

# The Census

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**Purpose:** to show that in order to have victory over our enemies and success in life, we must follow God's instructions and obey His orders.

Do you want to overcome the enemies that you are facing? Do you want to have success wherever you go? What is the secret to true success? This secret is found in the wilderness!

Where are we?

In Exodus, the children of Israel are in bondage in Egypt:

- They are delivered by Moses and led to Mt. Sinai in the wilderness
- There they are given specific instructions:
  - The Law (10 Commandments)
  - The Judgments
  - The Tabernacle (with all its utensils and furniture)
  - The Priesthood (including the responsibilities of the Priest and Levites as well as the making of their garments and the way they are to approach God)

In Leviticus they are given further instructions:

- How to bring sacrifices
- How to consecrate the priest
- What is holy and unholy
- Laws of purification

All of these are specific instructions to do with the way to approach God and how to be holy

Now, as we move to the book of Numbers there are several lessons to learn before the final push toward the land that God promised the children of Israel. The first lesson to learn is from: The Census

**Num 1:2** - "Take a census of all the congregation of the children of Israel, by their families, by their fathers' houses, according to the number of names, every male individually,

**Num 1:3** - from twenty years old and above—all who *are able to go to war* in Israel. You and Aaron shall number them by their armies.

Their numbers:

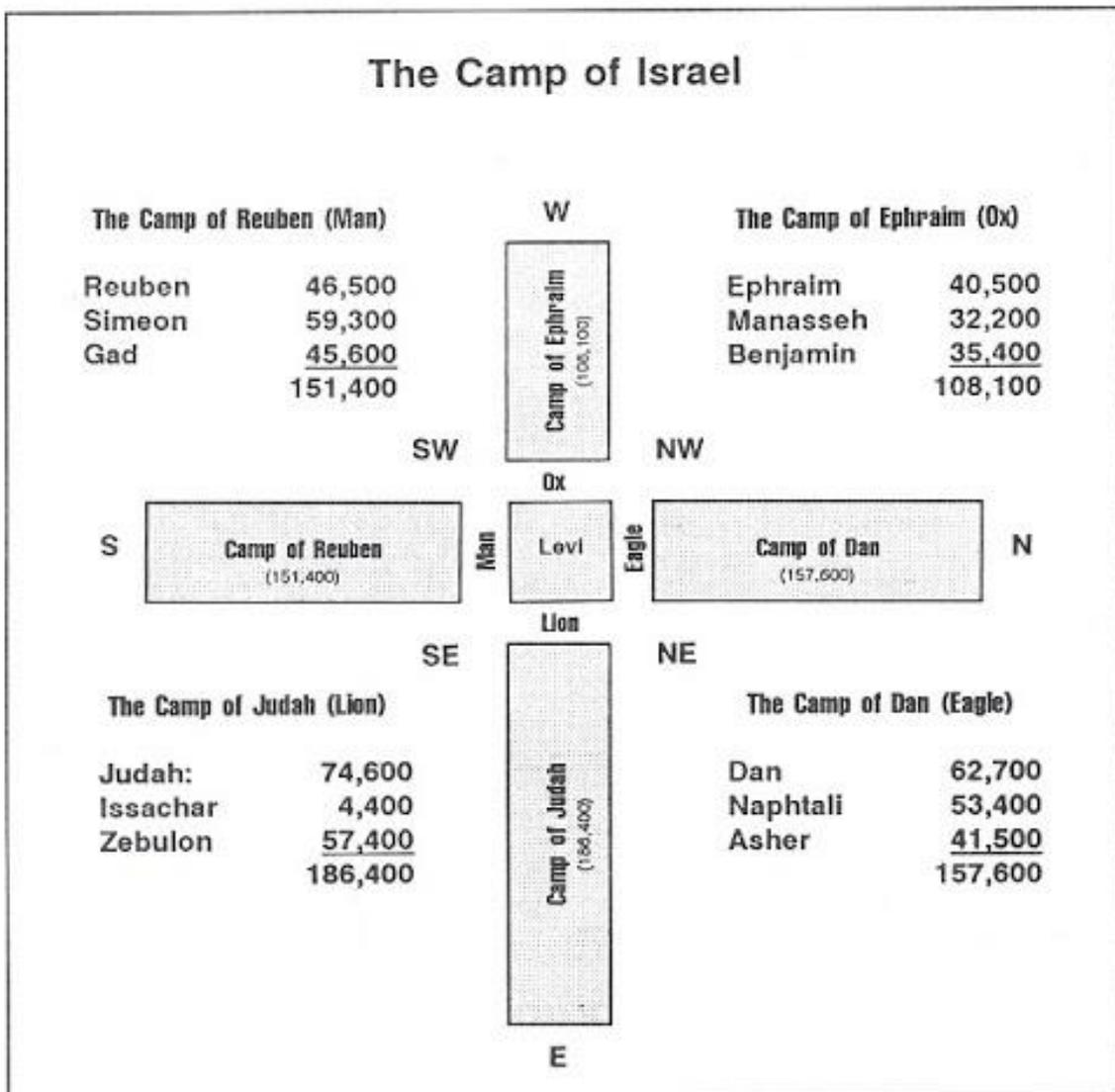
- Reuben – 46,500
- Simeon – 59,300
- Gad – 46,650
- Judah – 74,600
- Issachar – 54,400
- Zebulun – 57,400
- Ephraim – 40,500
- Manasseh – 32,200

- Benjamin – 35,400
- Dan – 62,700
- Asher – 41,500
- Naphtali – 53,400
- Total – 603,330

These numbers remind us that these were real people, not just fiction, fable or allegory. They did not number the women and children. Why? Because they were numbering the men for battle

They did not number the Levities in the same way. Why? Because they were responsible for the tabernacle and all its furnishings.

How was the camp arranged?



East: Judah, Issachar and Zebulun – 186,400 (they would break camp first whenever they travelled). Their standard (insignia) was a Lion

South: Reuben, Simeon and Gad – 151,450 (second to break camp). Their standard was a Man.

Middle: Tabernacle with the Levites - (they were always in the middle) - priest who dealt with the tabernacle (30 - 50 years old) of the sons of Levi:

- Kohath (2,750)
- Gershon (2,630)
- Merari (3,200)
- Total: 8,580

West: Ephraim, Manasseh and Benjamin – 108,100 (third to break camp). Their standard was an Ox.

North: Dan, Asher and Naphtali -157,600 (last to break camp). Their standard was an Eagle.

Why did God command this to take place?

1. To show God's faithfulness in multiplying the seed of Abraham – God keeps His promises
2. To set them in order for their journeys and encampment – God is a God of order
3. To prepare them for war –
  - a. We are definitely in a war, and the stakes are the souls of men; their salvation, development and quality of life
  - b. If we want victory, we must follow His instructions

God is faithful – every promise that He makes, He keeps.

God is a God of order. He gives specific directions as to how we should go. We must learn to follow His directions and do exactly what He tells us, the way He tells us. He will not change the rules just because you are a nice person.

God will put us where He wants us as a general, in preparation to fight against the enemy. The first secret to victory over our enemies is to follow His instructions!

We have already seen His instructions concerning His word (the Law) and worship (the Tabernacle). Now we are receiving instructions as to how to organise and prepare for battle. If you want victory over every enemy and success in whatever way we go, we must follow His instructions.