

## DVAR TORAH

**Parshat Bamidbar:** *Parshat Bamidbar* is the 1st in the Book of Numbers (Chapters 1-4). It is made up of an exhaustive census of *Bnei Yisrael* and the Tribe of Levi taken on the 1<sup>st</sup> day of the 2<sup>nd</sup> month of the 2<sup>nd</sup> year since the Exodus from Egypt.

Following G-d's command to take a census, leaders were enlisted and each tribe counted according to heads of households and their families. A second description of how the tribes encamped around and marched (with the *Mishkan* in the centre) followed.

G-d told Moshe to exclude the Levites from the tally, for they would have a unique role. A third census counted just the tribe of Levi and a fourth totalled the number of first born among the other tribes - the numbers were nearly identical. In *Naso*, a fifth census was taken to determine the working-aged Levites responsible for transporting the *Mishkan*.

### Heads of tribes:

Reuben –	Elitsur ben Shedayur
Shimon –	Shelumiel ben Tsurishadai
Yehudah –	Nakhshon ben Aminadav
Yissakhar –	Netanel ben Tsuar
Zebulun –	Eliav ben Heylon
Ephrayim –	Elishama ben Amihud
Menashe –	Gamliel ben Pedatsur
Binyamin –	Avidan ben Gidoni
Dan –	Akhiezer ben Amishadai
Asher –	Pagiel ben Okhran
Gad –	Elyasaf ben De'uel
Naftali –	Akhira ben Einan

### Tribal totals: (in this order)

Reuben –	46,500
Shimon –	59,300
Gad –	45,650
Yehudah –	74,600
Yissakhar –	54,400
Zebulun –	57,400
Ephrayim –	40,500
Menashe –	32,200
Binyamin –	35,400
Dan –	62,700
Asher –	41,500
Naftali –	53,400
=	603,550

### Encampments:

Yehudah –	74,600
Yissakhar –	54,400
Zebulun –	57,400
=	186,400
Reuben –	46,500
Shimon –	59,300
Gad –	45,650
=	151,450
Ephrayim –	40,500
Menashe –	32,200
Binyamin –	35,400
=	108,100
Dan –	62,700
Asher –	41,500
Naftali –	53,400
=	157,600
=	603,550

Moshe, Aharon  
Levi & Mishkan  
Camped in the centre

**Levite Total Population:**

Gershon – = 7,500

    Livni  
    Shimii

(Curtains & roof coverings)

Kehat – = 8,600

    Amram  
    Yitshar  
    Hevron  
    Uziel

(Holy vessels & utensils)

Merari – = 6,200

    Mahli  
    Mushi

(Wood boards & sockets)

= 22,000

(Actual Levite total was 22,300 –

See Rashi - but 300 were first born)

**First-born Population:** 22,273

(273 x 5 shekels)

(Levites were chosen in place of first born  
but surplus first born had to be redeemed)

(273 x 5 Shekels = 1,365 Shekels)

**Working-age Levites :**

Gershon = 2,630

Kehat = 2,750

Merari = 3,200

(Census taken in *Naso*) = 8,580