

NUMBERS 1:20-54 (MEN OF WAR; OFFENSE AND DEFENSE)

Our sermon verses display to us a rather vast army. To think of over six hundred thousand men rising up and engaging an enemy is almost hard to imagine. That is actually about half the size of the active US military today. In the Bible, there are engagements which record both larger and smaller armies. And not every soldier went out to every battle in Israel, and so we can just think of this giant number as a single force to be reckoned with at all times.

The number simply records those who are of proper age, and who are considered as capable of being a part of any engagement. However, with such a large number, one would think that the bravery-factor would be hugely increased for the individual. It is such an attitude though that will assuredly lead to trouble because with a trust in numbers, there will inevitably be a diminishing of a trust in the Lord. The men of Israel could have deduced this simply by thinking through what the Lord has done by leaving Levi out of the census as we just read.

If a portion of the men who are able-bodied are taken out of the total who are selected for war, and then that portion is told that they were to defend their charge even against their own people, it should tell them that their relationship with the Lord was still based on how they interacted with Him. If they could not approach the Lord under the pain of death, it obviously meant that they could not expect Him to be with them in battle if they had an attitude towards Him which was not appropriate, even if the entire army went out against a foe. It would also mean that a small number of those who did trust the Lord would have Him on their side. The rest of the Bible will bear this out. For Israel, great numbers will be defeated by small numbers, and at times small numbers will defeat vast armies. The measure of the army is based on the arm of the Lord. That is it.

Text Verse: “No king *is* saved by the multitude of an army;
A mighty man is not delivered by great strength.

¹⁷ A horse *is* a vain hope for safety;
Neither shall it deliver *any* by its great strength.” Psalm 33:16, 17

The key to understanding everything that is being told to us now comes down to understanding what God has done in the person and work of Jesus Christ. This won't be fully evident today. Numbers has a logical progression of thought which will lead to great discoveries for us. What seems slow, maybe a bit tedious, and definitely hard to follow, is given to reveal great things.

If you ask, “Why do I need to know all these numbers of men, and how big each tribe is, and how they are laid out around the tabernacle?” My answer to you would be, “How willing are you to be patient and fit it all together?” Just like elsewhere, the Lord takes a lot of little information, and He ties it all together into a bigger picture. Today's long list will find its perfect spot in your minds in the days ahead. For now, just enjoy the detail without getting bogged down in it. That was my job. You can just listen and process. How's that? The detail is leading to a better understanding of Christ and His work. It's all to be found in His superior word. And so let's turn to that precious word once again and... May God speak to us through His word today and may His glorious name ever be praised.

I. Men of War (verses 20-46)

²⁰ **Now the children of Reuben,**

We now come to the actual record of counting those of each tribe, head by head. The formula will be rather consistent for most of the tribes, but there will be a few variations in the wording at times. This counting was mandated by the Lord, it was to be through Moses and Aaron, and it was to be coordinated and led in each tribe by those mentioned in verses 5-16. As it said in verse 4, “And with you there shall be a man from every tribe, each one the head of his father's house.” After that, verses 17 & 18 indicated that

“Moses and Aaron took these men who had been mentioned by name and they assembled all the congregation together...and they recited their ancestry by families, by fathers’ houses, according to the number of names.” This record was only for those twenty and above. That census was conducted, and Reuben is the first tribe to be detailed as to the totals which were so recorded. He was...

20 (con’t) Israel’s oldest son,

Despite his low standing among the tribes, Reuben was the firstborn, and so he is reckoned first for the census. The reason for his diminished recognition was because of what he did in sleeping with his father’s concubine. In having done that, he brought a permanent stain on the tribe. That is recorded in Israel’s final words to this son in Genesis 49 –

“Reuben, you are my firstborn,
My might and the beginning of my strength,
The excellency of dignity and the excellency of power.
⁴ Unstable as water, you shall not excel,
Because you went up to your father’s bed;
Then you defiled *it*—
He went up to my couch.” Genesis 49:3, 4

20 (con’t) their genealogies

The word is *toledoth*. It signifies generations, coming from the word *yalad*, a verb meaning “to bear,” “bring forth,” or “beget.” In Numbers, the word will be used twelve times in this chapter, and then once in verse 3:1 concerning the generations of Aaron and Moses, meaning the counting of the Levites in a different census. These recordings are done separately, and yet they will combine to give a full record of those who are considered the hosts of Israel. Together, they will form a surprising and beautiful pattern.

²⁰ (con't) **by their families, by their fathers' house,**

As noted in the last sermon, two distinctions are made here. First “by their families,” and then “by their father’s households. The terms are somewhat changeable, but in general, it would be by clans and then by closer relationships.

²⁰ (con't) **according to the number of names,**

The names from the individual clans and houses were taken and recorded for this counting. It included...

²⁰ (con't) **every male individually,**

Literally, skull by skull, or head by head. No individual was neglected from the counting of those...

²⁰ (con't) **from twenty years old and above,**

This is the age selected by the Lord as appropriate for...

²⁰ (con't) **all who *were able to go to war*:**

These words, repeated from verse 3, explain the reason for the census. It is one of readiness for service in the Lord’s army. Israel had encountered enemies already in the war with Amalek in Exodus 17. They were to march towards the Land of Promise and enter via routes which took them along the borders of other countries who may be hostile. They were to face enemies in Canaan who were to be destroyed. And, they were to be a

united people, prepared to defend the land granted to them. Thus, a counting of the men of war was made to have them ready for any of these events as they came about.

²¹ those who were numbered of the tribe of Reuben were forty-six thousand five hundred.

Reuben's numbers are given, rounded to the nearest hundred. He is the seventh largest tribe by number.

²² From the children of Simeon, their genealogies by their families, by their fathers' house, of those who were numbered, according to the number of names, every male individually, from twenty years old and above, all who were able to go to war:

The words here are identical to that of Reuben, except with the addition of a single word, *paqad*, translated as "of those who were numbered."

²³ those who were numbered of the tribe of Simeon were fifty-nine thousand three hundred.

Simeon grew more than his older brother Reuben. He is the third largest tribe by number.

²⁴ From the children of Gad, their genealogies by their families, by their fathers' house, according to the number of names, from twenty years old and above, all who were able to go to war:

What? Gad? Why is Gad listed here in third position when he was eleventh earlier in verse 14? The reason is because of the arrangement of the tribes

around the sanctuary which will be detailed in Chapter 2. Reuben will be the lead tribe of those to the south. With him will be Simeon and Gad. The arrangement is not faulty, but beautifully organized. The words of this verse drop out the word *paqad* from the previous verse, and they also now drop out the words, every male individually. The pattern of counting skull by skull has been set, and so it will no longer be repeated.

²⁵ those who were numbered of the tribe of Gad were forty-five thousand six hundred and fifty.

Gad is the only tribe that divides to a tenth rather than a hundred. An interesting parallel is that in the second census of Numbers 26, the tribe of Reuben will be the only tribe to do this. Both Reuben and Gad will be placed together on the south side of the tabernacle. Likewise, Reuben and Gad are the two tribes whose total land inheritance remained solely on the east side of the Jordan. Gad is the eighth largest tribe by number.

²⁶ From the children of Judah, their genealogies by their families, by their fathers' house, according to the number of names, from twenty years old and above, all who were able to go to war:

Other than the name, the verse is stated exactly as verse 24.

²⁷ those who were numbered of the tribe of Judah were seventy-four thousand six hundred.

Judah is the largest tribe, and it will be the head tribe of those placed east of the tabernacle, along with the next two tribes, Issachar and Zebulun. The large size of Judah is in accord with the blessing assigned by Jacob in Genesis 49, granting him the preeminence. The growth of Judah is in accord with that blessing.

²⁸ From the children of Issachar, their genealogies by their families, by their fathers' house, according to the number of names, from twenty years old and above, all who *were able to go to war*:

Again, the wording is identical to verse 24.

²⁹ those who were numbered of the tribe of Issachar *were* fifty-four thousand four hundred.

Issachar is the fifth largest among the tribes.

³⁰ From the children of Zebulun, their genealogies by their families, by their fathers' house, according to the number of names, from twenty years old and above, all who *were able to go to war*:

And again, the wording is identical to verse 24.

³¹ those who were numbered of the tribe of Zebulun *were* fifty-seven thousand four hundred.

Zebulun is the fourth largest among the tribes.

³² From the sons of Joseph, the children of Ephraim, their genealogies by their families, by their fathers' house, according to the number of names, from twenty years old and above, all who *were able to go to war*:

Now a change in wording takes place as the tribe of Joseph is divided among his two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh. Other than that, the words are identical to verse 24. The younger, Ephraim is mentioned first, having

received the greater blessing from Jacob. Ephraim will be the lead tribe on the west side of the tabernacle. He will be joined with Manasseh and Benjamin. All are descendants of Rachel, Jacob's beloved wife.

³³ those who were numbered of the tribe of Ephraim were forty thousand five hundred.

And indeed, his numbers are greater than those of his brother Manasseh. Ephraim is tenth in size among the tribes of Israel.

³⁴ From the children of Manasseh, their genealogies by their families, by their fathers' house, according to the number of names, from twenty years old and above, all who were able to go to war:

The wording is identical to verse 24 once again.

³⁵ those who were numbered of the tribe of Manasseh were thirty-two thousand two hundred.

Manasseh is the smallest of the twelve tribes.

³⁶ From the children of Benjamin, their genealogies by their families, by their fathers' house, according to the number of names, from twenty years old and above, all who were able to go to war:

The pattern of verse 24 continues, word for word, here.

³⁷ those who were numbered of the tribe of Benjamin were thirty-five thousand four hundred.

Benjamin is the eleventh in size among the tribes. Thus, the three smallest tribes, Ephraim, Manasseh, and Benjamin are all located together on the west side of the tabernacle. Why would this be?

³⁸ From the children of Dan, their genealogies by their families, by their fathers' house, according to the number of names, from twenty years old and above, all who *were able to go to war*:

Again, the words are identical to verse 24. Dan will be the lead tribe on the north side of the tabernacle. He will be joined with Asher and Naphtali.

³⁹ those who were numbered of the tribe of Dan *were sixty-two thousand seven hundred*.

Dan is the second largest of the tribes. As a curious side note between Benjamin and Dan. Benjamin had more natural sons than any other son of Israel, ten. And yet he is here listed as the second smallest tribe. Dan had the smallest number of natural sons, one. And yet he is listed here as the second largest tribe.

⁴⁰ From the children of Asher, their genealogies by their families, by their fathers' house, according to the number of names, from twenty years old and above, all who *were able to go to war*:

And again, the pattern of words from verse 24 is maintained.

⁴¹ those who were numbered of the tribe of Asher *were forty-one thousand five hundred*.

Asher ranks number nine in size among the listed tribes.

⁴² From the children of Naphtali, their genealogies by their families, by their fathers' house, according to the number of names, from twenty years old and above, all who *were able to go to war*:

This is the last record, and it continues the words of verse 24.

⁴³ those who were numbered of the tribe of Naphtali *were fifty-three thousand four hundred.*

This last named tribe of Naphtali is sixth in size among the tribes.

⁴⁴ These are the ones who were numbered, whom Moses and Aaron numbered, with the leaders of Israel, twelve men, each one representing his father's house.

This verse, though seemingly unnecessary, is similar to what is recorded after the building of the tabernacle. Detailed instructions were first given for its construction. Next came lengthy details of its construction, showing exacting adherence to the instructions given. This showed that what was instructed was then accurately followed through with. After that, a statement acknowledging the accomplished act was given. The same is true here. Thus, we could term this "an obedience verse." In order to see this, we can put the command given in verses 3 & 4, and then the follow-through given in this verse, side by side –

"You and Aaron shall number them by their armies. ⁴ And with you there shall be a man from every tribe, each one the head of his father's house."

"These are the ones who were numbered, whom Moses and Aaron numbered, with the leaders of Israel, twelve men, each one representing his father's house."

Everything associated with the tabernacle is given minute instruction. It is then followed up with an account of the work done. It is then finished up with a statement showing exact obedience to the original command.

⁴⁵ So all who were numbered of the children of Israel, by their fathers' houses, from twenty years old and above, all who *were able to go to war* in Israel—

The thought here is that a totaling of the numbers acquired by each of the leaders was then presented to Moses and Aaron who took those numbers and added them up. In this...

⁴⁶ all who were numbered were six hundred and three thousand five hundred and fifty.

The number is exactly the same as the number which was given in Exodus 38:26, when a half shekel tax was imposed on each man who was twenty and above. This silver was used for the sockets of the sanctuary, the bases of the veil, the hooks for the pillars, the overlay of the capitals, and the bands for them. What seems obvious, is that the numbers were rounded up or down to the nearest hundred, except for Gad who rounded to the nearest ten. Likewise, in both Exodus 12 and Numbers 11, the total number of men is simply rounded to 600,000. The rounding to tens is something noted in Exodus 18:21.

A great and vast array is set for war

The armies are arranged for when the time comes

But even with a handful, we could defeat countless more

Our Defender is with us at the sound of battle drums

*We are the Lord's army; we are battle-ready
If we all go as one, or if only a portion engages the foe
We shall prevail; our ranks are sound and steady
The Lord is with us, whenever to battle we go*

*He is our Leader, we shall never quake in fear
No army can defeat us when we trust the Lord
His name is great; famous both far and near
We stand at the ready, as He draws forth His sword*

II. Charge of the Tabernacle of the Testimony (verses 47-54)

⁴⁷ But the Levites were not numbered among them by their fathers' tribe;

What appears to be the case from these words, is that the counting which was noted in Exodus 38 is the same census that is being referred to here. This would seem likely from the previous verse because both recorded the same number, but this verse adds more weight to that. The Levites are not counted in this census. If all men were counted in the previous census, but now no Levites were counted, there would be a great disparity between the two numbers. This is because the first census said nothing about not counting the Levites. What this means, is that the silver collected in the census is applied retroactively to the construction of the implements used in the tabernacle. Though those things were already made, and the tabernacle was already standing, the silver for them is reckoned based on the census which has now come sometime later.

⁴⁸ for the Lord had spoken to Moses, saying:

With very few exceptions, translations read this in the past tense. And yet it is the exact same words, *v'dabber Yehovah el Moshe lemor*, that are elsewhere always translated as, "And the Lord spoke to Moses saying." Putting this in the past tense is simply wrong. Nothing has yet been said in the Bible about what will next be said. If yours has it in the past tense, make a note that it is likely present tense. The formal appointment of the Levites for their special service is now to be made. The Lord first directed the counting of the twelve tribes, as noted by name. He now will show why He did not name anyone from Levi. That begins with...

⁴⁹ "Only the tribe of Levi you shall not number, nor take a census of them among the children of Israel;

The Lord specifically commanded, by name, the leaders of the other tribes, and the census which was required. Now he specifically commands that Levi is not to be numbered. The census was one for war-capability. Levi is to be exempt from this requirement. They will be employed in another type of war and they, as a tribe, will serve an entirely different purpose...

⁵⁰ but you shall appoint the Levites over the tabernacle of the Testimony,

The Levites' job was not to go out to war, but to care for the tabernacle of the Testimony. This would include its defense. Thus they are the last defense in a war, but they were also the permanent protectors of it even when there was no war. Here the edifice is called *miskan ha'edut*, or the "tabernacle of the Testimony" for only the second time in Scripture. It signifies the dwelling place of the Testimony, meaning the two tablets contained within the ark. Levi means "attached." They are now *attached* to the sanctuary in a unique and particular way. Their care of it will extend...

50 (con't) over all its furnishings, and over all things that belong to it;

Everything associated with the sanctuary, from tent peg to the ark itself, was to be cared for by the tribe of Levi. This would include being responsible for it as it was taken down, moved, and set up...

50 (con't) they shall carry the tabernacle and all its furnishings;

Some things could be carried on wagons, some things were so holy that they had to be carried by men with the use of poles on their shoulders. But all items of the tabernacle had to be carried solely by the Levites. When it was not being transported...

50 (con't) they shall attend to it and camp around the tabernacle.

The Levites were to be an honor guard around the tabernacle, and they were to ensure that it was always in perfect condition. Anything that needed care or repair was to be tended to. Anything which required regular service was their responsibility alone.

51 And when the tabernacle is to go forward, the Levites shall take it down; and when the tabernacle is to be set up, the Levites shall set it up.

The taking down and setting up of the tabernacle would be a large task. The materials were exceedingly heavy, they were specially designed to fit together in a particular order, and they were not to be carelessly rolled up and then unrolled and slapped together. They were to be handled with the greatest care. If one has ever watched the work of putting together a circus tent, you know the labor is intense, laborious, and precise. In the case of the tabernacle, it is the same, but a special dignity was to be given to the process. This special job now belonged to Levi and only Levi...

51 (con't) **The outsider who comes near shall be put to death.**

The *zur*, or outsider, signifies “another.” Thus, this is referring to anyone other than Levi. Those of other tribes could only approach in accord with the regulations already provided. Any infraction outside of what is granted for the conduct of the sacrificial system was to be handled via execution. Levi had already proven himself faithful to handle a sword. He and his brother Simeon used the sword to kill an entire town of men who had defiled their sister. And then, in Exodus 32 the Levites strapped swords to their sides and went throughout the camp of Israel, slaying each his brother, his companion, and his neighbor during the offense of the golden calf. They would now be expected to demonstrate that same loyalty at all times henceforth. To fail in this calling would be worse than the failure of the armies of Israel in battle because it would show contempt for the very sanctuary of the Lord.

52 The children of Israel shall pitch their tents, everyone by his own camp, everyone by his own standard, according to their armies;

From this, it is obvious that there was to be a specific arrangement of the tribes, not just a haphazard encampment, but a purposeful layout. There would be tents formed into camps. These would be according to a standard which was to be on display, and these would then signify their armies as already defined by the census.

In this is a new word, *degel*, or “standard.” It will be seen 13 times in Numbers and once in the Song of Solomon, in a particularly beautiful verse. It comes from the verb *dagal* which signifies raising a flag, and thus to be conspicuous. Chapter 2 will leave us with the impression that there are but four main standards, one for each of the four main tribes, Judah, Reuben, Ephraim, and Dan. Nothing explicit is given to describe these flags, but logical conclusions about what each division signified can be made from Scripture. That will be presented for your itchy ears eventually.

⁵³ but the Levites shall camp around the tabernacle of the Testimony,

The Levites' encampment is now explicitly stated. They are to encamp immediately around the tabernacle of the Testimony. It is not yet stated how they will be laid out, just that they are to be the inner protection of the entire encampment and for the tabernacle. Again, as was done in verse 50, the stress is on the Testimony, the tablets of the law. And there is a reason for this...

^{53 (con't)} that there may be no wrath on the congregation of the children of Israel;

A new noun, *qetseph*, signifying the state of indignation or wrath, is introduced. The Levites were to guard the tabernacle for a specific reason. If there was a breakthrough, wrath would come upon the congregation. The word *negeph*, or plague, is used in Numbers 8:19 in the same manner as *qetseph* is used here. Understanding this, we will now look at a rather complicated matter which takes us back to the ransom money mentioned in Exodus 13:12, and how we can know that the census mentioned there is the same census mentioned here –

“When you take the census of the children of Israel for their number, then every man shall give a ransom for himself to the Lord, when you number them, that there may be no plague among them when *you* number them.”

The plague, which is a result of the wrath, was to be stayed by the payment of a ransom. In the taking of this census, each man counted was to give a ransom for himself. This seems odd because the people had already been redeemed by the Lord –

“You in Your mercy have led forth
The people whom You have redeemed;
You have guided *them* in Your strength
To Your holy habitation.” Exodus 15:13

The noun *kopher*, or ransom, comes from the verb *kaphar* which means “to appease.” It is then “a covering,” and thus figuratively, “a redemption price.” The required ransom payment is tied in with the numbering of the people. Its intent was to impress upon the minds of the people that they were actually unworthy to be a part of the holy congregation. Because of this, they would need to pay a covering for that unworthiness. The Lord had redeemed them in a state of unworthiness and now, before they set out, they were to pay a ransom as a personal acknowledgment of that redemption.

When the ransom is paid, in the eyes of the Lord it would be as if their unworthiness no longer existed and thus they would be kept safe from the justly deserved punishment of the righteous Judge of mankind. With this covering, they could then come serve the Lord without any fear of danger. But this service did not include that which was reserved for the Levites. How the Levites will be set apart for their duties is yet ahead in Numbers. But that they will be is alluded to now. They alone had the charge of the tabernacle. For those in the census though, the paying of the ransom is directly tied into the idea of being saved from a plague. The word *negeph*, or “plague,” which can be expected for disobedience was first seen in Exodus 12 –

“For I will pass through the land of Egypt on that night, and will strike all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment: I *am* the LORD. ¹³ Now the blood shall be a sign for you on the houses where you *are*. And when I see the blood, I will pass over you; and the **plague** shall not be on you to destroy *you* when I strike the land of Egypt.”

There is a direct connection between the shedding of the blood of the lamb and the ransom payment of silver for the men in the census. One logically follows along with the other, redemption and ransom. The terms, though similar in meaning, do differ. Redemption is wider in its application than ransom. This noun, *negeph*, or plague, is used seven times in the Bible and all are in relation to the people of Israel. The final time is in Isaiah 8 where it is ascribed directly to the Lord in relation to them –

“He will be as a sanctuary,
But a stone of **stumbling** and a rock of offense
To both the houses of Israel,
As a trap and a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem.” Isaiah 8:14

This verse from Isaiah is then used by Paul when speaking of Christ in Romans 9, and by Peter – also speaking of Christ, in 1 Peter 2. In essence, Christ *became* the very plague upon Israel that the blood of the lamb and the ransom money was to protect them from. In their rejection of Him, they rejected what these types and shadows only pictured. The wrath and the plague are united together in one account concerning rebellion in Numbers 16. Coming soon to a sermon near you.

^{53 (con't)} **and the Levites shall keep charge of the tabernacle of the Testimony.”**

The word *mishmereth*, or charge, was also used in Leviticus 8:35 during the ordination of Aaron and his sons. It indicates to keep watch, or to guard. Thus, it is the watch of the Lord. If they failed to keep the watch of the Lord during their ordination, they would have died. The Levites are to be given the watch of the Lord, which if violated, would also result in death. There is the sense of holiness which is not to be violated. It is a somber warning which will require proof of the Lord’s word when a challenge is made. The outcome is obvious; bad news for the offenders.

***54 Thus the children of Israel did; according to all that the Lord commanded Moses, so they did.**

As I said earlier, like the giving of the instructions for the making of the sanctuary, and then the details of its construction, things are stated to show a logical process – command, execution, and then acknowledgment of what has been done. This is now how chapter 1 of Numbers closes out. To show how consistent this is, we can refer to the final statement concerning the work of the tabernacle –

“According to all that the Lord had commanded Moses, so the children of Israel did all the work. ⁴³Then Moses looked over all the work, and indeed they had done it; as the Lord had commanded, just so they had done it. And Moses blessed them.” Exodus 39:42, 43

As we think on the things we’ve learned so far in Numbers, just imagine... these were real people who really counted up their numbers for preparing the army of the Lord. They really encamped around His tabernacle, and the events that have happened, and that will come to pass, actually occurred. They were being used as living units of a spiritual picture of God working in human history. We saw a taste of that today. After all the counting and numbering, we saw how a segment of it actually pointed to Christ Jesus. This will continue all the way through the book as God reveals His love for His creatures in types, shadows, and pictures of the coming of His Son. In the end, this seemingly disjointed book falls into perfect alignment when we realize this. As God has put so much attention – literally thousands of years of detail – into the compilation of this treasure, it should indicate to us that we had better get the obvious parts correct.

Closing Verse: “Who can count the dust of Jacob,
Or number one-fourth of Israel?
Let me die the death of the righteous,
And let my end be like his!” Numbers 23:10

Next Week: Numbers 2:1-34 *In getting their position around the tabernacle, there was no paying of bribes...* (The Layout of the Tribes) (3rd Numbers Sermon)

The Lord has you exactly where He wants you. He has a good plan and purpose for you. It may seem at times as if you are lost in a desert, wandering aimlessly. But the Lord is there, carefully leading you to the Land of Promise. So follow Him and trust Him and He will do marvelous things for you and through you.

Men of War; Offense and Defense

Now the children of Reuben, Israel's oldest son

Their genealogies by their families, by their fathers' house too

According to the number of names

Every male individually, in this list of who's who

From twenty years old and above

All who were able to go to war thereof

Those who were numbered of the tribe of Reuben

-----so the record said

Were forty-six thousand five hundred

From the children of Simeon

Their genealogies by their families, by their fathers' house too

Of those who were numbered, according to the number of names

Every male individually, in this list of who's who

From twenty years old and above
All who were able to go to war thereof
Those who were numbered of the tribe of Simeon
-----so the record said
Are fifty-nine thousand three hundred

From the children of Gad
Their genealogies by their families, small and great
By their fathers' house
According to the number of names
-----as the record does state

From twenty years old and above
All who were able to go to war thereof
Those who were numbered of the tribe of Gad
-----a result which rhymes with "thrifty"
Were forty-five thousand six hundred and fifty

From the children of Judah
Their genealogies by their families, small and great
By their fathers' house
According to the number of names
-----as the record does state

From twenty years old and above
All who were able to go to war thereof
Those who were numbered of the tribe of Judah

-----so the record said
Were seventy-four thousand six hundred
From the children of Issachar
Their genealogies by their families, small and great
By their fathers' house
According to the number of names

-----as the record does state

From twenty years old and above
All who were able to go to war thereof
Those who were numbered of the tribe of Issachar

-----so the record said

Were fifty-four thousand four hundred
From the children of Zebulun
Their genealogies by their families, small and great
By their fathers' house
According to the number of names

-----as the record does state

From twenty years old and above
All who were able to go to war thereof
Those who were numbered of the tribe of Zebulun

-----so the record said

Were fifty-seven thousand four hundred
From the sons of Joseph, the children of Ephraim
Their genealogies by their families, small and great

By their fathers' house
According to the number of names
-----as the record does state
From twenty years old and above
All who were able to go to war thereof

Those who were numbered of the tribe of Ephraim
-----so the record said
Were forty thousand five hundred
From the children of Manasseh
Their genealogies by their families, small and great
By their fathers' house
According to the number of names
-----as the record does state

From twenty years old and above
All who were able to go to war thereof
Those who were numbered of the tribe of Manasseh
-----so the record said
Were thirty-two thousand two hundred

From the children of Benjamin
Their genealogies by their families, small and great
By their fathers' house
According to the number of names
-----as the record does state

From twenty years old and above
All who were able to go to war thereof
Those who were numbered of the tribe of Benjamin
-----so the record said
Were thirty-five thousand four hundred

From the children of Dan
Their genealogies by their families, small and great
By their fathers' house
According to the number of names
-----as the record does state
From twenty years old and above
All who were able to go to war thereof

Those who were numbered of the tribe of Dan
-----so the record said
Were sixty-two thousand seven hundred
From the children of Asher
Their genealogies by their families, small and great
By their fathers' house
According to the number of names
-----as the record does state

From twenty years old and above
All who were able to go to war thereof

Those who were numbered of the tribe of Asher
-----so the record said
Were forty-one thousand five hundred
From the children of Naphtali
Their genealogies by their families, small and great
By their fathers' house
According to the number of names
-----as the record does state

From twenty years old and above
All who were able to go to war thereof

Those who were numbered of the tribe of Naphtali
-----so the record said
Were fifty-three thousand four hundred

These are the ones who were numbered
Whom Moses and Aaron numbered there and then
With the leaders of Israel
Each one representing his father's house, twelve men

So all who were numbered of the children of Israel
By their fathers' houses, so the account does tell
From twenty years old and above
All who were able to go to war in Israel

All who were numbered came to a total rhyming with “thrifty”
They were six hundred and three thousand five hundred and fifty
But the Levites were not numbered among them
-----by their fathers’ tribe
For the Lord had spoken to Moses, saying; so He did tell
“Only the tribe of Levi you shall not number
Nor take a census of them among the children of Israel

But you shall appoint the Levites
Over the tabernacle of the Testimony
Over all its furnishings
And over all things that belong to it, so shall it be
They shall carry the tabernacle and all its furnishings
-----so this task they shall tackle
They shall attend to it and camp around the tabernacle

And when the tabernacle is to go forward
The Levites shall take it down, so they shall do
And when the tabernacle is to be set up
The Levites shall set it up, as I have instructed you
The outsider who comes near
Shall be put to death; so that all others shall fear

The children of Israel shall pitch their tents
Everyone by his own camp
Everyone by his own standard

According to their armies; their designation stamp
But the Levites shall camp around the tabernacle of the Testimony
That there may be no wrath on the congregation
-----of the children of Israel
And the Levites shall keep charge
Of the tabernacle of the Testimony, as to you I tell

Thus the children of Israel did, as stated
According to all that the Lord commanded Moses
-----so they did as he related
Lord God, we are even now in a wilderness
And we are wanting to be led by You
Without You to direct, our lives would be a mess
And so be our guide, O God; You who are faithful and true

We long for the water in this barren land
May it flow forth from the Rock, our souls to satisfy
Give us this refreshing, spiritual hand
And may we take it, and to our lives daily it apply

And we shall be content and satisfied in You alone
We will follow You as we sing our songs of praise
Hallelujah to You; to us Your path You have shown
Hallelujah we shall sing to you for all of our days

Hallelujah and Amen...