Takes its name from *Arithmoi* (Greek). It is also called *Bemidbar*, “In the wilderness” which is the 5th Hebrew word in the 1st verse of the book.

Book spans **40 years** of wilderness wanderings

*“I Wanna Go Back!”* - **Lack of faith is a big issue in this book**. The lack of faith leads to the almost complete destruction of the exodus generation, which is to be replaced by a new generation born in the wilderness and looking forward to Canaan rather than backward to Egypt.

BOOK IN two PARTS

1. Chapters 1-25: The fate of the First Exodus Generation Sinai
   1. SPOILER: they die in the wilderness because of their ***repeated*** offenses.
2. Chapters 26:1-36:13: Exodus Trek: The Next Generation

**“The Barnes & Noble of Bible Books”:** Different types of literature found in Numbers:

* Lists
* Case laws
* Ritual instructions
* Rebellion stories
* Battle reports
* Travel plans
* Poetic prophecies
* Popular songs
* Religious calendar

REMEMBER: It is ***God’s*** faithfulness that raises a new generation in the wilderness.

**PJ’S PICKS: THE PRIESTLY BLESSING (6:22-26)**

A series of **THREE** sentences of 3, 5, and 7 Hebrew words.

Not counting the name of God, the total word count is **TWELVE.** (As in 12 tribes?)

The first clause of each verse invokes God’s movement toward his people,

The second asks him to act on behalf of his people.

These blessings look to the *future*. God’s blessings will materialize as the people live out their lives with God’s name on them.

These sentences cover the complete life of Israel in **SIX** acts of God:

1. ***Bless***- relates to concrete and physical gifts (incl. descendants and prosperity)
2. ***Protect*** - “guard, watch over” all forms of evil
3. ***Make his face shine***- refers to the loving presence of God, in contrast to anger (the hiding of God’s face)
4. ***Be gracious-*** “*Grace* is the attitude that issues in kindly action of a superior party to an inferior one in which the inferior has no claim on the superior.”- Timothy Ashley
5. ***Lift up his face***- can involve answering requests
6. ***Grant peace***- provides well-being in all areas of life

“*Place my name on the Israelites*” God’s name functions as a protection from all harm. Deeper meaning: **God owns Israel**. The Israelites belong to God.

**MORE PICKS:**

**Chapter 10:11-36- AND AWAY WE GO!**

The people as a

* Freed (Exod. 1-18)
* Covenental (Exod. 19-40)
* Holy (Leviticus)
* Organized (Numbers 1:1-10:10)
* Community

NOW set out toward the promised land. REMEMBER: after the first generation fails, the next generation display greater faithfulness and enjoy more success. **They no longer are wanderers. They are now organized and marching toward the promised land as God’s congregation.**

**Chapter 11- THE COMPLAINING BEGINS**!

This is the **first** rebellion story in the book of Numbers.

Notice the contrast:

* What **precedes** (the perfect preparation and ideal departure from Sinai)
* What **follows** (constant complaints)

**GOD DEFENDS MOSES 12:1-9** BUT…God punishes Miriam, not Aaron

**THE THREE ~~CURSES~~ BLESSINGS OF BALAAM Ch. 22-24**

NOTE:

* No Israelites are present in this story! Moses isn’t mentioned.
* Although Balaam is not an Israelite, he consults with God.

NOTE: On a few occasions, especially in metaphorical or symbolic literature, **NONHUMANS** speak in the Bible:

* Genesis 3- The serpent
* Numbers 22- Balaam’s donkey
* Judges 9:7-20- The olive tree
* Luke 19:40- The stones (would shout)

**Ch. 33:8b-49: THE MARCH**

A total of **42** campsites, 17 aren’t mentioned anywhere else in the OT.

1. 9-36 The Southern March
2. 37-49 The Transjordan March