# Parsha Q&A



## Parshas Bamidbar

For the week ending 29 Iyar 5756 17 & 18 May 1996

### Parsha Questions

- 1. How were the Jewish People counted?
- 2. What was the minimum age for drafting someone?
- 3. Why was the Tribe of Levi not counted with the rest of the Jewish People?
- 4. How far away from the *Ohel Mo'ed* did the individual tribes encamp, and why this distance?
- 5. What was the signal for the camp to travel?
- 6. In what formation did the Jewish People travel in the desert?
- 7. Why does the Torah call the sons of Aaron the "sons of Aaron and Moshe"?
- 8. Why did the *Levi'im* receive a tithe ("ma'aser rishon")?
- Why were the Levi'im chosen to serve in the Ohel Mo'ed?
- 10. Why were the *Levi'im* counted only after the age of one month?
- Name one member of the tribe of Levi who was counted at birth.
- 12. Who assisted Moshe in counting the Levi'im?
- 13. What negative influence did the family of Kehas have on its neighbors?
- 14. What positive influence did Moshe have on his neighbors?

- 15. Which descendant of Levi was not numbered along with the *Levi'im*?
- 16. In verse 3:39, the Torah states that the total number of *Levi'im* was 22,000. The actual number of *Levi'im* was 22,300. Why does the Torah ignore 300 *Levi'im*?
- 17. The firstborn males of the Jewish People were redeemed for five *shekels* which was equal to twenty pieces of silver. What other firstborn had previously been valued at this price?
- 18. There were 22,000 *Levi'im* who were an "exchange" for the firstborn. There were 22,273 firstborn among the other Tribes. The remaining 273 redeemed themselves by paying five *shekels*. How did Moshe determine which of the first-born had to pay?
- 19. During what age-span is a man considered at his full strength?
- 20. As the camp was readying itself for travel, who was in charge of covering the vessels of the *Mishkan* in preparation for transport?



At the conclusion of the census (1:44-46), the Torah emphasizes three times that the Jewish People were "numbered." Why?

## I Did Not Know That!

The *Nasi* of the Tribe of Shimon, Shlumiel ben Tzorishadi (1:6), appears in the Torah in two other places under different names. He was Shaul ben Canaanis, who entered Egypt as one of the 70 souls (*Bereishis 46:10*). Also, he was Zimri ben Salo, who was killed by Pinchas at the end of *Parshas Balak*.

Sanhedrin 82b

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## Recommended Reading List

# **Ramban**Introduction to Bamidbar 1:19 Organization of the Camp

1:3 The Draft Age

1:45 The Reason for Counting

2:2 The Organization of the Camp

3:14 The Levi'im

4:16 The Role of Elazar ben Aaron

# Sforno

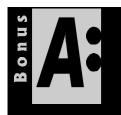
Introduction to Bamidbar

## Answers to this Week's Questions

#### All references are to the verses and Rashi's commentary, unless otherwise stated

- 1. 1:2 Each person donated a half-shekel (see *Shemos* 38:26).
- 2. 1:3 Twenty years old.
- 3. 1:49 Since they were "separated" for service in the *Mishkan* they were counted separately. Also, those who were "numbered" would die in the desert, and *Levi'im* were not to punished since they did not participate in the sin of the golden calf.
- 4. 2:2 1 mil [approx. 2000 *amos*], the permitted distance for travel on Shabbos. This allowed them to go there on Shabbos.
- 5. 2:9 The cloud over the *Ohel Mo'ed* would depart, and the *Kohanim* would blow the trumpets.
- 6. 2:9 In the formation in which they encamped.
- 7. 3:1 Because Moshe taught them Torah.
- 8. 3:8 The *Levi'im* served in the *Mishkan* in place of everyone else, and received tithes as "payment".
- 9. 3:12 Since the *Levi'im* did not sin with the golden calf, they were chosen to replace the firstborns who did sin and were thereby disqualified.
- 10. 3:15 A child is not known to be viable until it has lived thirty days.
- 11. 3:15 Yoceved, the daughter of Levi, was born while the Jewish People were entering the gates of

- Egypt. She is counted as one of the seventy souls who entered Egypt.
- 12. 3:16 The Shechina.
- 13. 3:29 Their proximity to the Tribe of Reuven led some of the Reuvenites to become involved in the rebellion of Korach.
- 14. 3:38 Moshe camped in the East, adjacent to the Tribes of Yehuda, Yissachar, and Zevulun. Many from these Tribes became great Torah scholars.
- 15. 3:39 Aaron HaKohen.
- 16. 3:39 The *Levi'im* were being counted in order that they might be used to redeem the firstborn of the Jewish People. Since 300 *Levi'im* were themselves first born, they could not be used to redeem others. Thus, the Torah didn't include them
- 17. 3:46 Yosef, Rachel's firstborn, was sold by his brothers for 20 pieces of silver (*Bereishis* 37:28).
- 18. 3:50 By lottery.
- 19. 4:2 Between the ages of 30 and 50 years old.
- 20. 4:5 The Kohanim.



To stress that the census served three distinct purposes. They were:

- 1) To determine who was fit for military service
- 2) To publicize Hashem's greatness, that from 70 souls who entered Egypt, He created a nation of over 600,000
- 3) To allow Moshe and Aaron the opportunity to bless each member of the Jewish People individually

Ksav Sofei

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