

The Book of Numbers

Lesson 16

Chapters 26:1 – 27:11

Following the LORD's instruction to kill all the Israelites who had worshiped *Baal* at Peor, the LORD had accepted Phinehas' jealousy when he killed the Simonite man and Midianite woman who had run for safety into the tent of meeting. The daughters of Moab, who included some of the clan of Midianites who were allies of the Moabites, were guilty of leading the Israelites astray in the act of the worship of *Baal*. The LORD told Moses to be "hostile" to the Midianites and "strike" them. Before doing so, the LORD had Moses number the nation of Israel as it had 38 years before. Beginning here in Numbers 26:5 we find the record of the census that was taken at that time before the attack on the Midianites.

Accounting of the Sons 20 Years and Older

Rueben

Num 26:5 Reuben, Israel's firstborn, the sons of Reuben: of Hanoch, the family of the Hanochites; of Pallu, the family of the Palluites; 26:6 of Hezron, the family of the Hezronites; of Carmi, the family of the Carmites. 26:7 These are the families of the Reubenites, and those who were numbered of them were 43,730. 26:8 The son of Pallu: Eliab. 26:9 The sons of Eliab: Nemuel and Dathan and Abiram. These are the Dathan and Abiram who were called by the congregation, who contended against Moses and against Aaron in the company of Korah, when they contended against the LORD, 26:10 and the earth opened its mouth and swallowed them up along with Korah, when that company died, when the fire devoured 250 men, so that they became a warning. 26:11 The sons of Korah, however, did not die.

Reuben (Ruebenites) 43,730	Hanoch (Hanochites) ¹		
	Pallu (Palluites) ²	Eliab	Nemuel
	Herzon (Hezronites) ³		Dathan
	Carmi (Carmites) ⁴		Abiram

Following the record of the 43,730 Ruebenites in the camp, Moses saw fit to give an explanation concerning three men, Dathan, Abiram and Korah. Dathan and Abiram were Ruebenites. Korah was a Levite. We met these three in Numbers 16 when they rebelled against the LORD because the family of Aaron had been selected to act as priests for the Nation of Israel instead of letting the family patriots continue as the priests as was the case previously throughout the record in Genesis and Job. All three were killed by the LORD in that rebellion. Here, clarity is seen with Korah and his clan; only Korah died in that event, not his descendants.

Simeon

Num 26:12 The sons of Simeon according to their families: of Nemuel, the family of the Nemuelites; of Jamin, the family of the Jaminites; of Jachin, the family of the Jachinites; 26:13 of Zerah, the family of the Zerahites; of Shaul, the family of the Shaulites. 26:14 These are the families of the Simeonites, 22,200.

	Nemuel (Nemuelites) ⁵
	Jamin (Jaminites) ⁶
Simeon (Simeonites)	Zerah (Zerahites) ⁷
22,200	Shaul (Shaulites) ⁸

Gad

Num 26:15 The sons of Gad according to their families: of Zephon, the family of the Zephonites; of Haggi, the family of the Haggites; of Shuni, the family of the Shunites; 26:16 of Ozni, the family of the Oznites; of Eri, the family of the Erites; 26:17 of Arod, the family of the Arodites; of Areli, the family of the Arelites. 26:18 These are the families of the sons of Gad according to those who were numbered of them, 40,500.

	Zephon (Zephonites) ⁹
	Haggi (Haggites) ¹⁰
Gad (Gadites)	Shuni (Shunites) ¹¹
40,500	Ozni (Oznites) ¹²
	Eri (Erites) ¹³
	Arod (Arodites) ¹⁴
	Areli (Arelites) ¹⁵

Judah

Num 26:19 The sons of Judah were Er and Onan, but Er and Onan died in the land of Canaan. 26:20 The sons of Judah according to their families were: of Shelah, the family of the Shelanites; of Perez, the family of the Perezites; of Zerah, the family of the Zerahites. 26:21 The sons of Perez were: of Hezron, the family of the Hezronites; of Hamul, the family of the Hamulites. 26:22 These are the families of Judah according to those who were numbered of them, 76,500.

Judah (Judah) 76,500	Er	
	Onan	
	Shelah (Shelanites) ¹⁶	
	Perez (Perezites) ¹⁷	Hezron (Hezronites) ¹⁹
	Zerah (Serahites) ¹⁸	Hamul (Hamulites) ²⁰

Issachar

Num 26:23 The sons of Issachar according to their families: *of* Tola, the family of the Tolaites; *of* Puvah, the family of the Punites; ^{26:24} *of* Jashub, the family of the Jashubites; *of* Shimron, the family of the Shimronites. ^{26:25} These are the families of Issachar according to those who were numbered of them, 64,300.

Issachar 64,300	Tola (Tolaites) ²¹	
	Puvah (Punites) ²²	
	Jashub (Jashubites) ²³	
	Shimron (Shimronites) ²⁴	

Zebulun

Num 26:26 The sons of Zebulun according to their families: *of* Sered, the family of the Seredites; *of* Elon, the family of the Elonites; *of* Jahleel, the family of the Jahleelites. ^{26:27} These are the families of the Zebulunites according to those who were numbered of them, 60,500.

Zebulun 60,500	Sered (Seredites) ²⁵	
	Elon (Elonites) ²⁶	
	Jahleel (Jahleelites) ²⁷	

Joseph - Manasseh

Num 26:28 The sons of Joseph according to their families: Manasseh and Ephraim. ^{26:29} The sons of Manasseh: *of* Machir, the family of the Machirites; and Machir became the father of Gilead: *of* Gilead, the family of the Gileadites. ^{26:30} These are the sons of Gilead: *of* Iezer, the family of the Iezerites; *of* Helek, the family of the Helekites; ^{26:31} and *of* Asriel, the family of the Asrielites; and *of* Shechem, the family of the Shechemites; ^{26:32} and *of* Shemida, the family of the Shemidaites; and *of* Hephher, the family of the Hephherites. ^{26:33} Now Zelophehad the son of Hephher had no sons, but only daughters; and the names of the daughters of Zelophehad were Mahlah, Noah, Hoglah, Milcah and Tirzah.

^{26:34} These are the families of Manasseh; and those who were numbered of them were 52,700.

Manasseh	Machir	Gilead	Iezer (Iezerites) ³⁰	
52,700	(Machirites) ²⁸	(Gileadites) ²⁹	Helek (Helekites) ³¹	
			Asriel (Asrielites) ³²	<i>Mahlah</i>
			Shechem(Shechemites) ³³	<i>Noah</i>
				<i>Hoglah</i>
				<i>Milcah</i>
			Hepher (Hepherites) ³⁴	Zelophehad <i>Tirzah</i>

Joseph - Ephraim

^{Num 26:35} These are the sons of Ephraim according to their families: of Shuthelah, the family of the Shuthelahites; of Becher, the family of the Becherites; of Tahan, the family of the Tahanites. ^{26:36} These are the sons of Shuthelah: of Eran, the family of the Eranites. ^{26:37} These are the families of the sons of Ephraim according to those who were numbered of them, 32,500. These are the sons of Joseph according to their families.

	Shuthelah (Shuthelahites) ³⁵	Eran (Eranites) ³⁸
Ephraim	Becher (Becherites) ³⁶	
32,500	Tahan (Tahanites) ³⁷	

Benjamin

^{Num 26:38} The sons of Benjamin according to their families: of Bela, the family of the Belaites; of Ashbel, the family of the Ashbelites; of Ahiram, the family of the Ahiramites; ^{26:39} of Shephupham, the family of the Shuphamites; of Hupham, the family of the Huphamites. ^{26:40} The sons of Bela were Ard and Naaman: *of Ard*, the family of the Ardites; of Naaman, the family of the Naamites. ^{26:41} These are the sons of Benjamin according to their families; and those who were numbered of them were 45,600.

	Bela (Belaites) ³⁹	Ard (Ardites) ⁴³
Benjamin	Ashbel (Ashbelites) ⁴⁰	Naaman (Naamanites) ⁴⁴
45,600	Ahiram (Ahiramites) ⁴¹	
	Shuphupham (Shuphamites) ⁴²	

Dan

^{Num 26:42} These are the sons of Dan according to their families: of Shuham, the family of the Shuhamites. These are the families of Dan according to their families. ^{26:43} All the families of the Shuhamites, according to those who were numbered of them, were 64,400.

Dan	Shuham (Shuhamites) ⁴⁵
64,400	

Asher

Num 26:44 The sons of Asher according to their families: of Imnah, the family of the Imnites; of Ishvi, the family of the Ishvites; of Beriah, the family of the Beriites. ^{26:45} Of the sons of Beriah: of Heber, the family of the Heberites; of Malchiel, the family of the Malchielites. ^{26:46} The name of the daughter of Asher was Serah. ^{26:47} These are the families of the sons of Asher according to those who were numbered of them, 53,400.

	Imnah (Imnites) ⁴⁶	
Asher	Ishvi (Ishvites) ⁴⁷	
53,400	Beriah (Beriites) ⁴⁸	Heber (Heberites) ⁴⁹
	Serah	Malchiel (Malchielites) ⁵⁰

Naphtali

Num 26:48 The sons of Naphtali according to their families: of Jahzeel, the family of the Jahzeelites; of Guni, the family of the Gunites; ^{26:49} of Jezer, the family of the Jezerites; of Shillem, the family of the Shillemites. ^{26:50} These are the families of Naphtali according to their families; and those who were numbered of them were 45,400.

	Jahzeel (Jahzeelites) ⁵¹	
Naphtali	Guni (Gunites) ⁵²	
45,400	Jezer (Jezerites) ⁵³	
	Shillem (Shillemites) ⁵⁴	

Grand Total

Num 26:51 These are those who were numbered of the sons of Israel, 601,730.

	1	2	3	4	5	6
Tribe of	<i>Reuben</i>	<i>Simeon</i>	<i>Judah</i>	<i>Issachar</i>	<i>Zebulun</i>	<i>Ephraim</i>
First Census of Men	46,500	59,300	74,600	54,400	57,400	40,500
Second Census of Men	43,730	22,200	76,500	64,300	60,500	32,500
Change in Population	-2,770	-37,100	1,900	9,900	3,100	-8,000

	7	8	9	10	11	12
Tribe of	<i>Manasseh</i>	<i>Benjamin</i>	<i>Dan</i>	<i>Asher</i>	<i>Gad</i>	<i>Naphtali</i>
First Census of Men	32,200	35,400	62,700	41,500	45,650	53,400
Second Census of Men	52,700	45,600	64,400	53,400	40,500	45,400
Change in Population	20,500	10,200	1,700	11,900	-5,150	-8,000

First Grand Total of Census - Men Above Twenty Years of Age **603,550**
Second Grand Total of Census - Men Above Twenty Years of Age **601,730**

Promised Land Family Inheritance Divided by Number of Names

Num 26:52 Then **the LORD spoke to Moses**, saying, ^{26:53} "Among these the land shall be divided for an inheritance according to the number of names. ^{26:54} "To the larger *group* you shall increase their inheritance, and to the smaller *group* you shall diminish their inheritance; each shall be given their inheritance according to those who were numbered of them.

	1	2	3	4	5	6
Tribe of	<i>Reuben</i>	<i>Simeon</i>	<i>Judah</i>	<i>Issachar</i>	<i>Zebulun</i>	<i>Ephraim</i>
Second Census of Men	43,730	22,200	76,500	64,300	60,500	32,500
Number of People in each Family Allotment by Tribe	10,933	4,440	15,300	16,075	20,167	8,125

	7	8	9	10	11	12
Tribe of	<i>Manasseh</i>	<i>Benjamin</i>	<i>Dan</i>	<i>Asher</i>	<i>Gad</i>	<i>Naphtali</i>
Second Census of Men	52,700	45,600	64,400	53,400	40,500	45,400
Number of People in each Family Allotment by Tribe	6,588	6,514	64,400	10,680	5,786	11,350

The boundaries of the Promised Land will change following the initial conquest. When Joshua finishes the conquest of the Promised Land, it will include about 11,200 square miles (about 140 miles long and about 80 miles wide – which include both sides of the Jordan). Under David, the borders will be expanded and under Solomon, the borders will expand even more. However, under Solomon, the nation will occupy only about 10% of the land actually set aside by the LORD for the Promised Land that He will inhabit during His 1,000-year reign on earth. Nevertheless, this second census reveals that each man will be given a specific portion. The 11,200 square miles equal approximately 7,168,000 acres and each man will initially receive about 12 acres for his inheritance in the Promised Land (7,168,000 acres / 601,730 men = 11.912395 acres per man).

Promised Land Tribal Inheritance Divided by Lot

Num 26:55 "But the land shall be divided by lot. They shall receive their inheritance according to the names of the tribes of their fathers. ^{26:56} "According to the selection by lot, their inheritance shall be divided between the larger and the smaller *groups*."

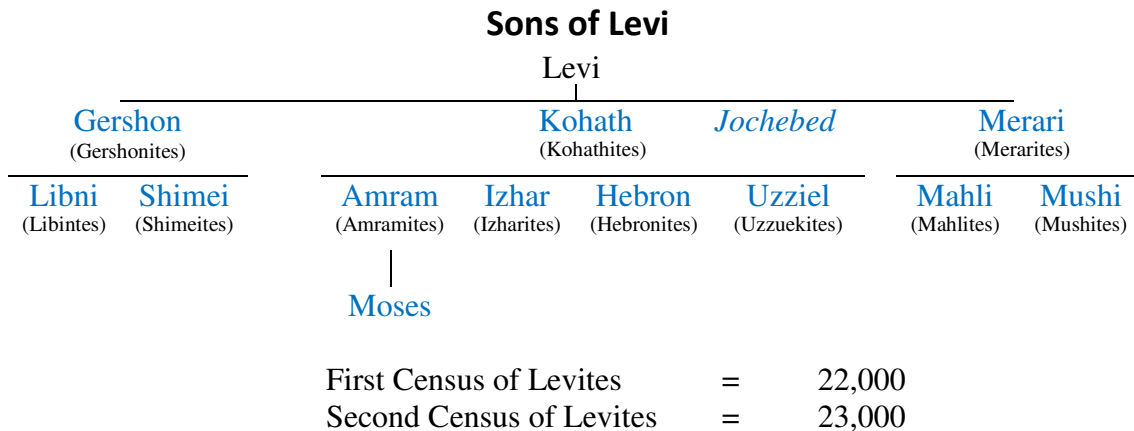
	1	2	3	4	5	6
Tribe of	<i>Reuben</i>	<i>Simeon</i>	<i>Judah</i>	<i>Issachar</i>	<i>Zebulun</i>	<i>Ephraim</i>
Second Census of Men	43,730	22,200	76,500	64,300	60,500	32,500
Acres per Tribe	524,760	266,400	918,000	771,600	726,000	390,000
Square Miles per Tribe	819.94	416.25	1,434.38	1,205.63	1,134.38	609.38

	7	8	9	10	11	12
Tribe of	<i>Manasseh</i>	<i>Benjamin</i>	<i>Dan</i>	<i>Asher</i>	<i>Gad</i>	<i>Naphtali</i>
Second Census of Men	52,700	45,600	64,400	53,400	40,500	45,400
Acres per Tribe	632,400	547,200	772,800	640,800	486,000	544,800
Square Miles per Tribe	988.13	855.00	1,207.50	1,001.25	759.38	851.25

Because we know that each man recorded in the census will receive approximately 12 acres of land, we can also determine the size of each tribal allotment. Each tribe did not receive the same size inheritance; rather, it was determined by the number of men in each tribe. The following chart shows the approximate number of acres and square miles allotted to each tribe.

Accounting of the Levites

Num 26:57 These are those who were numbered of the Levites according to their families: of Gershon, the family of the Gershonites; of Kohath, the family of the Kohathites; of Merari, the family of the Merarites. 26:58 These are the families of Levi: the family of the Libnites, the family of the Hebronites, the family of the Mahlites, the family of the Mushites, the family of the Korahites. Kohath became the father of Amram. 26:59 The name of Amram's wife was Jochebed, the daughter of Levi, who was born to Levi in Egypt; and she bore to Amram: Aaron and Moses and their sister Miriam. 26:60 To Aaron were born Nadab and Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar. 26:61 But Nadab and Abihu died when they offered strange fire before the LORD. 26:62 Those who were numbered of them were 23,000, every male from a month old and upward, for they were not numbered among the sons of Israel since no inheritance was given to them among the sons of Israel.



In the numbering of the Levites at the second census, the LORD had Moses include the heritage of his father and mother and his grandfather Levi. Verses 58 and 59 pose one of the most difficult passages in the Bible to reconcile. According to Exodus 6:16-19, the man's name was Amram and he was the son of Kohath, the son of Levi. According to Exodus 6:20, the daughter of Levi was Jochebed, the sister of Kohath. It is interesting that Jochebed is both the wife and aunt of Amram. Herein is a perfect example of the need for careful Scripture interpretation. The law was given through Moses to the people in the wilderness that a marriage such as this was unlawful;²⁴ that law was now in place at the time of this story, but it was not in place during Israel's stay in Egypt.

²⁴ Leviticus 18:12

According to the account in Genesis of the descendants of Jacob who moved to Egypt at Joseph's bidding, Kohath was among the 70. Because of the span of time involved in this story, Kohath must have been very young at the time and Jochebed was not born yet as indicated in Numbers 26:58-59. The entrance into Egypt occurred 2281 years after the creation of Adam.²⁵ The exodus occurred in 2689 years after Jacob entered Egypt. Therefore, there were at least 408 lunar years between the time Kohath entered Egypt and Moses was born. The only way to justify the relationships in this family is to assume that Levi was extremely old when Jochebed was born and Kohath was extremely old when Amram was born. Furthermore, both Jochebed and Amram were extremely old when Miriam, Aaron and Moses were born. Jochebed was younger than Amram by several years, but we do not know exactly how many years for sure. Levi would have had to outlive Joseph by many years and Jochebed would have been born long after Joseph's death. The Scripture does not give enough information to clarify this dilemma.²⁶

Only Two Men Numbered in Both Censuses

Num 26:63 These are those who were numbered by Moses and Eleazar the priest, who numbered the sons of Israel in the plains of Moab by the Jordan at Jericho. 26:64 But among these there was not a man of those who were numbered by Moses and Aaron the priest, who numbered the sons of Israel in the wilderness of Sinai. 26:65 For the LORD had said of them, "They shall surely die in the wilderness." And not a man was left of them, except Caleb the son of Jephunneh and Joshua the son of Nun.

Caleb and Joshua will be allowed to enter the Promised Land. After the Tabernacle complex was completed and dedicated, the Nation of Israel moved from Mount Sinai to Kadesh Barnea where Moses sent an envoy to search out the Promised Land and bring back a report. Twelve made the trip; ten said they could not go; two said they could – Joshua and Caleb. Because of that rebellion, the Nation of Israel was sent back to Mount Sinai for 38 years until everyone 20 years and older had died, except Joshua and Caleb. According to Joshua 14:7, Caleb was 40 years of age when he participated in the canvassing of the Promised Land 38 years earlier. That would mean that at this time in the story, Caleb was 78 years old.²⁷ After the Nation of Israel had entered the west side of the Jordan and conquered much of the land, they camped at Gilgal.²⁸ At that time Joshua was 85 years old.

²⁵ 1880 BC

²⁶ Exodus 6 states that Kohath lived to be 133 years of age; Amram lived to be 137 years of age. Moses was 80 when he led the nation of Israel out of Egypt where they had been for 430 years which included the 22 years that Joseph was in Egypt without his father and relatives. At the time of Moses' birth, the nation of Israel had been in Egypt 328 years with Joseph being there and additional 22 years. If Kohath was born the first year Levi entered Egypt and Amram was born the last year of Kohath's life, $133 + 137 = 270$ years that could have spanned from Kohath's entering Egypt to the death of Amram; 270 years falls short by 58 years of the 328 years in question. This dilemma is not explained in the Scriptures.

²⁷ Joshua 14:7

²⁸ Joshua 14:10

The Case of the Daughters with no Named Male Relatives

Num 27:1 Then the daughters of Zelophehad, the son of Hopher, the son of Gilead, the son of Machir, the son of Manasseh, of the families of Manasseh the son of Joseph, came near; and these are the names of his daughters: Mahlah, Noah and Hoglah and Milcah and Tirzah. 27:2 They stood before Moses and before Eleazar the priest and before the leaders and all the congregation, at the doorway of the tent of meeting, saying, 27:3 "Our father died in the wilderness, yet he was not among the company of those who gathered themselves together against the LORD in the company of Korah; but he died in his own sin, and he had no sons. 27:4 "Why should the name of our father be withdrawn from among his family because he had no son? Give us a possession among our father's brothers." 27:5 So Moses brought their case before the LORD.

The plan had been announced to the whole camp concerning the rules for the division of the Promised Land and immediately the five daughters of Zelophehad realized that they would have no place to live. Obviously, their father was dead for he was one of those over the age of 20 at the time of the rebellion at Kadesh Barnea. The problem was unique to these five daughters who had no brother to care for them. Had they had a brother, the sisters would have had an inheritance through him. Moses did not know the answer but he knew Who did – the LORD.

Manasseh	Machir (Machirites)	Gilead (Gileadites)	Iezer (Iezerites)	
52,700			Helek (Helekites)	<u>Mahlah</u>
			Asriel (Asrielites)	<u>Noah</u>
			Shechem(Shechemites)	<u>Hoglah</u>
				<u>Milcah</u>
			Hopher (Hopherites)	<u>Tirzah</u>
			Zelophehad	

Daughters Receive Inheritance in Name of Deceased Father

Num 27:6 Then **the LORD spoke to Moses**, saying, 27:7 "The daughters of Zelophehad are right in *their* statements. You shall surely give them a hereditary possession among their father's brothers, and you shall transfer the inheritance of their father to them.

To decipher the meaning of this statement is fairly easy now that we have determined the allotment of land given to each male with a family. An allotment of about 12 acres was to be given in Zelophehad's name to the five daughters. According to the record, Zelophehad's share was to be included as if he were alive and set aside at the same time as that of his brothers. However, according to the record, Zelophehad had no brothers. This seems like a problem, but it truly is not. In the Nation of Israel, all the closest relatives were considered brothers. Because Zelophehad was an only son, his father's share would have gone to him. His father had four brothers and their shares passed on to their heirs. In this case, the father's brothers would have been considered the brothers of Zelophehad. We would call them cousins. The five daughters would receive the land that would have passed from their grandfather to their father to their brother had they had one. Because of the requirement of the deaths of all those who rebelled 38 years earlier, these five daughters ended up without the possibility of an inheritance. They were

camping in the nation on their own. Frankly, it is amazing, considering the nature of the required deaths in the wilderness, that there were not more daughters who were in the same situation in light of the magnitude of the size of the camp as a whole. As always, Moses was looking for an answer that would handle that one problem but the LORD gave a reply that answered future problems as we see in the next passage.

Order of Inheritance

Num 27:8 "Further, you shall speak to the sons of Israel, saying, 'If a man dies and has no son, then you shall transfer his inheritance to his daughter. 27:9 'If he has no daughter, then you shall give his inheritance to his brothers. 27:10 'If he has no brothers, then you shall give his inheritance to his father's brothers. 27:11 'If his father has no brothers, then you shall give his inheritance to his nearest relative in his own family, and he shall possess it; and it shall be a statutory ordinance to the sons of Israel, just as the LORD commanded Moses.'"

Looking into the future, the LORD designed a plan that would allow the plot of land that was originally given to one specific family unit to remain in the larger family unit of the tribe in every circumstance in the future. This process is more complicated than it looks in the passage above because of one fact – daughters. Anywhere in the chain, if daughters were present without sons, the process would stop transferring from male to male and a female would control the land. For instance, in verse 8, "...a man dies and has no son..." therefore the daughter gets the land. When the daughter dies, the land will move to a male relative of the father. In the case where the father has one brother, at the death of the daughter the land goes to the father's brother. At his death, if he has no son but he has a daughter, the land will go to her and the whole process will start over. This strange order of events will occur only when sons are not alive and only daughters remain. In the perfect sense, when sons are alive, the above passage is straight forward. When sons are not alive and daughters remain, the daughters become the owners of the land until their deaths and the inheritance cycle begins again.

What is a "statutory ordinance?" *Statutory*, in the case of the Hebrew culture means a *prescribed enactment*. *Ordinance* in the same culture means *judgment*. In other words, this instruction concerning the inheritance when males are not present allows daughters to legally take possession of the land under the authority of the LORD as the statutes and ordinances given in Exodus, Leviticus and portions of Numbers.