

Pearl Seeking

TREASURING HIS WORD

Let's do a quick overview of the entire Torah portion:

Monday:	Num. 1	The census of Yisra'el
Tuesday:	Num. 2	The arranging of tribal encampments and order of their departure
Wednesday:	Num. 3:1-39	The census and duties of the Lewites
Thursday:	Num. 3:40-51	The census and redemption of the firstborn of the children of Yisra'el in place of the Lewites
Friday:	Num. 4:1-20	The census and priestly service of the sons of Qehath

In this week's Parsha Pearls lesson, we will be discussing the first 3 censuses recorded in the book of Bemidbar: a counting of the males of the tribes of Yisra'el - a separate count of every male of the tribe of Lewi as well as a count of the firstborn males of the children of Yisra'el. Now, let's read Num. 1-2 & 3:5-51.

PARSHA POINTS

- Yahweh spoke to Mosheh in the Wilderness of Sinai, in the Tent of Meeting, on the first day of the second month, in the second year after they had come out of the land of Mitsrayim, saying, "Take a census of all the congregation of the children of Yisra'el" (1:2-3):
 - by their clans
 - by their fathers' houses, according to the number of names
 - every male, head by head, from 20 (**esrim**) years old and above
 - everyone going out to the army in Yisra'el
 - number them by their divisions, you and Aharon
- As Yahweh commanded Mosheh, he registered them in the Wilderness of Sinai (1:19-43):

➤ Re'uben - 46,500

➤ Shim'on - 59,300

➤ Gad - 45,650



➤ Ephrayim (Yoseph) - 40,500

➤ Menashsheh (Yoseph) - 32,200

➤ Binyamin - 35,400



➤ Yehudah - 74,600

➤ Yissaskar - 54,400

➤ Zebulun - 57,400



➤ Dan - 62,700

➤ Asher - 41,500

➤ Naphtali - 53,400



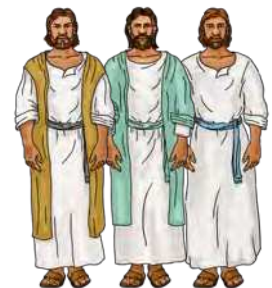
- These were those whom Mosheh and Aharon registered: a total of 603,550 men by their father's house, from 20 years old and above, everyone going out into the army - 1:44-46
- The Lewites were not registered, because Yahweh had appointed them over the Dwelling Place of the Witness - 1:49-50
- The Lewites were appointed to (1:50-51):
 - serve over all the furnishings and over all that belonged to it
 - bear the Dwelling Place and all its furnishings, and attend to it
 - take down the Dwelling Place when it was to go forward
 - set up the Dwelling Place when it was to be set up
- Any stranger (non-Lewite) who came near the Dwelling Place was to be put to death - 1:51; 3:10,38
- The children of Yisra'el were to pitch their tents, each tribe according to their camp, by their own banner, according to their divisions - 1:52
- The Lewites were to camp around the Dwelling Place, in order to guard the duty of the Dwelling Place, and so that Yahweh's anger would not be upon the children of Yisra'el - 1:53
- Yahweh gave instructions for the placement of each tribe by its own banner, around the Tent of Meeting, at a distance - 2:1-2
- This is the placement of the children of Yisra'el:
 - East side (**qedemah**) - Yehudah, Yissaskar, Zebulun - 2:3-8
 - South side (**temanah**) - Re'uben, Shim'on, Gad - 2:10-15
 - West side (**yammah**) - Ephrayim, Menashsheh, Binyamin - 2:18-23
 - North side (**tsaponah**) - Dan, Asher, Naphtali - 2:25-30
- These were the numbers of the children of Yisra'el and their order of departure with their banners:
 - Camp of Yehudah - 186,400; they depart first - 2:9
 - Camp of Re'uben - 151,450; they depart second - 2:16
 - Camp of the Lewites and the Tent of Meeting; they move out in the middle of the camps - 2:17
 - Camp of Ephrayim - 108,100; they depart third - 2:24
 - Camp of Dan - 157,600; they depart last - 2:31
- These were the registered ones of the children of Yisra'el, by their fathers' houses - a total of 603,550 men - 2:32
- As Yahweh had commanded Mosheh, the Lewites were not registered - 2:33
- The children of Yisra'el did according to all that Yahweh had commanded Mosheh. They camped by their banners and departed each by their clan, according to their fathers' houses - 2:34
- Yahweh told Mosheh to bring the tribe of Lewi before Aharon the priest to serve Him - 3:5-6



- Yahweh specified the Lewites' duties to guard (3:7-8):
 - Aharon's duty and the duty of all the congregation
 - the duty of the children of Yisra'el before the Tent of Meeting
 - the service of the Dwelling Place
 - all the furnishings of the Tent of Meeting
- Yahweh told Mosheh that the Lewites were to be given to Aharon and his sons from among the children of Yisra'el - 3:9
- Yahweh specified that Aharon and his sons shall guard their priesthood - 3:10
- Yahweh told Mosheh that the Lewites were His, instead of the firstborn among the children of Yisra'el - 3:11-12
- Yahweh set apart to Himself all the firstborn on the day that He struck the firstborn in the land of Mitsrayim, for He is Yahweh - 3:13
- Yahweh then spoke to Mosheh in the Wilderness of Sinai, instructing him to register the children of Lewi (3:14-15):
 - by their father's houses
 - by their clans
 - every male from a month old (a new moon old) and above



- As Yahweh commanded Mosheh, he registered them in the Wilderness of Sinai - 3:16
- These were the sons of Lewi: Gershon, Qehath, and Merari - 3:17
 - This was the placement of the sons of Lewi and their numbers:
 - The 7,500 Gershonites were to camp on the west side, behind the Dwelling Place - 3:22-23
 - The 8,600 Qehathites were to camp on the south side of the Dwelling Place - 3:28-29
 - The 6,200 Merarites were to camp on the north side of the Dwelling Place - 3:33-35
- Mosheh, Aharon, and his sons were to camp on the east side before the Dwelling Place, before the Tent of Meeting - 3:38
- These were the duties of the sons of Lewi:

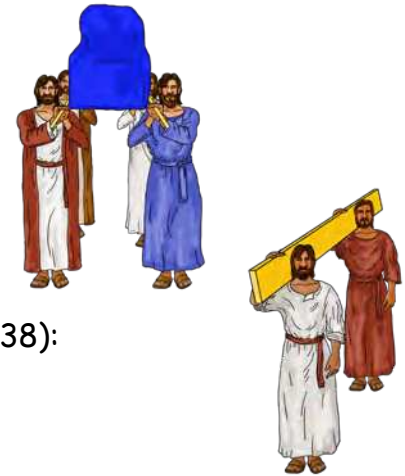


- The Gershonites' duty in the Tent of Meeting was the (3:25-26):
 - Dwelling Place
 - tent with its covering
 - covering of the door of the Tent of Meeting
 - screens of the courtyard
 - covering of the door of the courtyard which is around the Dwelling Place and the altar, and their cords



➤ The Qehathites' duty for the Set-apart Place was the (3:28,31-32):

- ark
- table
- lampstand
- altars
- utensils of the Set-apart Place used in the service
- covering, and all its service



➤ The Merarites' duty for the Dwelling Place was the (3:36-38):

- boards, bars, columns, sockets, and utensils
- columns, sockets, pegs, and cords of the courtyard



- Mosheh, Aharon, and his sons were responsible for guarding the duty of the (3:38):

➤ Set-apart Place
➤ children of Yisra'el



- These were the registered ones of the Lewites, whom Mosheh and Aharon registered at the command of Yahweh, by their clans, all the males from a month old (a new moon) and above - 22,000 - 3:39
- Yahweh also instructed Mosheh to register all the firstborn males of the children of Yisra'el from a month old (a new moon) and above - 3:40
- Yahweh instructed Mosheh to take the Lewites and their livestock for Himself instead of all the firstborn of Yisra'el and their firstborn livestock, for He is Yahweh - 3:41,45
- Mosheh registered all the firstborn among the children of Yisra'el, as Yahweh had commanded him (3:42-43):
 - all the firstborn males
 - by the number of names
 - from 1 (**achat**) month (a new moon) old and above



- Those registered of the children of Yisra'el who were a month old (a new moon) and above totaled 22,273 - 3:43
- For the ransom of the 273 of the firstborn of the children of Yisra'el that were more than the total of the Lewites, 5 shegels of silver for each firstborn was given to Aharon and his sons - 3:45-48
- Mosheh took the shegels - 1,365 pieces and gave their ransom silver to Aharon and to his sons, according to the word of Yahweh, as Yahweh had commanded him to do - 3:49-51



DIGGING DEEPER

Parents/Teachers may choose to use these prompts for further discussion of the Torah portion.

- Research the number of times that Yisra'elite males were counted. Why do you think Yahweh wanted that? Why do you think that the women and children were not counted? Do you believe they were less important to Yahweh or did He have another purpose? Do you think it had to do with the men serving in the army?
- Discuss the significance of the placement of the 12 tribes around the Dwelling Place. Why do you think Yahweh wanted the clans of Lewi closest to the Dwelling Place? Who had the most prestigious position around the camp? (Lev. 1:50-53; Ch.2)
- Go back to the story of the golden calf incident (Exodus 32) and find out why the children of Lewi were chosen by Yahweh to replace the firstborn of the other tribes to be set-apart for the Dwelling Place duties.
- Why do you think Yahweh mentioned that any stranger (non-Lewite) who came near the Dwelling Place was to be put to death? Do you think some of the firstborn might have tried to insert themselves into the positions they were originally to bear?
- Discuss the actions of Qayin, Esaw and Re'uben (all firstborn) and the consequences of their actions. Can we learn a valuable lesson through reading these stories?
- Discuss the importance and privileges of being the firstborn back in Bible times. Since Yahweh chose the Lewites to replace the firstborn in the duties of the Dwelling Place, do you think that the firstborn saw this as a demotion in their status or a relief?
- Research places in the Scriptures where Yahweh has called someone His firstborn and the significance of that.
- What is the difference in the duty of a son of Aharon (priest) and a Lewite (non-priest: Gershon, Qehath, Merari)? Do you think there might have been some jealousy over their positions? Would it be similar to white collar and blue collar work?

