

B'midbar

Numbers 1:1 - 4:20

This translation was taken from the JPS Tanakh

Chapter 1

1 On the first day of the second month, in the second year following the exodus from the land of Egypt, the Lord spoke to Moses in the wilderness of Sinai, in the Tent of Meeting, saying:

2 Take a census of the whole Israelite community by the clans of its ancestral houses, listing the names, every male, head by head. 3 You and Aaron shall record them by their groups, from the age of twenty years up, all those in Israel who are able to bear arms. 4 Associated with you shall be a man from each tribe, each one the head of his ancestral house.

5 These are the names of the men who shall assist you:

From Reuben, Elizur son of Shedeur.

6 From Simeon, Shelumiel son of Zurishaddai.

7 From Judah, Nahshon son of Amminadab.

8 From Issachar, Nethanel son of Zuar.

9 From Zebulun, Eliab son of Helon.

10 From the sons of Joseph:

from Ephraim, Elishama son of Ammihud;

from Manasseh, Gamaliel son of Pedahzur.

11 From Benjamin, Abidan son of Gideoni.

12 From Dan, Ahiezer son of Ammishaddai.

13 From Asher, Pagiel son of Ochran.

14 From Gad, Eliasaph son of Deuel.

15 From Naphtali, Ahira son of Enan.

16 Those are the elected of the assembly, the chieftains of their ancestral tribes: they are the heads of the contingents of Israel.

17 So Moses and Aaron took those men, who were designated by name, 18 and on the first day of the second month they convoked the whole community, who were registered by the clans of their ancestral houses — the names of those aged twenty years and over being listed head by head. 19 As the Lord had commanded Moses, so he recorded them in the wilderness of Sinai.

20 They totaled as follows:

The descendants of Reuben, Israel's first-born, the registration of the clans of their ancestral house, as listed by name, head by head, all males aged twenty years and over, all who were able to bear arms — 21 those enrolled from the tribe of Reuben: 46,500.

22 Of the descendants of Simeon, the registration of the clans of their ancestral house, their enrollment as listed by name, head by head, all males aged twenty years and over, all who were able to bear arms — 23 those enrolled from the tribe of Simeon: 59,300.

24 Of the descendants of Gad, the registration of the clans of their ancestral house, as listed by name, aged twenty years and over, all who were able to bear arms — 25 those enrolled from the tribe of Gad: 45,650.

26 Of the descendants of Judah, the registration of the clans of their ancestral house, as listed by name, aged twenty years and over, all who were able to bear arms — 27 those enrolled from the tribe of Judah: 74,600.

28 Of the descendants of Issachar, the registration of the clans of their ancestral house, as listed by name, aged twenty years and over, all who were able to bear arms — 29 those enrolled from the tribe of Issachar: 54,400.

30 Of the descendants of Zebulun, the registration of the clans of their ancestral house, as listed by name, aged twenty years and over, all who were able to bear arms — 31 those enrolled from the tribe of Zebulun: 57,400.

32 Of the descendants of Joseph:

Of the descendants of Ephraim, the registration of the clans of their ancestral house, as listed by name, aged twenty years and over, all who were able to bear arms — 33 those enrolled from the tribe of Ephraim: 40,500.

34 Of the descendants of Manasseh, the registration of the clans of their ancestral house, as listed by name, aged twenty years and over, all who were able to bear arms — 35 those enrolled from the tribe of Manasseh: 32,200.

36 Of the descendants of Benjamin, the registration of the clans of their ancestral house, as listed by name, aged twenty years and over, all who were able to bear arms — 37 those enrolled from the tribe of Benjamin: 35,400.

38 Of the descendants of Dan, the registration of the clans of their ancestral house, as listed by name, aged twenty years and over, all who were able to bear arms — 39 those enrolled from the tribe of Dan: 62,700.

40 Of the descendants of Asher, the registration of the clans of their ancestral house, as listed by name, aged twenty years and over, all who were able to bear arms — 41 those enrolled from the tribe of Asher: 41,500.

42 [Of] the descendants of Naphtali, the registration of the clans of their ancestral house as listed by name, aged twenty years and over, all who were able to bear arms — 43 those enrolled from the tribe of Naphtali: 53,400.

44 Those are the enrollments recorded by Moses and Aaron and by the chieftains of Israel, who were twelve in number, one man to each ancestral house. 45 All the Israelites, aged twenty years and over, enrolled by ancestral houses, all those in Israel who were able to bear arms — 46 all who were enrolled came to 603,550.

47 The Levites, however, were not recorded among them by their ancestral tribe. 48 For the Lord had spoken to Moses, saying: 49 Do not on any account enroll the tribe of Levi or take a census of them with the Israelites. 50 You shall put the Levites in charge of the Tabernacle of the Pact, all its furnishings, and everything that pertains to it: they shall carry the Tabernacle and all its furnishings, and they shall tend it; and they shall camp around the Tabernacle. 51 When the Tabernacle is to set out, the Levites shall take it down, and when the Tabernacle is to be pitched, the Levites shall set it up; any outsider who encroaches shall be put to death. 52 The Israelites shall encamp troop by troop, each man with his division and each under his standard. 53 The Levites, however, shall camp around the Tabernacle of the Pact, that wrath may not strike the Israelite community; the Levites shall stand guard around the Tabernacle of the Pact.

54 The Israelites did accordingly; just as the Lord had commanded Moses, so they did.

Chapter 2

1 The Lord spoke to Moses and Aaron, saying: 2 The Israelites shall camp each with his standard, under the banners of their ancestral house; they shall camp around the Tent of Meeting at a distance.

3 Camped on the front, or east side: the standard of the division of Judah, troop by troop. Chieftain of the Judites: Nahshon son of Amminadab. 4 His troop, as enrolled: 74,600.

5 Camping next to it:

The tribe of Issachar.

Chieftain of the Issacharites: Nethanel son of Zuar. 6 His troop, as enrolled: 54,400.

7 The tribe of Zebulun.

Chieftain of the Zebulunites: Eliab son of Helon. 8 His troop, as enrolled: 57,400.

9 The total enrolled in the division of Judah: 186,400, for all troops. These shall march first.

10 On the south: the standard of the division of Reuben, troop by troop. Chieftain of the Reubenites: Elizur son of Shedeur. 11 His troop, as enrolled: 46,500.

12 Camping next to it:

The tribe of Simeon.

Chieftain of the Simeonites: Shelumiel son of Zurishaddai.

13 His troop, as enrolled: 59,300.

14 And the tribe of Gad.

Chieftain of the Gadites: Eliasaph son of Reuel. 15 His troop, as enrolled: 45,650.

16 The total enrolled in the division of Reuben: 151,450, for all troops. These shall march second.

17 Then, midway between the divisions, the Tent of Meeting, the division of the Levites, shall move. As they camp, so they shall march, each in position, by their standards.

18 On the west: the standard of the division of Ephraim, troop by troop.

Chieftain of the Ephraimites: Elishama son of Ammihud. 19 His troop, as enrolled: 40,500.

20 Next to it:

The tribe of Manasseh.

Chieftain of the Manassites: Gamaliel son of Pedahzur. 21 His troop, as enrolled: 32,200.

22 And the tribe of Benjamin.

Chieftain of the Benjaminites: Abidan son of Gideoni. 23 His troop, as enrolled: 35,400.

24 The total enrolled in the division of Ephraim: 108,100 for all troops. These shall march third.

25 On the north: the standard of the division of Dan, troop by troop. Chieftain of the Danites:

Ahiezer son of Ammishaddai. 26 His troop, as enrolled: 62,700.

27 Camping next to it:

The tribe of Asher.

Chieftain of the Asherites: Pagiel son of Ochran. 28 His troop, as enrolled: 41,500.

29 And the tribe of Naphtali.

Chieftain of the Naphtalites: Ahira son of Enan. 30 His troop, as enrolled: 53,400.

31 The total enrolled in the division of Dan: 157,600. These shall march last, by their standards.

32 Those are the enrollments of the Israelites by ancestral houses. The total enrolled in the divisions, for all troops: 603,550. 33 The Levites, however, were not recorded among the Israelites, as the Lord had commanded Moses.

34 The Israelites did accordingly; just as the Lord had commanded Moses, so they camped by their standards, and so they marched, each with his clan according to his ancestral house.

Chapter 3

1 This is the line of Aaron and Moses at the time that the Lord spoke with Moses on Mount Sinai. 2 These were the names of Aaron's sons: Nadab, the first-born, and Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar; 3 those were the names of Aaron's sons, the anointed priests who were ordained for priesthood. 4 But Nadab and Abihu died by the will of the Lord, when they offered alien fire before the Lord in the wilderness of Sinai; and they left no sons. So it was Eleazar and Ithamar who served as priests in the lifetime of their father Aaron.

5 The Lord spoke to Moses, saying: 6 Advance the tribe of Levi and place them in attendance upon Aaron the priest to serve him. 7 They shall perform duties for him and for the whole community before the Tent of Meeting, doing the work of the Tabernacle. 8 They shall take charge of all the furnishings of the Tent of Meeting — a duty on behalf of the Israelites — doing the work of the Tabernacle. 9 You shall assign the Levites to Aaron and to his sons: they are formally assigned to him from among the Israelites. 10 You shall make Aaron and his sons responsible for observing their priestly duties; and any outsider who encroaches shall be put to death.

11 The Lord spoke to Moses, saying: 12 I hereby take the Levites from among the Israelites in place of all the first-born, the first issue of the womb among the Israelites: the Levites shall be Mine. 13 For every first-born is Mine: at the time that I smote every first-born in the land of Egypt, I consecrated every first-born in Israel, man and beast, to Myself, to be Mine, the Lord's.

14 The Lord spoke to Moses in the wilderness of Sinai, saying: 15 Record the Levites by ancestral house and by clan; record every male among them from the age of one month up. 16 So Moses recorded them at the command of the Lord, as he was bidden. 17 These were the sons of Levi by name: Gershon, Kohath, and Merari. 18 These were the names of the sons of Gershon by clan: Libni and Shimei. 19 The sons of Kohath by clan: Amram and Izhar, Hebron and Uzziel. 20 The sons of Merari by clan: Mahli and Mushi.

These were the clans of the Levites within their ancestral houses:

21 To Gershon belonged the clan of the Libnites and the clan of the Shimeites; those were the clans of the Gershonites. 22 The recorded entries of all their males from the age of one month up, as recorded, came to 7,500. 23 The clans of the Gershonites were to camp behind the Tabernacle, to the west. 24 The chieftain of the ancestral house of the Gershonites was Eliasaph son of Lael. 25 The duties of the Gershonites in the Tent of Meeting comprised: the tabernacle, the tent, its covering, and the screen for the entrance of the Tent of Meeting; 26 the hangings of the enclosure, the screen for the entrance of the enclosure which surrounds the Tabernacle, the cords thereof, and the altar — all the service connected with these.

27 To Kohath belonged the clan of the Amramites, the clan of the Izharites, the clan of the Hebronites, and the clan of the Uzzielites; those were the clans of the Kohathites. 28 All the listed males from the age of one month up came to 8,600, attending to the duties of the sanctuary. 29 The clans of the Kohathites were to camp along the south side of the Tabernacle. 30 The chieftain of the ancestral house of the Kohathite clans was Elizaphan son of Uzziel. 31 Their duties comprised: the ark, the table, the lampstand, the altars, and the sacred utensils that were used with them, and the screen — all the service connected with these. 32 The head chieftain of the Levites was Eleazar son of Aaron the priest, in charge of those attending to the duties of the sanctuary.

33 To Merari belonged the clan of the Mahlites and the clan of the Mushites; those were the clans of Merari. 34 The recorded entries of all their males from the age of one month up came to 6,200. 35 The chieftain of the ancestral house of the clans of Merari was Zuriel son of Abihail. They were to camp along the north side of the Tabernacle. 36 The assigned duties of the Merarites comprised:

the planks of the Tabernacle, its bars, posts, and sockets, and all its furnishings — all the service connected with these; 37 also the posts around the enclosure and their sockets, pegs, and cords.

38 Those who were to camp before the Tabernacle, in front — before the Tent of Meeting, on the east — were Moses and Aaron and his sons, attending to the duties of the sanctuary, as a duty on behalf of the Israelites; and any outsider who encroached was to be put to death. 39 All the Levites who were recorded, whom at the Lord's command Moses and Aaron recorded by their clans, all the males from the age of one month up, came to 22,000.

40 The Lord said to Moses: Record every first-born male of the Israelite people from the age of one month up, and make a list of their names; 41 and take the Levites for Me, the Lord, in place of every first-born among the Israelite people, and the cattle of the Levites in place of every first-born among the cattle of the Israelites. 42 So Moses recorded all the first-born among the Israelites, as the Lord had commanded him. 43 All the first-born males as listed by name, recorded from the age of one month up, came to 22,273.

44 The Lord spoke to Moses, saying: 45 Take the Levites in place of all the first-born among the Israelite people, and the cattle of the Levites in place of their cattle; and the Levites shall be Mine, the Lord's. 46 And as the redemption price of the 273 Israelite first-born over and above the number of the Levites, 47 take five shekels per head — take this by the sanctuary weight, twenty gerahs to the shekel — 48 and give the money to Aaron and his sons as the redemption price for those who are in excess. 49 So Moses took the redemption money from those over and above the ones redeemed by the Levites; 50 he took the money from the first-born of the Israelites, 1,365 sanctuary shekels. 51 And Moses gave the redemption money to Aaron and his sons at the Lord's bidding, as the Lord had commanded Moses.

Chapter 4

1 The Lord spoke to Moses and Aaron, saying:

2 Take a [separate] census of the Kohathites among the Levites, by the clans of their ancestral house, 3 from the age of thirty years up to the age of fifty, all who are subject to service, to perform tasks for the Tent of Meeting. 4 This is the responsibility of the Kohathites in the Tent of Meeting: the most sacred objects.

5 At the breaking of camp, Aaron and his sons shall go in and take down the screening curtain and cover the Ark of the Pact with it. 6 They shall lay a covering of dolphin skin over it and spread a cloth of pure blue on top; and they shall put its poles in place.

7 Over the table of display they shall spread a blue cloth; they shall place upon it the bowls, the ladles, the jars, and the libation jugs; and the regular bread shall rest upon it. 8 They shall spread over these a crimson cloth which they shall cover with a covering of dolphin skin; and they shall put the poles in place.

9 Then they shall take a blue cloth and cover the lampstand for lighting, with its lamps, its tongs, and its fire pans, as well as all the oil vessels that are used in its service. 10 They shall put it and all its furnishings into a covering of dolphin skin, which they shall then place on a carrying frame.

11 Next they shall spread a blue cloth over the altar of gold and cover it with a covering of dolphin skin; and they shall put its poles in place. 12 They shall take all the service vessels with which the service in the sanctuary is performed, put them into a blue cloth and cover them with a covering of dolphin skin, which they shall then place on a carrying frame. 13 They shall remove the ashes from the [copper] altar and spread a purple cloth over it. 14 Upon it they shall place all the vessels that are used in its service: the fire pans, the flesh hooks, the scrapers, and the basins — all the vessels of the altar — and over it they shall spread a covering of dolphin skin; and they shall put its poles in place.

15 When Aaron and his sons have finished covering the sacred objects and all the furnishings of the sacred objects at the breaking of camp, only then shall the Kohathites come and lift them, so that they do not come in contact with the sacred objects and die. These things in the Tent of Meeting shall be the portorage of the Kohathites.

16 Responsibility shall rest with Eleazar son of Aaron the priest for the lighting oil, the aromatic incense, the regular meal offering, and the anointing oil — responsibility for the whole Tabernacle and for everything consecrated that is in it or in its vessels.

17 The Lord spoke to Moses and Aaron, saying: 18 Do not let the group of Kohathite clans be cut off from the Levites. 19 Do this with them, that they may live and not die when they approach the most sacred objects: let Aaron and his sons go in and assign each of them to his duties and to his portorage. 20 But let not [the Kohathites] go inside and witness the dismantling of the sanctuary, lest they die.