

118

Preparation for the Departure from Sinai (1:1-10:10)

- The Israelites had been at Sinai for almost a year. They arrived there three months after leaving Egypt and now it is the first day of the second month of the second year since they left Egypt.
- The Law has been given
- The Tabernacle has been completed.
- The Priests have been consecrated and the Levites appointed to their work.
- God is now preparing them to leave Sinai for the Promised Land on the 20th day of the second month of the second year.

119

Preparation for the Departure from Sinai (1:1-10:10)

- The 12 Tribes are numbered and organized
 - The men 20 years old and older who were fit for battle were counted
 - The Levites were not counted in this census but will be numbered later
 - The reason we still have 12 tribes although the Levites are not counted it that the sons of Joseph, Ephraim and Manasseh, are counted as sons of Jacob thus providing the double portion blessing for Joseph. (See Genesis 48:3-16)

120

Preparation for the Departure from Sinai (1:1-10:10)

- The 12 Tribes are numbered and organized
 - The number 603,550
 - Indicates a total number of more than two million Israelites.
 - This number is seen by many as logistically impossible and several attempts have been made to understand it in a different way. For example:
 - To view the story as a myth and not reflecting a historical event but explaining the origin of the Israelite nation
 - To understand the word translated “thousand” as a military unit e.g. 46,500 would be 46 military units with a total of 500 men

121

Preparation for the Departure from Sinai (1:1-10:10)

- The 12 Tribes are numbered and organized
 - The number 603,550
 - Indicates a total number of more than two million Israelites.
 - This number is seen by many as logistically impossible and several attempts have been made understand it in a different way. For example:
 - To understand the word translated “thousand” as a tribal chieftain e.g. 46,500 would be 46 tribal chiefs over a total of 500 warriors
 - Somehow David’s census recorded in 2 Samuel 24 ends up here.

122

Preparation for the Departure from Sinai (1:1-10:10)

- The 12 Tribes are numbered and organized
 - The number 603,550
 - Indicates a total number of more than two million Israelites.
 - This number is seen by many as logistically impossible and several attempts have been made understand it in a different way. For example:
 - The number is to be taken figuratively as an expression of the strength of Israel.
 - There is a hidden meaning in the sum that is designed to communicate the sum of all the children of Israel.

123

Preparation for the Departure from Sinai (1:1-10:10)

- The 12 Tribes are numbered and organized
 - The number 603,550
 - Indicates a total number of more than two million Israelites.
 - The stance of this study is that the Word of God is taken literally unless there is clear indication that a teaching is figurative.

124

Preparation for the Departure from Sinai (1:1-10:10)

- The 12 Tribes are numbered and organized
 - The number 603,550
 - Indicates a total number of more than two million Israelites.
 - A whole new set of problems are created when trying to deny or explain away these numbers.
 - If there were only a few thousand Israelites why were the Egyptians so afraid of them?
 - Why was there a constant clamor in the wilderness for food and water?
 - Why were the Moabites terrified of them (see Numbers 22:3)

125

Preparation for the Departure from Sinai (1:1-10:10)

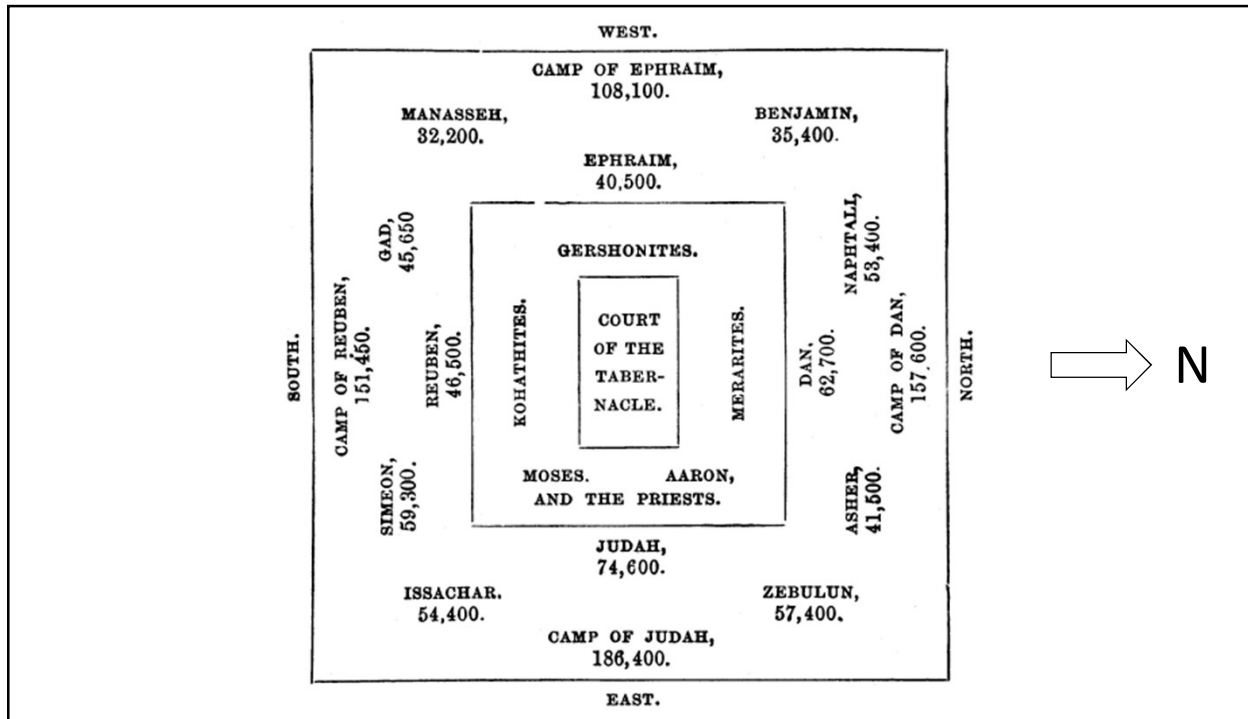
- The 12 Tribes are numbered and organized
 - The number 603,550
 - Indicates a total number of more than two million Israelites.
 - As I pointed out in the Exodus study, a growth rate of 2.5% would yield 2,859,961 people over 430 years beginning with a population of 70.
 - This is feasible considering the growth rates of the following countries in the year 2000. Afghanistan 2.5%, Angola 3.3%, Bahrain 4.6%, Benin 2.8%, Burkina Faso 2.9%, Burundi 3.2%, Cameroon 2.6%, Chad 3.0%, Congo 3.3%.

126

Preparation for the Departure from Sinai (1:1-10:10)

- A chief is chosen for each of the 12 tribes
- Four tribes are chosen as the standard bearer for the group of three tribes on all four sides of the tabernacle and given the order in which they were to set out when the camp moved.
 - Judah, first
 - Reuben, second
 - (Levites with the tent of meeting)
 - Ephraim, third
 - Dan, last

127



128

Preparation for the Departure from Sinai (1:1-10:10)

- The Levites 1:47-54
 - Not included in the general census since they were exempt from military service due to their charge to care for and protect the priests and tabernacle.
 - Responsible for the breakdown, transportation and set up of everything pertaining to the tabernacle as they journeyed to the Promised Land.
 - The Gershonites:
 - The tabernacle tent and covering
 - The screen for the entrance of the tent of meeting
 - The hangings of the court
 - The screen for the door of the court that is around the tabernacle and the altar along with everything connected to it.

129

Preparation for the Departure from Sinai (1:1-10:10)

- The Levites 1:47-54
 - Responsible for the breakdown, transportation and set up of everything pertaining to the tabernacle as they journeyed to the Promised Land.
 - The Kohathites
 - The ark of the covenant
 - The table of showbread
 - The lampstand
 - The altars (incense altar and burnt offering altar)
 - The vessels of the sanctuary
 - The screen between the holy place and holy of holies.

130

Preparation for the Departure from Sinai (1:1-10:10)

- The Levites 1:47-54
 - Responsible for the breakdown, transportation and set up of everything pertaining to the tabernacle as they journeyed to the Promised Land.
 - Specific responsibilities of the Merarites
 - The framework of the entire tabernacle area

131

Preparation for the Departure from Sinai (1:1-10:10)

- The Levites 1:47-54
 - Other general responsibilities
 - They were to camp around the tabernacle and provide security for it.
 - Their encampment would act as a buffer zone between the rest of the camp and the tabernacle area.
 - Minister to the priests.
 - Provide security for the priests.

132

Preparation for the Departure from Sinai (1:1-10:10)

- The first census of the Levites
 - The first counts every male one month old and older.
 - The purpose of this first census is to count the number of male Levites and compare it to the number of the males Israelites who are the firstborn.

133

Preparation for the Departure from Sinai (1:1-10:10)

- The first census of the Levites
 - In the last plague on Egypt, God dedicated all the firstborn to Himself. That is the reason all of the firstborn of the Egyptians died, and the Israelites were only spared as they followed the instructions for the Passover. The fact that these were passed over in God's visitation on the Egyptians did not change the fact that they were still under this dedication. God would choose to accept the lifelong service of the Levites to Him in lieu of the lives of the firstborn of the Israelites.

134

Preparation for the Departure from Sinai (1:1-10:10)

- The first census of the Levites
 - When a count was made of the Israelite firstborn, it was found that the number exceeded the 22,000 Levites by 273. Provision was made for these to be redeemed by paying five shekels per person to Aaron and his two sons, the priests.

135

Preparation for the Departure from Sinai (1:1-10:10)

- The second census of the Levites
 - The second census was of males 30 to 50 years old and able to do the prescribed ministries.
 - Detailed descriptions of the preparation for moving the Tabernacle.
 - The Kohathites were given the charge of the most holy things in the tabernacle.
 - Aaron and his sons, the priests, were charged with covering all of the holy things and then they were carried by the Kohath clan of the Levites. The Levites could not touch any of the holy things. They could only carry them by the poles inserted through the rings of the object itself or frames made for that purpose.

136

Preparation for the Departure from Sinai (1:1-10:10)

- The second census of the Levites
 - Detailed descriptions of the preparation for moving the Tabernacle.
 - The Kohathites were given the charge of the most holy things in the tabernacle.
 - They were to take down the screen (which we also know as the veil of the temple) and cover the ark of the covenant with it. On top of that a goatskin covering and then a blue cloth. This was carried by the poles that were originally placed in the rings on the ark.

137

Preparation for the Departure from Sinai (1:1-10:10)

- The second census of the Levites
 - Detailed descriptions of the preparation for moving the Tabernacle.
 - The Kohathites were given the charge of the most holy things in the tabernacle.
 - A blue cloth was placed over the table of the Presence (Showbread). The utensils used in this service plus the showbread was placed on top of this cloth. This was then covered with a scarlet cloth and that covered by a goatskin covering. The table was also carried by poles that were placed in it.

138

Preparation for the Departure from Sinai (1:1-10:10)

- The second census of the Levites
 - Detailed descriptions of the preparation for moving the Tabernacle.
 - The Kohathites were given the charge of the most holy things in the tabernacle.
 - The lampstand was covered with a blue cloth and the lampstand with all its utensils was placed in a covering of goatskin and placed on a frame made to carry it.
 - The incense altar was covered with a blue cloth and then goatskin covering and carried by poles.

139

Preparation for the Departure from Sinai (1:1-10:10)

- The second census of the Levites
 - Detailed descriptions of the preparation for moving the Tabernacle.
 - The Kohathites were given the charge of the most holy things in the tabernacle.
 - Aaron's son Eleazar was given specific supervision over this operation with personal attention given to the oil for lighting the lamp, the fragrant incense the grain offering and the anointing oil.

140

Preparation for the Departure from Sinai (1:1-10:10)

- The second census of the Levites
 - Detailed descriptions of the preparation for moving the Tabernacle.
 - The Gershonites had charge over all of the fabric of the structure of the tabernacle and were under the direction of Aaron's son Ithamar.
 - The Merarites were charged with the frame and fasteners of the tabernacle and were also under the supervision of Ithamar.

141