

good
NEWS BIBLE

The book of

NUMBERS

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Welcome to the Good News Bible

Welcome to this dyslexia-friendly edition of the book of Numbers, using text from the Good News Bible.

If you are dyslexic, you may find most Bibles very difficult to read, because of their small type, long paragraphs and thin paper. This book has been specially designed with the British Dyslexia Association's style guide in mind, so it has the following features:

- Thicker paper, so that type does not show through
- Cream-coloured paper
- Matt paper
- Plain font
- Larger type
- Wider line spacing
- Short paragraphs
- Bold headings

The Good News Bible is a clear, easy-to read translation of the Bible. It uses ordinary, everyday language so that as many people as possible can read and understand it. This has made it a very popular translation, selling over 150 million copies in the UK alone.

The book of NUMBERS

God's people and the Promised Land

What's it about? Numbers starts with Moses counting the people of God before they journey towards the land God has promised them.

Who wrote it? As one of the first five books of the Bible, Numbers is said to be written by Moses. These stories are very old, though, and proof of who the author is has been lost over time.

Why read it? The story of Numbers is one that starts in triumph and quickly falls into disaster. Its stories, lists and laws tell us a great deal about God and his faithfulness.

What's it to me? Even though the events of Numbers are separated from us by hundreds of years, people don't change, and the story of the people of God is similar to our own. God stuck by his people in the desert, and he will stick by us.

Chapter 1

The First Census of Israel

¹ On the first day of the second month in the second year after the people of Israel left Egypt, the LORD spoke to Moses there in the Tent of his presence in the Sinai Desert. He said, ² "You and Aaron are to take a census of the people of Israel by clans and families. List the names of all the men ³ twenty years old or older who are fit for military service.

⁴ Ask one clan chief from each tribe to help you."

⁵⁻¹⁶ These are the men, leaders within their tribes, who were chosen from the community for this work:

Tribe	Clan chief
Reuben	Elizur son of Shedeur
Simeon	Shelumiel son of Zurishaddai
Judah	Nahshon son of Amminadab
Issachar	Nethanel son of Zuar
Zebulun	Eliab son of Helon
Ephraim	Elishama son of Ammihud
Manasseh	Gamaliel son of Pedahzur
Benjamin	Abidan son of Gideoni
Dan	Ahiezer son of Ammishaddai
Asher	Pagiel son of Ochran
Gad	Eliasaph son of Deuel
Naphtali	Ahira son of Enan

¹⁷ With the help of these twelve men Moses and Aaron

¹⁸ called together the whole community on the first day of

the second month and registered all the people by clans and families. The names of all the men twenty years old or older were recorded and counted, ¹⁹as the LORD had commanded. In the Sinai Desert, Moses registered the people.

²⁰⁻⁴⁶The men twenty years old or older who were fit for military service were registered by name according to clan and family, beginning with the tribe of Reuben, Jacob's eldest son. The totals were as follows:

Tribe	Number
Reuben	46,500
Simeon	59,300
Gad	45,650
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:	603,550

⁴⁷The Levites were not registered with the other tribes, ⁴⁸because the LORD had said to Moses, ⁴⁹“When you take a census of the men fit for military service, do not include the tribe of Levi.

⁵⁰Instead, put the Levites in charge of the Tent of my presence and all its equipment. They shall carry it and its equipment, serve in it, and set up their camp round it.

⁵¹Whenever you move your camp, the Levites shall take the Tent down and set it up again at each new camping place. Anyone else who comes near the Tent shall be put to death.

⁵²The rest of the Israelites shall set up camp, company by company, each man with his own group and under his own banner.

⁵³But the Levites shall camp round the Tent to guard it, so that no one may come near and cause my anger to strike the community of Israel."

⁵⁴So the people of Israel did everything that the LORD had commanded Moses.

Chapter 2

The Arrangement of the Tribes in Camp

¹The LORD gave Moses and Aaron the following instructions.

²When the Israelites set up camp, each man will camp under the banner of his division and the flag of his own clan. The camp is to be set up all round the Tent.

³⁻⁹On the east side, those under the banner of the division of Judah shall camp in their groups, under their leaders, as follows:

Tribe	Leader	Number
Judah	Nahshon son of Amminadab	74,600
Issachar	Nethanel son of Zuar	54,400
Zebulun	Eliab son of Helon	57,400
	Total:	186,400

The division of Judah shall march first.

¹⁰⁻¹⁶On the south, those under the banner of the division of Reuben shall camp in their groups, under their leaders, as follows:

Tribe	Leader	Number
Reuben	Elizur son of Shedeur	46,500
Simeon	Shelumiel son of Zurishaddai	59,300
Gad	Eliasaph son of Deuel	45,650
	Total:	151,450

The division of Reuben shall march second.

¹⁷Then, between the first two divisions and the last two the Levites are to march carrying the Tent. Each division shall march in the same order as they camp, each in position under its banner.

¹⁸⁻²⁴On the west, those under the banner of the division of Ephraim shall camp in their groups, under their leaders, as follows:

Tribe	Leader	Number
Ephraim	Elishama son of Ammihud	40,500
Manasseh	Gamaliel son of Pedahzur	32,200
Benjamin	Abidan son of Gideoni	35,400
	Total:	108,100

The division of Ephraim shall march third.

²⁵⁻³¹ On the north, those under the banner of the division of Dan shall camp in their groups, under their leaders, as follows:

Tribe	Leader	Number
Dan	Ahiezer son of Ammishaddai	62,700
Asher	Pagiel son of Ocran	41,500
Naphtali	Ahira son of Enan	53,400
	Total:	157,600

The division of Dan shall march last.

³² The total number of the people of Israel enrolled in the divisions, group by group, was 603,550.

³³ As the LORD had commanded Moses, the Levites were not registered with the rest of the Israelites.

³⁴ So the people of Israel did everything the LORD had commanded Moses. They camped, each under his own banner, and they marched, each with his own clan.

Chapter 3

Aaron's Sons

¹This is the family of Aaron and Moses at the time the LORD spoke to Moses on Mount Sinai.

²Aaron had four sons: Nadab, the eldest, Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar.

³They were anointed and ordained as priests, ⁴but Nadab and Abihu were killed when they offered unholy fire to the LORD in the Sinai Desert. They had no children, so Eleazar and Ithamar served as priests during Aaron's lifetime.

The Levites are Appointed to Serve the Priests

⁵The LORD said to Moses, ⁶“Bring forward the tribe of Levi and appoint them as servants of Aaron the priest.

⁷They shall do the work required for the Tent of my presence and perform duties for the priests and for the whole community.

⁸They shall take charge of all the equipment of the Tent and perform the duties for the rest of the Israelites.

⁹The only responsibility the Levites have is to serve Aaron and his sons.

¹⁰You shall appoint Aaron and his sons to carry out the duties of the priesthood; anyone else who tries to do so shall be put to death.”

¹¹The LORD said to Moses, ¹²⁻¹³“The Levites are now to be mine. When I killed all the firstborn of the Egyptians, I consecrated as my own the eldest son of each Israelite family and the firstborn of every animal. Now, instead of having the firstborn sons of Israel as my own, I have the Levites; they will belong to me. I am the LORD.”

The Census of the Levites

¹⁴In the Sinai Desert the LORD commanded Moses ¹⁵to register the Levites by clans and families, enrolling every male a month old or older, ¹⁶and Moses did so.

¹⁷⁻²⁰Levi had three sons: Gershon, Kohath, and Merari, who were the ancestors of the clans that bear their names. Gershon had two sons: Libni and Shimei; Kohath had four sons: Amram, Izhar, Hebron, and Uzziel; and Merari had two sons: Mahli and Mushi. They were the ancestors of the families that bear their names.

²¹The clan of Gershon was composed of the families of Libni and Shimei.

²²The total number of males one month old or older that were enrolled was 7,500.

²³This clan was to camp on the west behind the Tent, ²⁴with Eliasaph son of Lael as chief of the clan.

²⁵They were responsible for the Tent, its inner cover, its outer cover, the curtain for the entrance, ²⁶the curtains for the court which is round the Tent and the altar, and the curtain for the entrance of the court. They were responsible for all the service connected with these items.