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**BIBLE STUDY**

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**GLAD TO “STILL” BE IN THE NUMBER**

**ONE MORE TIME**

**Numbers 26:38-65**

Chapter 26 concludes the second census God commanded Moses to complete. The rest of the first generation apparently died in the plague of chapter 25, and now the Lord instructed Moses and Eleazar (since Aaron had died) to conduct another census. The purpose of this census had military overtones since hostilities against the Midianites were just announced in Chapter 25:17 and the nation needed to make logistical preparations as well for the conquest. This census would also aid in deciding how much land allotment each tribe would need after possessing the promised land. The totals for this census provide a basis for comparison with the earlier one from Numbers 1. With the numbers given in this chapter, it is possible to calculate approximately on average how many of the first generation died per day during the wilderness-wandering period. Massive deaths occurred at the Korah rebellion and the plague of Baal-peor, but an average of 90 funerals a day would have had to be conducted during this period. Just as the Levites were not numbered in the census, they may have been exempt from this judgment. This census mirrors the one in Nm 1 except that the order of Manasseh and Ephraim is reversed. The other major difference between the two censuses is that this second one not only states the totals of each tribe but also lists the families or clans that comprise each tribe. The mention of these additional tribal family names highlights the Abrahamic covenant, promising that Abraham’s descendants would become a mighty nation (Genesis 12:2; 26:24; 46:3). Scattered throughout the census are mentions of those whom the Lord judged: Dathan and Abriam, and Er and Onan. These references are to specifically remind the Israelites of their propensity to sin. This census, minus the tribe of Levi, totaled 601,730. During the wilderness-wandering period the Lord had prospered the second generation so that in essence its military force was about the same size as it was at the time of the exodus. Though similar in size this group was a totally different group in age and devotion to God.

***Numbers 26:38-43***

***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:"***

***39 "Of Shupham, the family of the Shuphamites: of Hupham, the family of the Huphamites."***

***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."***

***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 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***

***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."***

***43 "All the families of the Shuhamites, according to those that were numbered of them, [were] threescore and four thousand and four hundred."***

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***

***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."***

***45 "Of the sons of Beriah: of Heber, the family of the Heberites: of Malchiel, the family of the Malchielites."***

***46 "And the name of the daughter of Asher [was] Sarah."***

***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."***

Asher's descendants at this count were 53,400. The earlier count on Asher's descendents was 41,500. They had increased by 11,900.

***Numbers 26:48-50***

***48 "[Of] the sons of Naphtali after their families: of Jahzeel, the family of the Jahzeelites: of Guni, the family of the Gunites:"***

***49 "Of Jezer, the family of the Jezerites: of Shillem, the family of the Shillemites."***

***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 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 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 figure was quite close to the original count taken almost four decades earlier. So even though the exodus generation died off and Israel suffered a number of severe judgments on their way to Canaan, God prospered his people, and they were ready to cross the Jordan at full strength. It should be noted that God has a “fixed” number of who belongs to him.

***John 6:44 KJV “No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day.”***

***John 10:16 KJV “And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd.”***

***John 10:27 KJV “My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me:”***

***Romans 8:28-30 KJV***

***28 And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.***

***29 For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.***

***30 Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.***

***Ephesians 1:4-5 KJV***

***4 According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love:***

***5 Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will,***

***Acts 17:26-31 KJV***

***26 And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation;***

***27 That they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us:***

***28 For in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring.***

***29 Forasmuch then as we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man's device.***

***30 And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent:***

***31 Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead.***

***Numbers 26:52-55***

***52 "And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,"***

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

***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."***

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

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

The difference, here, is that the LORD speaks to Moses alone. The inheritance of land allotted will be according to how many people each tribe has. God wanted all of them to have their allotment equally. The census was followed by the casting of a lot to determine where each tribe’s inheritance in the promised land would be located. The actual dividing of the land would come later. 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. 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.

***Numbers 26:57-62***

***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."***

***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."***

***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."***

***60 "And unto Aaron was born Nadab, and Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar."***

***61 "And Nadab and Abihu died, when they offered strange fire before the LORD."***

***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."***

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. The three main Levite clans, Gershonite, Kohathite, and Merarite clans were counted. Amram was the father of Moses, Aaron, and Miriam. Jochebed was of Levi, as well, as 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.

***Numbers 26:63-65***

***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."***

***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."***

***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 is just saying, that Moses did exactly as God had commanded him to do. They numbered the people. 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. This stresses the faithfulness of God to keep His promises to those loyal to Him and to punish those who are unfaithful to His covenant. This new census also foreshadows a spirit of hope for the new generation as they look forward to inheriting the land God promised them.

**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. What is different about the Levites?
12. Who was Amram?
13. Amram's wife was \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
14. Who were Amram's and Jochebed's children?
15. Who was the first high priest?
16. What happened to his two oldest sons?
17. Why did this happen to them?
18. What was the strange fire, probably?
19. Who were the only ones, of the twelve spies, who lived to see the promised land?
20. Why did they wander 40 years in the wilderness?