

Numbers 3:1-51 **Tribe of the Levites**

Priests, Aaron, Eleazar, Ithamar

¹ Now these are the records of Aaron and Moses when the LORD spoke with Moses on Mount Sinai. ² And these are the names of the sons of Aaron: Nadab, the firstborn, and Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar. ³ These are the names of the sons of Aaron, the anointed priests, whom he consecrated to minister as priests. ⁴ Nadab and Abihu had died before the LORD when they offered profane fire before the LORD in the Wilderness of Sinai; and they had no children. So Eleazar and Ithamar ministered as priests under the oversight of Aaron their father.

Levites belong to Yehowah for work of the Tabernacle in the place of the Firstborn of all Israel

⁵ And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying: ⁶ "Bring the tribe of Levi near, and present them before Aaron the priest, that they may serve him. ⁷ And they shall attend to his needs and the needs of the whole congregation before the tabernacle of meeting, to do the work of the tabernacle. ⁸ Also they shall attend to all the furnishings of the tabernacle of meeting, and to the needs of the children of Israel, to do the work of the tabernacle. ⁹ And you shall give the Levites to Aaron and his sons; they are given entirely to him from among the children of Israel. ¹⁰ So you shall appoint Aaron and his sons, and they shall attend to their priesthood; but the outsider who comes near shall be put to death." ¹¹ Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying: ¹² "Now behold, I Myself have taken the Levites from among the children of Israel instead of every firstborn who opens the womb among the children of Israel. Therefore the Levites shall be Mine, ¹³ because all the firstborn are Mine. On the day that I struck all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, I sanctified to Myself all the firstborn in Israel, both man and beast. They shall be Mine: I am the LORD."

Levite tribes of Gershon, Kohath, and Merari

¹⁴ Then the LORD spoke to Moses in the Wilderness of Sinai, saying: ¹⁵ "Number the children of Levi by their fathers' houses, by their families; you shall number every male from a month old and above." ¹⁶ So Moses numbered them according to the word of the LORD, as he was commanded. ¹⁷ These were the sons of Levi by their names: Gershon, Kohath, and Merari. ¹⁸ And these are the names of the sons of Gershon by their families: Libni and Shimei. ¹⁹ And the sons of Kohath by their families: Amram, Izehar, Hebron, and Uzziel. ²⁰ And the sons of Merari by their families: Mahli and Mushi. These are the families of the Levites by their fathers' houses.

Levite tribe of Gershon

²¹ From Gershon came the family of the Libnites and the family of the Shimites; these were the families of the Gershonites. ²² Those who were numbered, according to the number of all the males from a month old and above--of those who were numbered there were seven thousand five hundred. ²³ The families of the Gershonites were to camp behind the tabernacle westward. ²⁴ And the leader of the fathers' house of the Gershonites was Eliasaph the son of Lael. ²⁵ The duties of the children of Gershon in the tabernacle of meeting included the tabernacle, the tent with its covering, the screen for the door of the tabernacle of meeting, ²⁶ the screen for the door of the court, the hangings of the court which are around the tabernacle and the altar, and their cords, according to all the work relating to them.

Levite tribe of Kohath

²⁷ From Kohath came the family of the Amramites, the family of the Izharites, the family of the Hebronites, and the family of the Uzzielites; these were the families of the Kohathites. ²⁸ According to the number of all the males, from a month old and above, there were eight thousand six hundred

keeping charge of the sanctuary. ²⁹ The families of the children of Kohath were to camp on the south side of the tabernacle. ³⁰ And the leader of the fathers' house of the families of the Kohathites was Elizaphan the son of Uzziel. ³¹ Their duty included the ark, the table, the lampstand, the altars, the utensils of the sanctuary with which they ministered, the screen, and all the work relating to them. ³² And Eleazar the son of Aaron the priest was to be chief over the leaders of the Levites, with oversight of those who kept charge of the sanctuary.

Levite tribe of Merari

³³ From Merari came the family of the Mahlites and the family of the Mushites; these were the families of Merari. ³⁴ And those who were numbered, according to the number of all the males from a month old and above, were six thousand two hundred. ³⁵ The leader of the fathers' house of the families of Merari was Zuriel the son of Abihail. These were to camp on the north side of the tabernacle. ³⁶ And the appointed duty of the children of Merari included the boards of the tabernacle, its bars, its pillars, its sockets, its utensils, all the work relating to them, ³⁷ and the pillars of the court all around, with their sockets, their pegs, and their cords.

Moses, Aaron and his sons camped East of the Tabernacle

³⁸ Moreover those who were to camp before the tabernacle on the east, before the tabernacle of meeting, were Moses, Aaron, and his sons, keeping charge of the sanctuary, to meet the needs of the children of Israel; but the outsider who came near was to be put to death.

Summary of the Census of the Levites

³⁹ All who were numbered of the Levites, whom Moses and Aaron numbered at the commandment of the LORD, by their families, all the males from a month old and above, were twenty-two thousand.

Firstborn of all Israel are substituted by the Levites and the Redemption tax

⁴⁰ Then the LORD said to Moses: "Number all the firstborn males of the children of Israel from a month old and above, and take the number of their names. ⁴¹ And you shall take the Levites for Me--I am the LORD--instead of all the firstborn among the children of Israel, and the livestock of the Levites instead of all the firstborn among the livestock of the children of Israel." ⁴² So Moses numbered all the firstborn among the children of Israel, as the LORD commanded him. ⁴³ And all the firstborn males, according to the number of names from a month old and above, of those who were numbered of them, were twenty-two thousand two hundred and seventy-three.

⁴⁴ Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying: ⁴⁵ "Take the Levites instead of all the firstborn among the children of Israel, and the livestock of the Levites instead of their livestock. The Levites shall be Mine: I am the LORD. ⁴⁶ And for the redemption of the two hundred and seventy-three of the firstborn of the children of Israel, who are more than the number of the Levites, ⁴⁷ you shall take five shekels for each one individually; you shall take them in the currency of the shekel of the sanctuary, the shekel of twenty gerahs. ⁴⁸ And you shall give the money, with which the excess number of them is redeemed, to Aaron and his sons." ⁴⁹ So Moses took the redemption money from those who were over and above those who were redeemed by the Levites. ⁵⁰ From the firstborn of the children of Israel he took the money, one thousand three hundred and sixty-five shekels, according to the shekel of the sanctuary. ⁵¹ And Moses gave their redemption money to Aaron and his sons, according to the word of the LORD, as the LORD commanded Moses. NKJV

Facts Revealed:

- ✧ Aaron and his sons are the anointed Priests in Israel, Called by name and anointed for service.

- ✧ Nadab and Abihu were killed before Yehowah because they offered profane fire before Yehowah, failing to reverence the holiness of God and failing to glorify God before all the people. [Leviticus 10:1-3]
 - ✧ Only Eleazar and Ithamar remain of the sons of Aaron to serve as priests under the oversight of their father Aaron.
- ✧ **Levites belong to Yehowah for work of the Tabernacle in the place of the Firstborn of all Israel**
- ✧ The Levites are to serve the priests in the work of the Tabernacle.
 - ✧ They shall attend to the needs of the priests.
 - ✧ They shall attend to the needs of the whole congregation before the Tabernacle of Meeting to do the work of the Tabernacle and its furnishings.
 - ✧ Any outsider who comes near shall be put to death.
- ✧ When God killed all the firstborn of Egypt as the final plague to free the Children of Israel, He laid claim to all the firstborn of Israel and established the concept of Redemption. [Exodus 13:1-2, 13:11-15, 22:29-30, Numbers 3:13]
 - ✧ The firstborn of your sons you shall redeem. [Exodus 13:11-14]

God set the precedent of Redemption pointing forward to the time when all mankind would be offered Redemption to God through the blood of His Son the Lamb of God, Whom God Himself sacrificed on the cross of Golgotha. [Luke 21:28, Romans 3:24, Romans 8:23, 1 Corinthians 1:30, Ephesians 1:3-7, Colossians 1:13-14, Hebrews 9:11-15]

- ✧ The Levites became the substitute to redeem the Firstborn of all Israel. [Numbers 3:12]
- ✧ **Levite tribes are, Gershon, Kohath, and Merari**
- ✧ Sons of Gershon – Libni, Shimei, fathers of the Libnites, and the Shimites.
 - ✧ Sons of Kohath – Amram, Izehar, Hebron, Uzziel, fathers of the Amramites, Izharites, Hebronites, and the Uzzielites.
 - ✧ Sons of Merari – Mahli, Mushi, fathers of the Mahlites, and of the Mushites.

Numbering the tribes of Levi

- ✧ **Gershon** – All males from one month and upward:
 - ✧ 7,500 males
 - ✧ Eliasaph son of Lael - Leader
 - ✧ Camp location directly **West of the Tabernacle**.
 - ✧ Tabernacle responsibilities; Soft items, tent of the Tabernacle, coverings, Door, Gate, hangings of the court all around, the cords and all the work relating to them.
- ✧ **Kohath** - All males from one month and upward:
 - ✧ 8,600 males
 - ✧ Elizaphan son of Uzziel – Leader
 - ✧ Camp location directly **South of the Tabernacle**
 - ✧ Tabernacle responsibilities; Ark of the Covenant, Table of Showbread, Lampstand, Altar of Incense, Altar of Sacrifice, and all the utensils of the sanctuary, the Veil and all the work relating to them.
 - ✧ Eleazar son of Aaron was chief having oversight over the leaders of the Levites.

- ✧ **Merari** - All males from one month and upward:
 - ✧ 6,200 males
 - ✧ Zuriel son of Abihail – Leader
 - ✧ Camp location, directly **North of the Tabernacle**
 - ✧ Tabernacle responsibilities; Boards of the Tabernacle, boards pillars of the Tabernacle, their sockets, utensils, pillars of the Court, their sockets, pegs, and cords, and all the work relating to them.

- ✧ **Moses, Aaron and his sons** – descended from **Amram** of the tribe of **Levi** through **Kohath** [\[Exodus 6:14-27\]](#)
 - ✧ Camp Location, directly **East of the Tabernacle**
 - ✧ Tabernacle Responsibilities, Keeping charge of the Sanctuary to meet the needs of the Children of Israel.
 - ✧ The outsider who came near was to be put to death.

- ✧ Total number of the Levites from one month and upward, 22,000
- ✧ Total number of the Firstborn males of all Israel, from one month and upward, 22,273
 - ✧ Substitution of Redemption: God said, “The Levites shall be Mine, I am Yehowah.”
 - ✧ God took for Himself the Levites in the place of the Firstborn of the Children of Israel.
 - ✧ The livestock of the Levites in the place of the livestock of the Children of Israel.
 - ✧ To redeem the remaining Firstborn of the Children of Israel, God required 5 shekels each to be given to Aaron and his sons, a sum of 1,365 shekels.

- ✧ It was done as Yehowah commanded Moses.