

The Book of Numbers

The Numbering and Ordering of Israel

Text: Numbers 1 – 2

I. A Note on Chronology

- A. 2nd year, 1st month, 1st day – Tabernacle set up (Exo. 40:1)
- B. 2nd year, 1st month, 1st – 8th days – Priests consecrated (Lev. 8 – 9)
- C. 2nd year, 1st month, 12th day – Offerings brought to Tabernacle (Num. 7)
- D. 2nd year, 1st month, 14th – 21st day – Passover and Feast of Unleavened Bread (Num. 9:3)
- E. 2nd year, 2nd month, 1st day – God commanded the numbering of Israel (Num. 1:1)
- F. 2nd year, 2nd month, 14th day – “Make-up” Passover observed (Num. 9:6-11)

II. The Numbering of Israel (Numbers 1)

- A. This census was ordered by God.
- B. In this numbering, only the males who were 20 years old or older were counted – not including those who had passed fighting age.
 - 1. Women, children, old men, and the disabled were not counted.
 - 2. Thus, when a total is reached, it does not represent the number of the entire nation.
- C. Moses and Aaron were to make this numbering, with the help of one man from each tribe (vs. 5-16).
- D. The count was as follows:

Tribe of Reuben – 46,500	Tribe of Ephraim – 40,500
Tribe of Simeon – 59,300	Tribe of Manasseh – 32,200
Tribe of Gad – 45,650	Tribe of Benjamin – 35,400
Tribe of Judah – 74,600	Tribe of Dan – 62,700
Tribe of Issachar – 54,400	Tribe of Asher – 41,500
Tribe of Zebulun – 57,400	Tribe of Naphtali – 53,400
- E. The total number of soldiers was 603,550.
- F. The Levites were not numbered with the nation, but were numbered themselves later.
- G. *The 2010 population of Marion County, AL was 30,776. Estimate for 2016 was 29,998.*

III. The Ordering of Israel (Numbers 2)

- A. God instructed each tribe where to camp and when to move in relation to the Tabernacle.
- B. The Levites were responsible for setting up, taking down, transporting, and maintaining the Tabernacle.
- C. When it was set up, they were to encamp around it – Moses, Aaron, and his sons to the East, the families of Gershon to the West, the families of Kohath to the South, and the families of Merari to the North (Num. 3:23-38).
- D. Outside the Levites, the 12 tribes were to encamp:
 - 1. To the East, the camp of Judah – Judah, Issachar, Zebulun (186,400 soldiers)
 - 2. To the South, the camp of Reuben – Reuben, Simeon, Gad (151,450 soldiers)
 - 3. To the West, the camp of Ephraim – Ephraim, Manasseh, Benjamin (108,100)
 - 4. To the North, the camp of Dan – Dan, Asher, Naphtali (157,600 soldiers)
- E. It is estimated that Israel’s camp would have covered seven square miles!
- F. Note that the Tabernacle was the center of Israel’s existence – literally and figuratively.

