

Numbers Chapter 26 Continued

Numbers 26:38-41 "The sons of Benjamin after their families: of Bela, the family of the Belaites: of Ashbel, the family of the Ashbelites: of Ahiram, the family of the Ahiramites:" "Of Shupham, the family of the Shuphamites: of Hupham, the family of the Huphamites." "And the sons of Bela were Ard and Naaman: [of Ard], the family of the Ardites: [and] of Naaman, the family of the Naamites." "And the sons of Bela were Ard and Naaman: [of Ard], the family of the Ardites: [and] of Naaman, the family of the Naamites." "These [are] the sons of Benjamin after their families: and they that were numbered of them [were] forty and five thousand and six hundred."

This tribe was numbered next to Ephraim, being under his standard.

Five of the sons of Benjamin are omitted, perhaps because they died without issue, and so no families sprang from them.

The names of the five sons mentioned vary a little from the names of them in (Gen. 46:21).

Instead of Ehi, it is here Ahiram.

And instead of Huphim and Muphim, it is here Shupham and Hupham.

From these last five were the families of the Belaites, Ashbelites, Ahiramites, Shuphamites, and Huphamites.

And from the eldest of them sprang two other families, the Ardites and Naamites.

From Ard and Naaman, two sons of Bela.

The number of men in these families was 45,600.

So, that here was an increase of 10,200.

In the last lesson, the LORD told Moses and Eleazar to number the males 20 years old and older, who were able to go to war.

Benjamin was the youngest son of Jacob.

His mother was Jacob's beloved Rachel.

The brother of Benjamin, who had the same mother, was Joseph.

The tribe of Benjamin at this counting, numbered 45,600.

Their count earlier on this wilderness wandering was 35,400.

We see this family has increased in size by 10,200.

Numbers 26:42-43 "These [are] the sons of Dan after their families: of Shuham, the family of the Shuhamites. These [are] the families of Dan after their families." "All the families of the Shuhamites, according to those that were numbered of them, [were] threescore and four thousand and four hundred."

Though he had but one son, the plural being put for the singular.

Or by sons are meant his posterity.

His son's name was Shuham, and by transposition Hushim in (Gen. 46:23). From him was the family of the Shulamites.

The number of Dan's tribe at this counting was 64,400.

At the first census, they numbered 62,700.

They have increased by 1,700.

Numbers 26:44-47 "[Of] the children of Asher after their families: of Jimna, the family of the Jimnites: of Jesui, the family of the Jesuites: of Beriah, the family of the Beriites." "Of the sons of Beriah: of Heber, the family of the Heberites: of Malchiel, the family of the Malchielites." "And the name of the daughter of Asher [was] Sarah." "These [are] the families of the sons of Asher according to those that were numbered of them; [who were] fifty and three thousand and four hundred."

This tribe was numbered next to Dan, because it was under his standard.

One of his sons is omitted, very probably dying childless, and so had no family.

From the rest sprang the families of the Jimnites, Jesuites, and Beriites; and, from the latter, two others, the Heberites and Malchielites.

And it is remarked that Asher had a daughter named Serah, and who also is particularly mentioned as a sister of Asher's sons in (Gen. 46:17).

No doubt but she was a remarkable woman.

Either for religion, or for wisdom and prudence.

Or some amiable virtue or grace or another.

That she is so particularly taken notice of.

According to Maimonides she was an heiress.

For though Asher had many sons, this was his wife's daughter by another man, who had no sons. And the inheritance was his daughter's, and therefore is so particularly mentioned.

She inheriting as the daughters of Zelophehad did.

Asher's descendants at this count were 53,400.

The earlier count on Asher's descendants was 41,500.

They had increased by 11,900.

Numbers 26:48-50 "[Of] the sons of Naphtali after their families: of Jahzeel, the family of the Jahzeelites: of Guni, the family of the Gunites:" "Of Jezer, the family of the Jezerites: of Shillem, the family of the Shillemites." "These [are] the families of Naphtali according to their families: and they that were numbered of them [were] forty and five thousand and four hundred."

This tribe, which is the last of them, was numbered next to Asher, because it was with that under the standard of Dan.

It had four families in it.

The Jahzeelites, Gunites, Jezerites, and Shillemites.

The sons of Naphtali who were counted here were 45,400.

The earlier count was 53,400.

We find they decreased by 8,000.

Numbers 26:51 "These [were] the numbered of the children of Israel, six hundred thousand and a thousand seven hundred and thirty."

The total net loss between the first and second census (603,550 verses 601,730, was a little less than 2,000 (1:46; verses 26:5-51).

Such a small decline is somewhat surprising in light of the numerous failures of the people in the wilderness.

Despite their sin, God kept His promise to preserve the nation.

The number counted, here, of all the tribes were 601,730.

The number counted at the beginning of the journey was 603,550.

There was a small decrease of the number of people who began the trip, because of the judgements from God that came upon them for sin.

There were 1,820 fewer than started.

This is almost the same number that started.

Verses 52-56

These census numbers would be used to decide the size of each tribe's inheritance in the Land.

The exact locations would be determined by lot (see Joshua 13:1-7; 14:1 – 19:51 for the outworking of these words).

Numbers 26:52 "And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,"

After the sum of the people of Israel had been taken.

"Saying":

As follows.

The difference, here, is that the LORD speaks to Moses alone.

Numbers 26:53 "Unto these the land shall be divided for an inheritance according to the number of names."

That were numbered, and to none else.

"According to the number of names":

And for this end was the number of them now taken, that the land might be equally divided among them.

Women and minors, or such as were under twenty years of age, had no share in it.

And even only those who were at that age at this time; so Jarchi says.

It was not divided to any that were less than twenty years of age, even though they came to be full twenty before the division of the land.

For they were seven years subduing it, and seven years dividing it.

Yet none took any part of it but these 601,730.

Nay, he says, if a man had six children they took but their father's part only.

The inheritance of land allotted will be according to how many people each tribe has.

Numbers 26:54 "To many thou shalt give the more inheritance, and to few thou shalt give the less inheritance: to every one shall his inheritance be given according to those that were numbered of him."

To a tribe more numerous, and consisting of more and larger families, a greater part of the land was to be given to them to possess.

And to a smaller tribe, and of the fewer families and persons in them, a lesser share of it.

This direction is given to Moses, but is not designed for him personally.

For he never entered the land, but died before Israel went into it.

But for the chief ruler that would be then in being, namely, Joshua, his successor.

"To everyone shall his inheritance be given, according to those that were numbered of him":

That is, to every tribe, and so to every family in it, according to the number of men in it, that were of the above age when the sum of them was taken.

Because it is in the original text, "to a man according to those numbered of him", etc.

Hence the Jewish writers gather, that the land was distributed not to women, but to men only.

God wanted all of them to have their allotment equally.

Numbers 26:55 "Notwithstanding the land shall be divided by lot: according to the names of the tribes of their fathers they shall inherit."

That the division might appear to be according to the determination and will of God.

And not left to the judgment and discretion of the chief magistrate, though bound by the above rule.

"According to the names of the tribes of their fathers they shall inherit":

That is, according as to whatsoever name of a tribe such a part or portion of the land comes up by lot.

That shall their inheritance be.

Jarchi says, the names of the twelve tribes were written on twelve scrolls of parchment.

And twelve borders or limits of land on twelve others, and they were mixed together in an urn. And the prince put his hand into it and took two scrolls.

A scroll came up with the name of a tribe, and a scroll with a border or limit expressed on it.

And the lot, he says, was by the Holy Ghost.

For Eleazar, at the same time, was clothed with Urim and Thummim; so that the people were certain that the disposition and division of the land was of God.

But there were but nine tribes and a half, among whom the land of Canaan was divided.

Two tribes and a half settled on the other side Jordan.

Namely, the tribes of Reuben and Gad, and half the tribe of Manasseh.

This is saying rather than each one choosing what they wanted, and having an argument about the division, God will have them to cast lots.

Numbers 26:56 "According to the lot shall the possession thereof be divided between many and few."

It was by the determination of the lot that the land was divided by inheritance.

And that was by the LORD, according to (Prov. 16:33).

"Between many and few":

It was so ordered of the LORD by the lot, that the many should have a larger share, and the few a lesser.

The lot decides the situation of each person's inheritance.

This is just saying, that those who are larger in number will have the larger allotment.

Verses 57-65

As in the first census (3:14-39), the Levites were counted separately.

The total number of Levites was 23,000 (verse 62), an increase of 1,000 over the previous census (see 3:39).

Numbers 26:57-62 "And these [are] they that were numbered of the Levites after their families: of Gershon, the family of the Gershonites: of Kohath, the family of the

Kohathites: of Merari, the family of the Merarites." "These [are] the families of the Levites: the family of the Libnites, the family of the Hebronites, the family of the Mahlites, the family of the Mushites, the family of the Korathites. And Kohath begat Amram." "And the name of Amram's wife [was] Jochebed, the daughter of Levi, whom [her mother] bare to Levi in Egypt: and she bare unto Amram Aaron and Moses, and Miriam their sister." "And unto Aaron was born Nadab, and Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar." "And Nadab and Abihu died, when they offered strange fire before the LORD." "And those that were numbered of them were twenty and three thousand, all males from a month old and upward: for they were not numbered among the children of Israel, because there was no inheritance given them among the children of Israel."

And they were numbered not with the rest of the tribes of Israel, but by themselves, as they were at the first numbering of the tribes; the three principal families of which were, the Gershonite, the Kohathite, and Merarite, so called from the three sons of Levi.

But all their sons are not mentioned.

Of the sons of Gershon only Libni, from whom was the family of the Libnites; not Shimei, because, as Aben Ezra conjectures, either he had no sons, or, if he had, they died without any, and so there was no family from them.

And of the sons of Kohath no mention is made of Uzziel, nor of Izhar, but in the Korhites, only of the Hebronite family from Hebron.

And of Amram, whose wife Jochebed is spoken of as a daughter of Levi, whom Levi's wife, as Jarchi rightly supplies it, bore to him in Egypt, and which Jochebed was the mother of Aaron, Moses, and Miriam.

And it is observed that Aaron had four sons, Nadab, Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar, the two first of which died for offering strange fire to the LORD, and the two last were now living.

From Merari, another son of Levi, sprang two families, the Mahlite, and the Mushite. And the whole number of the Levites at this time taken was 23,000 males of a month old and upward.

So that here was an increase of 1,000 males since the former numbering of them.

The reason why they were not numbered with the other tribes was, because they had no part of the land of Israel divided to them, and had no inheritance in it.

Now we see the tribes of the Levites.

They were not numbered with the others, because they do not go to war.

They are the servants of the LORD.

They take care of the religious side of the life of the Israelites.

They take care of the tabernacle also.

Amram was the father of Moses, Aaron, and Miriam.

Jochebed was the wife of Amram, and was of Levi, as well as was her husband, Amram.

We see that both parents of Moses, Aaron, and Miriam were from the Levitical tribe.

Aaron was the first high priest.

His sons would have been the priests in the temple.

They were all to serve the LORD in the temple.

Nadab and Abihu were killed with fire from off the altar of God.

They carried strange fire into the tabernacle.

Eleazar took over as high priest, when Aaron died.

The strange fire probably, was the fact that they were drinking.

The males of the Levites that were numbered at the end of the journey across the wilderness was 23,000.

At the beginning of the journey they were numbered 22,000.

This is an additional 1,000 people.

Verses 63-65

This summary section is enormously important.

None of the first generation enumerated in the census of chapters 1-3 was included in this census, except for "Caleb" and "Joshua".

The rest had died.

Numbers 26:63 "These [are] they that were numbered by Moses and Eleazar the priest, who numbered the children of Israel in the plains of Moab by Jordan [near] Jericho."

That is, these were the Levites, their families, and the number of males in them.

Which was taken by Moses and Eleazar.

Who might be only concerned in numbering the Levites.

Of which tribe they were.

And;

"Who also numbered the children of Israel":

All the tribes of them, with the assistance of their princes.

"In the plains of Moab by Jordan near Jericho":

As they were commanded by the LORD.

This is just saying, that Moses did exactly as God had commanded him to do.

They numbered the people.

Numbers 26:64 "But among these there was not a man of them whom Moses and Aaron the priest numbered, when they numbered the children of Israel in the wilderness of Sinai."

About thirty eight years before this time.

This, as Aben Ezra observes, respects the numbering of the Israelites, not of the Levites.

For there were some of the tribe of Levi numbered then who were living.

As Eleazar, and very probably Ithamar, and perhaps some few more.

Though it may be Eleazar, now doing numbering, was not reckoned among the numbered.

"When they numbered the children of Israel in the wilderness of Sinai":

See Num. 1:1.

For as there were none of the tribe of Levi among the spies.

There might be but few of them among the murmurers.

Numbers 26:65 "For the LORD had said of them, They shall surely die in the wilderness. And there was not left a man of them, save Caleb the son of Jephunneh, and Joshua the son of Nun."

This was threatened them (Num. 14:32), and now it was fulfilled.

"And there was not left a man of them, save Caleb the son of Jephunneh, and Joshua the son of Nun.

The only two of the spies that brought a good report of the land of Canaan.

All the rest of them, and those that murmured on the ill report of theirs, were now dead.

Those who were numbered as men in the first census are all dead, except for Joshua and Caleb.

God let them all die off, because of their lack of faith.

The new generation of their descendants will inherit the Promised Land.

Twelve men searched the Promised Land 40 days, and only two, Caleb and Joshua, brought a good report.

They wandered 40 years to compensate for their 40 days of unbelief.

Numbers Chapter 26 Continued Questions

1. Who did God tell to number the people?
2. _____ was the youngest son of Jacob.
3. Who was his mother?
4. His brother, who had the same mother, was _____.
5. How many had the family of Benjamin increased at this counting?
6. How many had Dan's tribe increased at this counting?
7. Asher's tribe increased by what number?
8. Naphtali's tribe decreased by how many?
9. How many fewer, at this count, were the entire nation of Israel?
10. How shall the land be divided?
11. How will they decide, who gets what parcel of land?
12. How will they make the division fair for all?
13. Who were included in the families of the Levites?

14. What is different about the Levites?
15. Who begat Amram?
16. Who was Amram?
17. Amram's wife was _____.
18. What tribe were they both from?
19. Who were Amram's and Jochebed's children?
20. Who was the first high priest?
21. What happened to his two oldest sons?
22. Why did this happen to them?
23. What was the strange fire, probably?
24. By how many did the Levite tribe grow during the wilderness wanderings?
25. Who took Aaron's place as high priest, when Aaron died?
26. Who were the only ones of the twelve spies, who lived to see the Promised Land?
27. Why did they wander 40 years in the wilderness?