

THE NUMBERS NUMBERS FIVE

Part 1 • May 3, 2026 | Pastor Jason Smotherman

There is a space every believer is required to walk through. It's not Egypt. It's not the Promised Land. It's the in-between.

A liminal space is a place or state of transition, representing the "in-between" threshold between "what was" and "next". Derived from the Latin limen (threshold), these spaces are often transitional, empty, and unsettling, such as empty hallways, airports, or parking garages.

"Thresholds" are the places where your hand is empty from the seed it once held but the crop isn't yet seen in the field. Many Christians abandon hope in that moment.

The place where God has spoken but you haven't seen it yet. The place where you've been delivered but you're not fully developed. This is where most people struggle, right in the stuck.

The in-between is loud.

It is filled with voices, most all of the voices you hear in this space aren't from God. The greatest battle in the in-between is not external opposition: it's internal perception of the opposition.

1 PETER 5:8 (CSB)

Be sober minded, be alert. Your adversary the Devil is prowling around like a roaring lion, looking for anyone he can devour.

He is like a lion. The perception that leads to a false reality is that he is one, not like one.

The Truth: You don't lose the promise because of giants. You lose it because of which voice you believe about the giants.

Numbers 13 - We don't just see a scouting mission. We see a battle of voices.

The book of Numbers allows us to step into a moment where God's promise has been given, redemption has happened, and now God is forming a people who can carry it.

Genesis — The Promise Given

Genesis is where it all begins. God creates, man falls, but God doesn't walk away. He makes a promise. Through Abraham, God declares: "I will make you into a great nation... I will give you a land... and through you, all nations will be blessed."

Exodus — The Promise Rescued

By the time you get to Exodus, the promise looks buried. Israel is no longer a thriving family, they're enslaved in Egypt. But God raises up Moses and brings them out with power. The Red Sea parts. Pharaoh falls. Chains break. God doesn't just make promises, He rescues people into them.

Leviticus — The Promise Defined

Now the people are free but they're not yet formed. Leviticus is God teaching them how to live with Him in their midst. "Be holy, for I am holy." Sacrifices, offerings, purity laws, it's not about restriction, it's about relationship. God is saying, "If I'm going to dwell among you, this is what it requires."

Numbers — The Promise Tested

This is where it all converges.

- The promise has been spoken (Genesis)
- The people have been delivered (Exodus)
- The standard has been established (Leviticus)

Now the question is: Can the people steward what God has given? Numbers is not primarily about wandering, like many people think. It's about whether a people can walk in what God prepared for them.

It's the tension between:

- What God said.
- What God did.
- How people respond.

The Book of Numbers is the story of a people living in the in-between. It's not Egypt anymore... but it's not the Promised Land yet. It's the space between deliverance and fulfillment. Between what God did and what God said He would still do.

COMPETING VOICES IN THE IN-BETWEEN

Moses sent twelve leaders one from each tribe of Israel to scout the land of Canaan, the land God had promised them. After forty days, the spies returned with proof that the land was rich and fruitful, even carrying a massive cluster of grapes.

However, ten of the spies focused on the obstacles. They reported that the land was filled with strong cities and giants, saying the Israelites seemed like grasshoppers in comparison. Their fear spread through the people, leading to panic, complaining, and even talk of turning back to Egypt.

Only two spies, Joshua and Caleb, trusted God's promise. They urged the people to move forward, believing that God would give them victory.

The people chose fear over faith. As a result, ***God declared, that generation would not enter the Promised Land.***

Instead they would wander in the wilderness for forty years until a new generation

rose one that would trust Him. A generation missed the Promise because they let reason stand over Faith. Let's dive into the in-between.

1. THE VOICE OF PROMISE

God had already spoken before the spies ever moved. "I am giving this land..." The promise was not discovered by the spies. It was declared by God.

This is critical: The assignment was never to decide IF the land was theirs; it was to see HOW to take what God already said was theirs.

We often declare what God already decided. They stopped listening to what God said and started interpreting what they saw. Here is the plain truth. Many believers are not waiting on a promise, they are re-evaluating a promise God already gave.

2. THE VOICE OF FEAR

Ten spies come back with a report:

"The land is good... "BUT there are giants..." "We are like grasshoppers..."

Fear always does this. Fear agrees with God just enough to sound spiritual then introduces a "but" that cancels faith. Notice God never mentioned giants, Fear magnified what God minimized. Fear is not the absence of promise, it is the reinterpretation of promise through human limitation.

And here's the danger, what they saw wasn't wrong but what they concluded was.

3. THE VOICE OF FAITH

Then you have Caleb (and Joshua). Caleb says: "Let us go up at once... we are well able..." Same land. Same giants. Different voice. Faith doesn't deny reality, it reframes reality through God's word.

The difference was not information. The difference was interpretation.

What lens are you viewing the promise of God through. Your circumstance or His Promise?

4. THE VOICE YOU AGREE WITH WILL SHAPE YOUR FUTURE

The people sided with the ten.

And in that moment,

- fear became agreement
- agreement became direction
- and direction became destiny.

They didn't die in the wilderness because of Pharaoh. They died because they agreed with the wrong voice. Agreement is the gateway to destiny.

5. THE IN-BETWEEN REVEALS WHAT VOICE LEADS YOU

The in-between exposes:

- Do you trust what God said... or what you see?
- Do you interpret through promise... or through pressure?

Because here's the truth, God will let you hear competing voices to reveal which one you've crowned as authority. In the in-between, the loudest voice isn't the one you hear, it's the one you agree with.

What does this look like in real life?

- God says "I've called you" → Fear says "you're not ready"
- God says "I will provide" → Fear says "look at your resources"
- God says "step out" → Fear says "stay safe"

You will hear both.

The question is not, "What voices are present?"

The question is: "Which voice has your agreement?"

They all saw the same land. But only two saw it through the lens of promise. The others saw it through the lens of fear. And that difference cost them everything.

You are in the in-between.

God has spoken. But there are voices competing for your agreement?

And your future will not be determined by what God said alone. It will be determined by which voice you decide to believe.

*Dig deeper into a Bible Study on The Book of Numbers with us. Be sure to sign up at parkwaycc.com/newsletter. **Select "General (Newsletter + Updates)"** to get notified of additional content for the Bible Study and Sermon Series.*

