

Numbers 26:1 ¶ And it came to pass after the plague, that the LORD spake unto Moses and unto Eleazar the son of Aaron the priest, saying,
Numbers 26:2 Take the sum of all the congregation of the children of Israel, from twenty years old and upward, throughout their fathers' house, all that are able to go to war in Israel.

Numbers 26:3 And Moses and Eleazar the priest spake with them in the plains of Moab by Jordan *near* Jericho, saying,
Numbers 26:4 Take the sum of the people, from twenty years old and upward; as the LORD commanded Moses and the children of Israel, which went forth out of the land of Egypt.

This chapter begins with the LORD once again instructing Moses and Eleazar to take a census of all the men of Israel that were twenty years and older that were fit for war. As we read through to the end of the chapter, we learn that one of the purposes was to reveal that no one remained of those that the LORD had declared would not be allowed to enter the land of promise. Moses and Eleazar proceeded to supervise the taking of the census. The founding patriarch of each tribe is noted, his sons' names and the cumulative total of the census of that tribe.

Note: The names listed identify the descendants that founded the primary clans or family groups of that tribe. In biblical genealogies a son could be a reference to a grandson, etc.

Numbers 26:5 ¶ Reuben, the eldest son of Israel: the children of Reuben; Hanoch, of whom cometh the family of the Hanochites: of Pallu, the family of the Palluites:

Numbers 26:6 Of Hezron, the family of the Hezronites: of Carmi, the family of the Carmites.

Numbers 26:7 These *are* the families of the Reubenites: and they that were numbered of them were forty and three thousand and seven hundred and thirty.

Reuben, the oldest son of Jacob
His sons – Hanoch, Pallu, Hezron and Carmi
From these families were numbered 43,730

Numbers 26:8 And the sons of Pallu; Eliab.

Numbers 26:9 And the sons of Eliab; Nemuel, and Dathan, and Abiram. This is *that* Dathan and Abiram, *which were* famous in the congregation, who strove against Moses and against Aaron in the company of Korah, when they strove against the LORD:

Numbers 26:10 And the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed them up together with Korah, when that company died, what time the fire devoured two hundred and fifty men: and they became a sign.

Numbers 26:11 Notwithstanding the children of Korah died not.

A further note is made concerning Pallu. He had a son named Eliab who fathered Nemuel, Dathan and Abiram. Point is made that it was this Dathan and Abiram who took a stand against Moses and Aaron in the company of Korah

because they did not like that the LORD had singled them out for chief leadership of the nation. They were swallowed up in the earth along with Korah. Their deaths along with the deaths of the 250 men that had allied themselves with them became a sign before the people of God's supreme power and authority.

Then an interesting note—not all of Korah's children died. It seems that there were some old enough to make their own choices independent of their father and chose to follow the LORD's leadership through Moses and Aaron and were spared the judgment of their father.

Numbers 26:12 The sons of Simeon after their families: of Nemuel, the family of the Nemuelites: of Jamin, the family of the Jaminites: of Jachin, the family of the Jachinites:

Numbers 26:13 Of Zerah, the family of the Zarhites: of Shaul, the family of the Shaulites.

Numbers 26:14 These *are* the families of the Simeonites, twenty and two thousand and two hundred.

The sons of Simeon were Nemuel, Jamin, Jachin, Zerah, and Shaul.
The census of these families totaled 22,200.

Numbers 26:15 The children of Gad after their families: of Zephon, the family of the Zephonites: of Haggi, the family of the Haggites: of Shuni, the family of the Shunites:

Numbers 26:16 Of Ozni, the family of the Oznites: of Eri, the family of the Erites:

Numbers 26:17 Of Arod, the family of the Arodites: of Areli, the family of the Arelites.

Numbers 26:18 These *are* the families of the children of Gad according to those that were numbered of them, forty thousand and five hundred.

The sons of Gad were Zephon, Haggi, Shuni, Ozni, Eri, Arod and Areli.
The census of these families totaled 40,500.

Numbers 26:19 The sons of Judah *were* Er and Onan: and Er and Onan died in the land of Canaan.

Numbers 26:20 And the sons of Judah after their families were; of Shelah, the family of the Shelanites: of Pharez, the family of the Pharzites: of Zerah, the family of the Zarhites.

Numbers 26:21 And the sons of Pharez were; of Hezron, the family of the Hezronites: of Hamul, the family of the Hamulites.

Numbers 26:22 These *are* the families of Judah according to those that were numbered of them, threescore and sixteen thousand and five hundred.

The sons of Judah were Er, Onan, Shelah, Pharez and Zerah; the sons of Pharez were Hezron and Hamul. The census of these families totaled 76,500.

It is noted that Er and Onan died in the land of Canaan, as noted in the following

quote from Genesis.

Genesis 38:6–10 “And Judah took a wife for Er his firstborn, whose name was Tamar. And Er, Judah’s firstborn, was wicked in the sight of the LORD; and the LORD slew him. And Judah said unto Onan, Go in unto thy brother’s wife, and marry her, and raise up seed to thy brother. And Onan knew that the seed should not be his; and it came to pass, when he went in unto his brother’s wife, that he spilled it on the ground, lest that he should give seed to his brother. And the thing which he did displeased the LORD: wherefore he slew him also.”

Numbers 26:23 Of the sons of Issachar after their families: of Tola, the family of the Tolaites: of Pua, the family of the Punites:

Numbers 26:24 Of Jashub, the family of the Jashubites: of Shimron, the family of the Shimronites.

Numbers 26:25 These are the families of Issachar according to those that were numbered of them, threescore and four thousand and three hundred.

The sons of Issachar were Tola, Pua, Jashub and Shimron.
The census of these families totaled 64,300.

Numbers 26:26 Of the sons of Zebulun after their families: of Sered, the family of the Sardites: of Elon, the family of the Elonites: of Jahleel, the family of the Jahleelites.

Numbers 26:27 These are the families of the Zebulunites according to those that were numbered of them, threescore thousand and five hundred.

The sons of Zebulun were Sered, Elon and Jahleel.
The census of these families totaled 60,500.

Numbers 26:28 The sons of Joseph after their families were Manasseh and Ephraim.

The sons of Joseph were Manasseh and Ephraim.
Reminder – Jacob had adopted Joseph’s sons as his own and declared that they would each receive an inheritance in the land.

Genesis 48:3–6 “And Jacob said unto Joseph, God Almighty appeared unto me at Luz in the land of Canaan, and blessed me, And said unto me, Behold, I will make thee fruitful, and multiply thee, and I will make of thee a multitude of people; and will give this land to thy seed after thee for an everlasting possession. And now thy two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, which were born unto thee in the land of Egypt before I came unto thee into Egypt, are mine; as Reuben and Simeon, they shall be mine. And thy issue, which thou begettest after them, shall be thine, and shall be called after the name of their brethren in their inheritance.”

Numbers 26:29 Of the sons of Manasseh: of Machir, the family of the Machirites: and Machir begat Gilead: of Gilead come the family of the Gileadites.

Numbers 26:30 These are the sons of Gilead: of Jeezer, the family of the

Jeezerites: of Helek, the family of the Helekites:

Numbers 26:31 And of Asriel, the family of the Asrielites: and of Shechem, the family of the Shechemites:

Numbers 26:32 And of Shemida, the family of the Shemidaites: and of Hepher, the family of the Hopherites.

Numbers 26:33 And Zelophehad the son of Hepher had no sons, but daughters: and the names of the daughters of Zelophehad were Mahlah, and Noah, Hoglah, Milcah, and Tirzah.

Numbers 26:34 These are the families of Manasseh, and those that were numbered of them, fifty and two thousand and seven hundred.

The son of Manasseh was Machir, and his son was Gilead. The sons of Gilead were Jeezer, Helek, Asriel, Shechem, Shemida and Hepher. Zelophehad, the son of Hepher, had no son but had five daughters—Mahlah, Noah, Hoglah, Milcah and Tirzah.

The census of these families totaled 52,700.

Numbers 26:35 These are the sons of Ephraim after their families: of Shuthelah, the family of the Shuthalhites: of Becher, the family of the Bachrites: of Tahan, the family of the Tahanites.

Numbers 26:36 And these are the sons of Shuthelah: of Eran, the family of the Eranites.

Numbers 26:37 These are the families of the sons of Ephraim according to those that were numbered of them, thirty and two thousand and five hundred. These are the sons of Joseph after their families.

The sons of Ephraim were Shuthelah, Becher and Tahan; and Shuthelah had a son named Eran.

The census of these families totaled 32,500.

Numbers 26:38 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:

Numbers 26:39 Of Shupham, the family of the Shuphamites: of Hupham, the family of the Huphamites.

Numbers 26:40 And the sons of Bela were Ard and Naaman: of Ard, the family of the Ardites: and of Naaman, the family of the Naamites.

Numbers 26:41 These are the sons of Benjamin after their families: and they that were numbered of them were forty and five thousand and six hundred.

The sons of Benjamin were Bela, Ashbel, Ahiram, Shupham and Hupham. Bela had two sons—Ard and Naaman.

The census of these families totaled 45,600.

Numbers 26:42 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.

Numbers 26:43 All the families of the Shuhamites, according to those that were numbered of them, *were* threescore and four thousand and four hundred.

The son of Dan was Shuham, and total number from their census was 64,400.

Numbers 26:44 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.

Numbers 26:45 Of the sons of Beriah: of Heber, the family of the Heberites: of Malchiel, the family of the Malchielites.

Numbers 26:46 And the name of the daughter of Asher *was* Sarah.

Numbers 26:47 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.

The sons of Asher were Jimna, Jesui and Beriah. Beriah had two sons—Heber and Malchiel. Asher also had a daughter named Sarah.

The census of these families totaled 53,400.

Numbers 26:48 Of the sons of Naphtali after their families: of Jahzeel, the family of the Jahzeelites: of Guni, the family of the Gunites:

Numbers 26:49 Of Jezer, the family of the Jezerites: of Shillem, the family of the Shillemites.

Numbers 26:50 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.

The sons of Naphtali were Jahzeel, Guni, Jezer and Shillem.

The census of these families totaled 45,400.

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

The total number from the census of all twelve tribes was 601,730.

As I looked at some of the commentaries after finishing this chapter, I found some interesting facts.

- The tribe of Reuben had decreased by 2,770.
- Simeon suffered the greatest decrease—37,100. It is reasoned that such a significant drop reflected this tribe's leadership in turning to Baal. (Zimri was a leader in this tribe.)
- Gad decreased by 5,150.
- Judah increased by 1,900.
- Issachar increased by 9,900.
- Zebulun increased by 3,100.
- Ephraim began with greater numbers than Manasseh, but was now

significantly smaller; Manasseh increased by 20,500 and Ephraim decreased by 8,000.

- The tribe of Benjamin increased by 10,200.
- The tribe of Dan increased by 1,700 and was the second largest tribe; Judah was the largest.
- The tribe of Asher increased by 11,900.
- The tribe of Naphtali decreased by 8,000.
- The total number from the census decreased by 1,820.
- It was noted that though there were many foreigners included in the camp of Israel, only the descendants of Jacob received inheritances in the land.

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

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

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.

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

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

The LORD told Moses that the land was to be divided as an inheritance among the people according to the population of each tribe as shown by the census. The tribes that had more people were to be given more land; those with less were to be given less. Specific inheritances were to be determined by lot.

It should be noted that the casting of lots was a recognized way of determining the LORD's will.

Proverbs 16:33 "The lot is cast into the lap; but the whole disposing thereof is of the LORD."

Numbers 26:57 ¶ 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.

Numbers 26:58 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.

Numbers 26:59 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.

Numbers 26:60 And unto Aaron was born Nadab, and Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar.

Numbers 26:61 And Nadab and Abihu died, when they offered strange fire before the LORD.

Numbers 26:62 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.

The census of Levi included all males from one month and older. The sons of Levi were Gershon, Kohath and Merari. The families of the Levites included the Libnites, Hebronites, Mahlites, Mushites and Korathites.

It is noted that Kohath was the father of Amram who married Jochebed, a daughter of Levi. The children of Amram and Jochebed were Aaron, Moses and Miriam. Aaron had four sons—Nadab, Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar. It is again noted that Nadab and Abihu died when they chose to disobey the LORD regarding the offering of incense.

Leviticus 10:1–2 “And Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, took either of them his censer, and put fire therein, and put incense thereon, and offered strange fire before the LORD, which he commanded them not. And there went out fire from the LORD, and devoured them, and they died before the LORD.”

The census of the house of Levi totaled 23,000, making an increase of 22,000 from the first census. This number was not included in the previous total because the house of Levi was to receive no land inheritance.

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.

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.

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 census was taken in the plains of Moab by the Jordan River near Jericho. It is noted that not a man remained of them whom Moses and Aaron had first numbered in the wilderness of Sinai. The LORD had declared that from that census only Caleb the son of Jephunneh and Joshua the son of Nun would be allowed to enter the land of promise.

I had not thought about this before, but JFB notes that the tribe of Levi must not have been held accountable for the unbelief exhibited by the rest of the congregation since they had no part as spies or of their subsequent disobedience. Eleazar and Ithamar provide the most prominent testimony to this likelihood.