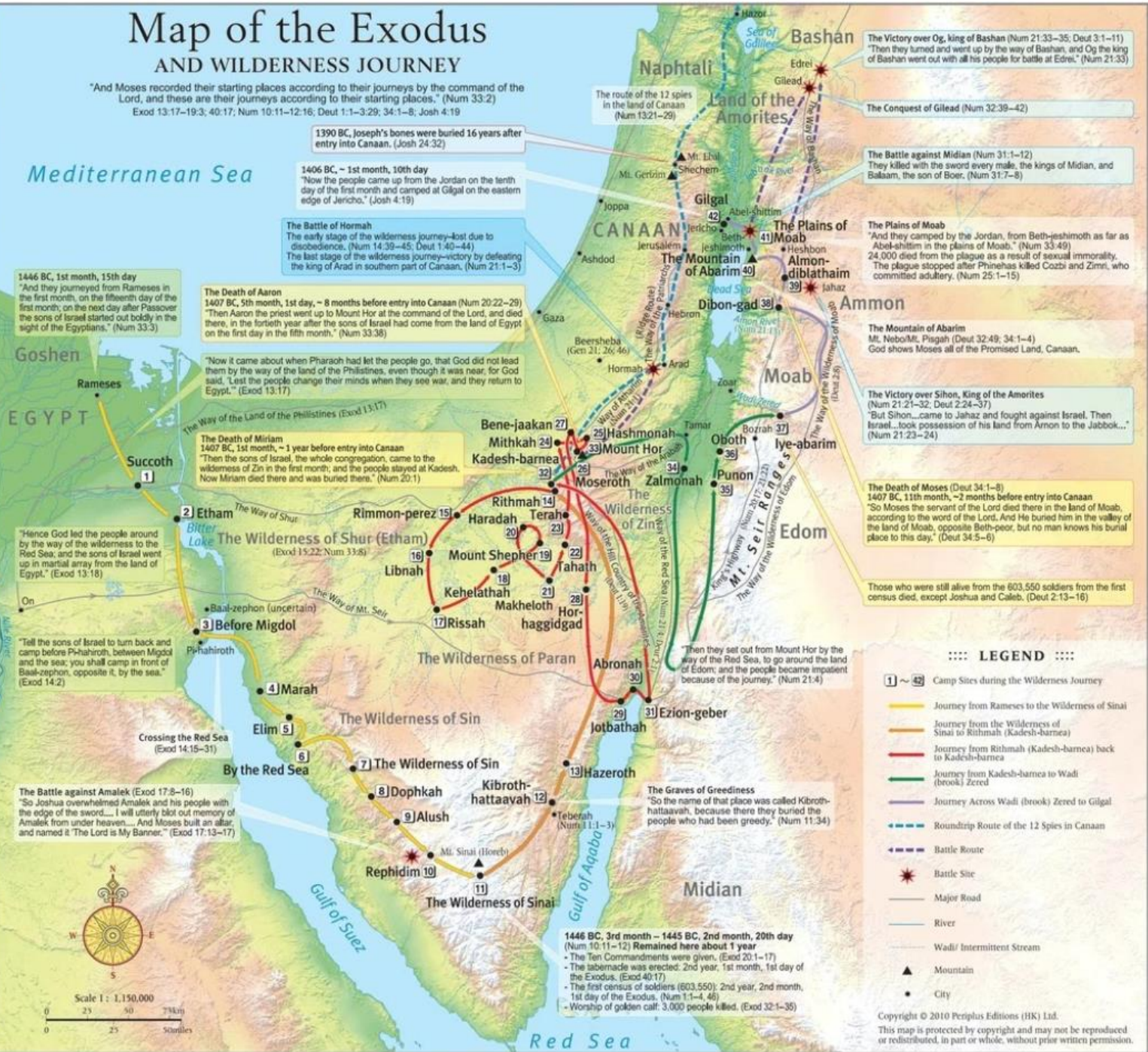
- 1 Succoth סוּכּוֹת (Exod 12:37; Num 33:5)
- 2 Etham אֶתְחָם (Exod 13:20; Num 33:6)
- 3 Before Migdol פְּנֵים מִגְדוֹל (Exod 14:2; Num 33:7)
- 4 Marah מָרָה (Exod 15:23; Num 33:8)
- 5 Elim אֵילִם (Exod 15:27; Num 33:9)
- 6 By the Red Sea עַל יַם סוּף (Num 33:10)
- 7 The Wilderness of Sin מִדְבַּר סִין (Exod 16:1; Num 33:11)
- 8 Dophkah דּוֹפְקָה (Num 33:12-13)
- 9 Alush אֱלוֹשׁ (Num 33:13)
- 10 Rephidim רְפִידִים (Exod 17:1; 19:2; Num 33:14)
- 11 The Wilderness of Sinai מִדְבַּר סִינַי (Exod 19:1-2; Num 33:15)
- 12 Kibroth-hattaavah קִבְרוֹת הַחַטָּאוֹת (Num 33:16)
- 13 Hazeroth הַצְּרוֹת (Num 33:17)
- 14 Rithmah רִיתְמָה (Num 33:18)
- 15 Rimmon-perez רִמּוֹן-פֶּרֶץ (Num 33:19)
- 16 Libnah לִבְנָה (Num 33:20)
- 17 Rissah רִסָּה (Num 33:21)
- 18 Kehelathah קְהֵלֶתָה (Num 33:22)
- 19 Mount Shepher הַר שֶׁפֶר (Num 33:23)
- 20 Haradah הַרְדָּה (Num 33:24)
- 21 Makheloth מַקְהֵלֹת (Num 33:25)
- 22 Tahath תַּחַת (Num 33:26)
- 23 Terah תֵּרָח (Num 33:27)
- 24 Mithkah מִתְקָה (Num 33:28)
- 25 Hashmonah חַשְׁמוֹנָה (Num 33:29)
- 26 Moseroth מוֹסֵרוֹת (Num 33:30)
- 27 Bene-jaakan בְּנֵי יַעֲקֹב (Num 33:31)
- 28 Hor-haggidgad הַר הַגִּידְגָד (Num 33:32)
- 29 Jotbathah יוֹטְבָתָה (Num 33:33)
- 30 Abronah אֲבֵרוֹנָה (Num 33:34)
- 31 Ezion-geber עִזְיוֹן גִּבְרָה (Num 33:35)
- 32 Kadesh-barnea קָדֵשׁ בַּרְנֵה (Num 33:36)
- 33 Mount Hor הַר הָהָר (Num 20:22; 33:37)
- 34 Zalmonah צַלְמוֹנָה (Num 33:41)
- 35 Punon פּוֹנוֹן (Num 33:42)
- 36 Oboth אֲבוֹת (Num 21:10; 33:43)
- 37 Iye-abarim עַיֵי הָעֲבָרִים (Num 21:11; 33:44)
- 38 Dibon-gad דִּבְיוֹן גַּד (Num 33:45)
- 39 Almon-diblathaim אֱלִמֹן דִּבְלַתְיָה (Num 33:46)
- 40 The Mountain of Abarim הַר עֲבָרִים (Num 27:12; 33:47)
- 41 The Plains of Moab עֲרָבָה מוֹאָב (Num 33:48-49)
- 42 Gilgal גִּלְגָּל (Josh 4:19)

Oral traditions recounted by indigenous peoples during site visits were taken into consideration for the location of a few camp sites.

Map of the Exodus AND WILDERNESS JOURNEY

"And Moses recorded their starting places according to their journeys by the command of the Lord, and these are their journeys according to their starting places." (Num 33:2)
Exod 13:17-19:3; 40:17; Num 10:11-12:16; Deut 1:1-3:29; 34:1-8; Josh 4:19

Mediterranean Sea



LEGEND

- 1 ~ 42 Camp Sites during the Wilderness Journey
- Journey from Ramses to the Wilderness of Sinai
- Journey from the Wilderness of Sinai to Rithmah (Kadesh-barnea)
- Journey from Rithmah (Kadesh-barnea) back to Kadesh-barnea
- Journey from Kadesh-barnea to Wadi (brook) Zered
- Journey Across Wadi (brook) Zered to Gilgal
- Roundtrip Route of the 12 Spies in Canaan
- Battle Route
- Battle Site
- Major Road
- River
- Wadi/ Intermittent Stream
- Mountain
- City

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<https://www.thebiblejourney.org/find-people-places-maps/find-maps-diagrams/>

(6) Spiritual Lessons

- (i) God appointed Joshua who had the spirit of God in him.
- (ii) This would also be evident when Joshua and Caleb were the only two out of 12 spies who were in favour of going to the Promised Land.
- (iii) In our decision to choose spiritual leaders, it must be people with evidence of the spirit of God in them eg. believers with the fruit of the Spirit. (Gal 5:22-23).
- (iv) How to appoint a new leader?
Be prayerful, observe their conduct and commit the appointment to God (Num 27:15-20).

(7) In summary, the **spiritual lessons**:

(i) Seek the Lord's will when pursuing a task. In particular, when the going is not smooth:

- Pray,
- Read the bible for wisdom and understanding
- Be led by the Spirit
- Seek counsel from godly believers
- Respond to circumstances

(ii) If the Lord says "No", it is for our good.

(iii) Keep away from sin