

# “Take a Census”

## Numbers Chapter 1

The Hebrew Bible titles this book “*The Wilderness*” (from verse 1)

The Septuagint titles this “*Arithmoi*” where we get arithmetic or numbers

(Numbers is from the two Census’ taken. One at the beginning and one at the end. )

### Background

<b>Genesis</b> – 2200 + years	Perfect Beginnings, then the fall;	God’s Command “Let there be”
<b>Exodus</b> – 1 year	Deliverance from bondage;	God’s Command “Let My people go.”
<b>Leviticus</b> – 1 month	Instructions of worship;	God’s Command “Be Holy”
<b>Numbers</b> – 38 + years	Wandering / Wilderness;	God’s Command “Go In”
<b>Deuteronomy</b> – 1 month	Renewed Covenant;	God’s Command “Obey”

### Numbers Outlined

Chapters 1-10	At Mt Sinai	Preparation
Chapters 10-25	In Wilderness	Postponement
Chapters 26-36	In Plains of Moab	Preparation

This preparation was much like boot camp for our military. This boot camp was to train Israel from slaves to Warriors.

**Romans 15:4** “For whatever was written in earlier times was written for our instruction, so that through perseverance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope.”

**1 Corinthians 10:5-12** “Nevertheless, with most of them God was not well-pleased; for they were laid low in the wilderness. Now **these things happened as examples for us**, so that we would not crave evil things as they also craved. Do not be idolaters, as some of them were; as it is written, “THE PEOPLE SAT DOWN TO EAT AND DRINK, AND STOOD UP TO PLAY.” Nor let us act immorally, as some of them did, and twenty-three thousand fell in one day. **(Numbers 25:9)** Nor let us try the Lord, as some of them did, and were destroyed by the serpents. **(Numbers 21:5-6)** Nor grumble, as some of them did, and were destroyed by the destroyer. **(Numbers 14, 16, 17)** Now **these things happened to them as an example, and they were written for our instruction**, upon whom the ends of the ages have come. Therefore **let him who thinks he stands take heed that he does not fall**”

### Num 1:1 1) The Counters and the Counted vs 1-19

Then the LORD spoke to Moses in the wilderness of Sinai, in the tent of meeting, on the first of the second month, in the second year after they had come out of the land of Egypt, saying,

- The Lord Speaks to Moses over 150 times in this book.
- It has been 1 year and 1 month since the Exodus of Israel from Egypt. They are currently in the second year.
- **Deuteronomy 1:2-3** “It is **eleven days’ journey** from Horeb by the way of Mount Seir to Kadesh-barnea. In **the fortieth year, on the first day of the eleventh month**, Moses spoke to the children of Israel, according to all that the LORD had commanded him to give to them,”
  - It is only an 11 day journey from Sinai to Kadeshbarnea.
  - But this journey will take them over 38 years.
  - The Journey is more than just destinations. It is about the heart.

Num 1:2 “Take a census of all the congregation of the sons of Israel, by their families, by their fathers’ households, according to the number of names, every male, head by head

Num 1:3 from twenty years old and upward, whoever *is able to go out to war in Israel*, you and Aaron shall number them by their armies.

- God tells Moses to number Israel. But he is looking for something specific.
  - Men Men go to war.
  - 20 years an older 20 Year olds are expected to be warriors (spiritual)
  - Who is able to go to war. Go to war? What happened to peace, prosperity and happiness. Expected to go to war.
- These Israelites came out of Egypt as slaves. God wants them to be Warriors. This standing army begins not by a volunteer army. It is an expected DRAFT into the service.

- David Guzik "Promised Land people are very different from slave people. Israel emerged from Egypt a slave people, basically unsuited for the Promised Land." God will use the wilderness to prepare His people to be ready for the Promised Land.
- In verse 46 the total number will be 603,550. At the end of the book we will see another census taken. Chapter 26. That number will be 601,730. There will be a loss of 1820 in the overall standing army.
  - In Egypt, Israel grew great in number. (They were in captivity)
  - In the Wilderness, time of doubt and fear rather than trust and faith they experienced ZERO GROWTH.

- Num 1:4 "With you, moreover, there shall be a man of each tribe, each one head of his father's household.
- God is a God of structure and order. He doesn't just have a massive army. He calls out leaders (to head) the numbers.
  - Their names can lead us to see what truths need to be in the hearts of our leaders.
- Num 1:5 "These then are the names of the men who shall stand with you: of Reuben, **Elizur** the son of Shedeur;
- name meaning "God is a Rock"
- Num 1:6 of Simeon, **Shelumiel** the son of Zurishaddai;
- name meaning "Friend of God"
- Num 1:7 of Judah, **Nahshon** the son of Amminadab;
- name meaning "Enchanter" root- one who diligently observes
- Num 1:8 of Issachar, **Nethanel** the son of Zuar;
- name meaning "Given of God"
- Num 1:9 of Zebulun, **Eliab** the son of Helon;
- name meaning "God is my Father"
- Num 1:10 of the sons of Joseph: of Ephraim, **Elishama** the son of Ammihud; of Manasseh, **Gamaliel** the son of Pedahzur;
- name meaning "God has Heard"      name meaning "God Rewards"
- Num 1:11 of Benjamin, **Abidan** the son of Gideoni;
- name meaning "My Father is Judge"
- Num 1:12 of Dan, **Ahiezer** the son of Ammishaddai;
- name meaning "My Brother is a Helper"
- Num 1:13 of Asher, **Pagiel** the son of Ocran;
- name meaning "God Makes it Happen"
- Num 1:14 of Gad, **Eliasaph** the son of Deuel;
- name meaning "God Adds" or "God Increases"
- Num 1:15 of Naphtali, **Ahira** the son of Enan.
- name meaning "My Brother is Evil" (understands humility - this is how close wickedness is to us)
- Num 1:16 "These are they who were called of the congregation, the leaders of their fathers' tribes; they were the heads of divisions of Israel."
- Num 1:17 So Moses and Aaron took these men who had been designated by name,
- Num 1:18 and they assembled all the congregation together on the first of the second month. Then they registered by ancestry in their families, by their fathers' households, according to the number of names, from twenty years old and upward, head by head,
- Num 1:19 just as the LORD had commanded Moses. So he numbered them in the wilderness of Sinai.

Num 1:20 **2) The Count** vs 20-46

Now the sons of Reuben, Israel's firstborn, their genealogical registration by their families, by their fathers' households, according to the number of names, head by head, every male from twenty years old and upward, whoever *was able to go out to war*,

Num 1:21 their numbered men of the tribe of **Reuben** were 46,500.

• Number at Beginning	Number in Chapter 26	Net
• 46,500	43,730	<2,770>

Num 1:22 Of the sons of Simeon, their genealogical registration by their families, by their fathers' households, their numbered men, according to the number of names, head by head, every male from twenty years old and upward, whoever *was able to go out to war*,

Num 1:23 their numbered men of the tribe of **Simeon** were 59,300.

• Number at Beginning	Number in Chapter 26	Net
• 59,300	22,200	<37,100>

Num 1:24 Of the sons of Gad, their genealogical registration by their families, by their fathers' households, according to the number of names, from twenty years old and upward, whoever *was able to go out to war*,

Num 1:25 their numbered men of the tribe of **Gad** were 45,650.

• Number at Beginning	Number in Chapter 26	Net
• 45,650	40,500	<5,150>

Num 1:26 Of the sons of Judah, their genealogical registration by their families, by their fathers' households, according to the number of names, from twenty years old and upward, whoever *was able to go out to war*,

Num 1:27 their numbered men of the tribe of **Judah** were 74,600.

• Number at Beginning	Number in Chapter 26	Net
• 74,600	76,500	+ 1,900

Num 1:28 Of the sons of Issachar, their genealogical registration by their families, by their fathers' households, according to the number of names, from twenty years old and upward, whoever *was able to go out to war*,

Num 1:29 their numbered men of the tribe of **Issachar** were 54,400.

• Number at Beginning	Number in Chapter 26	Net
• 54,400	64,300	+ 9,900

Num 1:30 Of the sons of Zebulun, their genealogical registration by their families, by their fathers' households, according to the number of names, from twenty years old and upward, whoever *was able to go out to war*,

Num 1:31 their numbered men of the tribe of **Zebulun** were 57,400.

• Number at Beginning	Number in Chapter 26	Net
• 57,400	60,500	+ 3,100

Num 1:32 Of the sons of Joseph, *namely*, of the sons of Ephraim, their genealogical registration by their families, by their fathers' households, according to the number of names, from twenty years old and upward, whoever *was able to go out to war*,

Num 1:33 their numbered men of the tribe of **Ephraim** were 40,500.

• Number at Beginning	Number in Chapter 26	Net
• 40,500	32,500	<8,000>

Num 1:34 Of the sons of Manasseh, their genealogical registration by their families, by their fathers' households, according to the number of names, from twenty years old and upward,

whoever *was able to go out to war*,  
Num 1:35 their numbered men of the tribe of **Manasseh** were 32,200.

• Number at Beginning	Number in Chapter 26	Net
• 32,200	52,700	+ 20,500

Num 1:36 Of the sons of Benjamin, their genealogical registration by their families, by their fathers' households, according to the number of names, from twenty years old and upward, whoever *was able to go out to war*,

Num 1:37 their numbered men of the tribe of **Benjamin** were 35,400.

• Number at Beginning	Number in Chapter 26	Net
• 35,400	45,600	+ 10,200

Num 1:38 Of the sons of Dan, their genealogical registration by their families, by their fathers' households, according to the number of names, from twenty years old and upward, whoever *was able to go out to war*,

Num 1:39 their numbered men of the tribe of **Dan** were 62,700.

• Number at Beginning	Number in Chapter 26	Net
• 62,700	64,400	+ 1,700

Num 1:40 Of the sons of Asher, their genealogical registration by their families, by their fathers' households, according to the number of names, from twenty years old and upward, whoever *was able to go out to war*,

Num 1:41 their numbered men of the tribe of **Asher** were 41,500.

• Number at Beginning	Number in Chapter 26	Net
• 41,500	53,400	+ 11,900

Num 1:42 Of the sons of Naphtali, their genealogical registration by their families, by their fathers' households, according to the number of names, from twenty years old and upward, whoever *was able to go out to war*,

Num 1:43 their numbered men of the tribe of **Naphtali** were 53,400.

• Number at Beginning	Number in Chapter 26	Net
• 53,400	45,400	<8,000>

Num 1:44 These are the ones who were numbered, whom Moses and Aaron numbered, with the leaders of Israel, twelve men, each of whom was of his father's household.

Num 1:45 So all the numbered men of the sons of Israel by their fathers' households, from twenty years old and upward, whoever *was able to go out to war* in Israel,

Num 1:46 even **all the numbered men** were 603,550.

• Number at Beginning	Number in Chapter 26	Net
• 603,550	601,730	<1,820>

Num 1:47 **3) Except the Levites** vs 47-54

The Levites, however, were not numbered among them by their fathers' tribe.

- The Levites were not numbered for War.
- They already had a job -- To Worship To
- In crossing the Jordan - They lead the Army      Worship precedes Warfare

Num 1:48 For the LORD had spoken to Moses, saying,

Num 1:49 "Only the tribe of Levi you shall not number, nor shall you take their census among the sons of Israel.

Num 1:50 "But you shall appoint the Levites over the tabernacle of the testimony, and over all its

furnishings and over all that belongs to it. They shall carry the tabernacle and all its furnishings, and they shall take care of it; they shall also camp around the tabernacle.

Num 1:51 "So when the tabernacle is to set out, the Levites shall take it down; and when the tabernacle encamps, the Levites shall set it up. But the layman who comes near shall be put to death.

- God has an order and assignments. You cannot pick and choose your assignment. Again, God has an order and a purpose.
- We need to trust His assignments.

Num 1:52 "The sons of Israel shall camp, each man by his own camp, and each man by his own standard, according to their armies.

Num 1:53 "But the Levites shall camp around the tabernacle of the testimony, so that there will be no wrath on the congregation of the sons of Israel. So the Levites shall keep charge of the tabernacle of the testimony."

Num 1:54 Thus the sons of Israel did; according to all which the LORD had commanded Moses, so they did.

- The Levites will camp closest to the Tabernacle. This is important as we look into Chapter 2.
- Compare 2 Censuses This one and one the David did in 1 Chronicles 21
  - 1 Chronicles 21:1+2 "Then Satan stood up against Israel and moved David to number Israel. So David said to Joab and to the princes of the people, "Go, number Israel from Beersheba even to Dan, and bring me word that I may know their number."
  - 1 Chronicles 21:7 "God was displeased with this thing, so He struck Israel."

#### Moses' Census

God Called for it  
Aaron Obeyed  
God Approved  
Israel Became Warriors

#### David's Census

Satan Called for it  
Joab warned David not to  
God Displeased  
70,000 of Israel Perished

- **Concerning Moses' census did God need to know how many warriors there were?**  
No, when Gideon was facing a battle God thinned the ranks to 300. Later Jonathan and his armor bearer conquered a Philistine garrison.
- **Who was the census for?**  
For Israel, Not God.
- **Why was there a census?**  
To prepare Israel for war. So they could understand that in this kingdom there is warfare and they needed to become warriors.
- **2 Corinthians 10:3-6** "For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh, for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses. We are destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God, and we are taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ, and we are ready to punish all disobedience, whenever your obedience is complete."
- **Ephesians 6:11-17** "Put on the full armor of God, so that you will be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places. Therefore, take up the full armor of God, so that you will be able to resist in the evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm. Stand firm therefore, HAVING GIRDED YOUR LOINS WITH TRUTH, and HAVING PUT ON THE BREASTPLATE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS, and having shod YOUR FEET WITH THE PREPARATION OF THE GOSPEL OF PEACE; in addition to all, taking up the shield of faith with which you will be able to extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. And take THE HELMET OF SALVATION, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God."

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