

# THE NUMBERS NUMBERS FIVE

Part 2 • May 17, 2026 | Pastor Jason Smotherman

## THE PURPOSE OF PURPOSE

When you study ancient cultures, one thing becomes very clear: humanity has always searched for purpose, identity, and transcendence. The search for meaning is embedded in people as much as breath itself.

In Greek mythology, they believed inspiration came from spiritual entities called "the Muses." These were supernatural figures believed to inspire: music, poetry, art, literature, and expression, amongst other things. That's where we get the modern phrase: "the muse." Artists would invoke the muse because they believed creativity flowed from a spiritual source outside themselves and honestly, that language never disappeared.

Even today musicians and artists say things like: "the song came to me." "I tapped into something." "It just flowed through me." "I was channeling something."

Let's be careful in this thought. If we were not careful we can see the demonic in everything (legalistic) and also see the demonic in nothing (naive). The tension of the middle ground is a hard place to exist today. We, as a society, are pretty naive about spiritual forces.

Creativity itself is not evil. God is a Creator. The Spirit of God inspired artistry all throughout Scripture. But we also recognize that culture has always searched for spiritual inspiration and meaning apart from surrender to God. **That's the danger.**

Counterfeit purpose always imitates real purpose while disconnecting people from the Creator. We see it happening in today's culture. Anything that replaces Godly purpose disconnects people from the Creator is counterfeit.

### **ROMANS 1:25 (ESV)**

*Because they exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshipped and served the creature rather than the Creator.*

And that is exactly what Israel was battling in the book of Book of Numbers. They were battling the magnifying glass that was the wilderness. Egypt looked really good while they battled unbelief. Egypt had become their source. It had: gods, identity, power, meaning, spirituality, structure, and purpose. But it was counterfeit.

Egypt taught them how to survive, but God wanted to teach them how to become sons and daughters.

***The wilderness became the battleground between two identities: The identity Egypt gave them versus the identity God was trying to form in them.***

God was not just bringing them somewhere. He was forming them into someone. That's still the tension today in our lives. The battleground between two identities.

**Our Egypt (system) says:** "Express yourself." "Create yourself." "Follow your feelings." "Find yourself through experience." "Speak your Truth."

**But God says:** "Deny yourself." "Follow Me." "Be transformed." "Become holy." "Become Mine."

***One system says purpose comes from inside you (Relative Truth). The Kingdom says purpose comes from the One who created you.***

They were so conditioned by Egypt that when God began forming them for promise, they wanted formation and freedom to be as comfortable as bondage and slavery.

Purpose is not just what you do. Purpose is who you become while following God.

### ***NUMBERS 14:1-10 (NKJV)***

One of the most powerful realities in the Book of Numbers is that Israel kept comparing God's formation to Egypt's familiarity. Numbers is not about Egypt, its about the wilderness. Egypt was the distraction from the transforming ground that was the wilderness.

IMPORTANT: we want to make our current season about what God did in us last season. Many people want to make their current season about their future or about their past. This current season isn't about that, its about your formation, right now.

**THE DECEPTION OF BONDAGE:** Bondage can become so normal that freedom feels uncomfortable. The wilderness magnifies what your heart is clinging to the most. Trust in God or reliance on bondage. In Numbers 14, when fear entered the camp, they literally said, "Let us choose a leader and go back to Egypt."

The Churches in Revelations will have leaders who either resist the end time compromise or leaders who choose convenience over conviction. Led by people choosing teachers who are scratching their itching ears. The End Times Church is going to get robbed of many generational miracles because we will try to skip to the promised Revival without submitting to the transformation found in the wilderness.

The dry season either creates a hunger for the promise or a hunger for the comfort of Egypt. The tragedy is that Israel became emotionally attached to the very thing God delivered them from. They missed Egypt's food while forgetting Egypt's whips.

Its the in-between we spoke of in Lesson 1. God's purpose constantly reshapes you into becoming the person you were created to become.

Egypt taught them, "You are slaves." God said, "You are My people."

Egypt said, "You exist to build Pharaoh's kingdom." God said, "You exist to carry My presence."

Egypt measured value by production. God measured value by covenant.

That's why the wilderness mattered so much. God was dismantling an Egyptian mindset. ***You cannot possess promised things with enslaved thinking.***

Directly, that is the tension of discipleship. To become a disciple (follower) of Jesus

our enslaved thinking must end and His freedom thoughts must reign in our lives. Sometimes people want God's promises while still thinking like Egypt.

They want: freedom with old habits, purpose with old mindsets, covenant with worldly identity, promise while still romanticizing bondage.

But God loved Israel too much to leave them thinking like slaves. ***He loves you too much to leave you thinking like slaves!***

True Discipleship is one decision away. His ways over my ways. That's the difference between counterfeit life and Kingdom life. One simple trust decision.

They are now standing at the doorway of promise. And instead of stepping forward, they rebel. Numbers 14 says they cried all night long.

A lack of peace comes directly from the wrestling between what you want to do versus what God wants you to do. They complained against Moses. Complained against Aaron. And ultimately complained against God. Complaining is also a sign of wrestling with the will of God.

They literally said, "We should go back to Egypt." Think about how insane that is. Egypt was bondage. Egypt was slavery. Egypt was oppression.

Bring the scabs of addiction back. Bring the destruction of alcohol back. Bring the love of money and the destruction of the family back. Bring loneliness back. Bring the void back.

In the Last days they will say, "bring the sacrifices back." As though what Jesus has done is not enough. That's essentially what they were saying.

That's what unbelief does. It rewrites your memory (why Testimonies are so important). It distorts your perspective. It makes yesterday's chains seem more appealing than tomorrow's calling.

This is one of the clearest pictures in Scripture of what happens when people want promise without transformation. Because the issue was never whether God could provide the land. The issue was whether Israel would become the kind of people who could trust Him enough to enter it.

You cannot have it your way and expect His promises to be evident in your life. God is not just preparing a place for you. If you are in the in-between (wilderness), ***He is preparing YOU for the place.***

They saw giants but forgot God. They saw walls but forgot miracles. They saw obstacles but forgot the Red Sea. ***The crazy part, the Generation that saw the most miracles still died in the wilderness.***

**Because miracles alone do not transform people. TRUST DOES.**

Faith is not denying the existence of giants. Faith is believing God is bigger than them. They wanted to stone the Leaders. That's how dangerous unbelief becomes. Unbelief will start attacking voices of faith. And God finally says, "This generation will wander." Not because God lacked power, but because they refused to trust.

And I feel this strongly today, some people are standing at the edge of something God promised you but fear is trying to talk you backwards.

Backward into comfort. Backward into insecurity. Backward into old mindsets. Backward into survival mode. Here's the Promise for you today:

**GOD DID NOT BRING YOU THIS FAR TO ABANDON YOU NOW.**

The wilderness was never supposed to become your residence. It was only supposed to be your transition and transformation. Some of you have been in transition so long that it started feeling normal. You must jump forward in TRUST. Our God is able. God is still calling you forward. It's not too late. One day it might be too late.

Forward in faith. Forward in obedience. Forward in holiness. Forward in purpose. I don't know about you, but I refuse to die in a wilderness God only intended me to walk through. I don't want fear to make me retreat from what God said. I don't want comfort to rob me of a calling. I don't want unbelief to keep me circling what God intended me to possess. I don't want my kids see to see scared unbelief. I want them to see Faith.

My prayer is, "Lord, don't just take me somewhere, make me someone." Make me faithful. Make me obedient. Make me holy. Make me trusting. Make me surrendered.

I don't want the destination without the transformation.

But God understood something they did not. If He changed their location without changing their nature, the promise would crush them instead of bless them. So the wilderness became a classroom.

Every instruction, every census, every camp arrangement, every test, every delay, every battle, was forming identity.

The Process made way for the Promise.

Don't abandon the process.

Resolve today to keep walking in your Purpose.

You are a son or daughter of the King.

You were birthed to change your world.

***You change the world not just by what you do,  
but who God is transforming you to be.***

*Dig deeper into a Bible Study on The Book of Numbers with us. Be sure to sign up at [parkwaycc.com/newsletter](http://parkwaycc.com/newsletter).  
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