

BeMidbar Numbers - BeMidbar (1-4.2)

It was in the second year of the Exodus, in the second month, when God spoke to Moses from within the Tent of Testimony. God said, "Take a census of the entire Israelite community by family based on the twelve children of Jacob. Have the head of each tribe assist you and Aaron. Attach a name for males who are 20 years old or more." So Moses and Aaron counted the Israelites according to their family: the sons of Reuben, 46,500. Sons of Shimeon, 59,300. Sons of Gad, 45,650. Sons of Yehuda, 74,600. Sons of Yissakhar, 54,400. Sons of Zebulun, 57,400. Sons of Ephraim, 40,500. Sons of Menashe, 32,200. Sons of Benjamin 35,400. Sons of Dan, 62,700. Sons of Asher, 41,500. Sons of Naphtali, 53,400. A total of 603,550 were counted.

God said to Moses, "Do not include the Levite family when you count the Israelites. The Levites will be in charge of everything having to do with the Tabernacle Tent of Meeting, including all the furnishings and utensils. You and Aaron and his priestly Levite sons will set your tents and camp immediately around the Tabernacle and safeguard the trust of God's Testimony. Then, place at a distance, a second layer of tribes with their camps around the Tabernacle, so the Tabernacle shall be protected in all directions. Each tribe shall have their own symbol which they are to sew on a banner. This banner shall be the flag you wave on journeys and when at camp.

God said to Moses, "You will bring forth the tribe of Levi and present them to Aaron the High Priest so they shall serve to safeguard My Trust and the trust of the entire community with everything regarding the Tabernacle. I consider the Levites firstborn to Me. On the day I struck down all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, I made the firstborn, from man to beast, holy. Each firstborn is Mine." Thereafter, the sons of Levi, one month old and up, are then counted to a total 22,000. The firstborn Levites are also counted. For each firstborn, five shekels must be given to Aaron and his sons.

"Among the Levites," God commanded Moses and the Kohen High Priest Aaron, "the Kohens are to perform special duties in the Tent of Appointed Meeting. That means that when it is time for the Hebrews to journey, the Kohen priests shall take down the screen curtain and cover all the sacred objects and the Ark of the Pact. Only the Kohens shall come and lift these covers. Each Kohen will have a specific duty so they will not die when they approach the holy of holies. Aaron's son, Eleazar, who shall be the leader of the Kohens when this is done.

Questions: 1. What symbol would you choose for yourself or family to put on a banner? 2) What is trust? 2) How do you safeguard a trust? **Illustration Ideas:** The Hebrews being counted....The Levites camping around the Dwelling Place for The Ten Commandments...the Kohens moving sacred objects....you or your family's banner