

## INTRODUCTION TO NUMBERS

This book has its name from the account it gives of the “numbers” of the children of Israel, twice taken particularly; which name it has with this Greeks and Latins, and so with the Syriac and Arabic versions; but with the Jews it is called sometimes “Vajedabber”, from the first word of it, “and the Lord spake”; and sometimes “Bemidbar”, from the fifth word of the first verse, “in the wilderness”, and sometimes “Sepher Pikkudim”; or, as with Origen<sup>f1</sup>, “Ammesph,kodim”, the book of musters or surveys. That it was written by Moses is not to be doubted; and is indeed suggested by our Lord himself, (~~<B66>~~John 5:46) compared with (~~<O614>~~Numbers 3:14), and the references to it, in the New Testament, fully ascertain to us Christians the authenticity of it, as that of our Lord hinted at, and those of the apostle in (~~<A00>~~1 Corinthians 10:4 ~~<S013>~~Hebrews 9:13,14). It contains an history of the affairs of the Israelites, and of their travel in the wilderness for the space of thirty eight years; though the principal facts it relates were done in the second year of their coming out of Egypt, and in the last of their being in the wilderness; and it is not merely historical, but gives a particular account of several laws, ceremonial and judicial, to be observed by the people of Israel, as well as has many things in it very instructive, both of a moral and evangelical nature.

# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION TO NUMBERS 1

In this chapter orders are given to Moses to take the number of the children of Israel, from twenty years old and upwards, (<BOOK> Numbers 1:1-3); and the men that were to assist in this work, one of each tribe are mentioned by name, (<BOOK> Numbers 1:4-16); all which was accordingly done, (<BOOK> Numbers 1:17-19); and the particular numbers of each tribe are recorded, as they were taken, (<BOOK> Numbers 1:20-44); and the sum total is given, (<BOOK> Numbers 1:45,46); the Levites being excepted, who were employed about the tabernacle, and so not to be employed in military service, (<BOOK> Numbers 1:47-51); they encamped about that, while the Israelites pitched their tents every man by his own camp and standard, (<BOOK> Numbers 1:52-54).

**Ver. 1.** *And the Lord spake unto Moses in the wilderness of Sinai*, etc.] Which is different from the wilderness of Sin, (<BOOK> Exodus 16:1); and had its name from the mountain so called, on which God gave the law of the decalogue, and where the Israelites had been encamped eleven months, (<BOOK> Exodus 19:1,2);

*in the tabernacle of the congregation*; which had now been set up a whole month, and out of which the Lord had delivered to Moses the several laws recorded in the preceding book in that space of time, (<BOOK> Exodus 40:17 <BOOK> Leviticus 1:1);

*on the first [day] of the second month*; the month Ijar, as the Targum of Jonathan, which answers to part of our April, and part of May, and was the second month of the ecclesiastical year, which began with Abib or Nisan:

*in the second year after they were come out of the land of Egypt*; that is, the children of Israel, who had now been a year and half a month out of it:

*saying*, as follows.

**Ver. 2.** *Take ye the sum of all the congregation of the children of Israel*, etc.] Excepting the Levites; nor were any account taken of the mixed

multitude that came out of Egypt with the children of Israel, only of them; and this account was taken, partly to observe the fulfilment of the divine promise to Abraham concerning the multiplication of his seed, and partly that it might be observed, that at the end of thirty eight years from hence, when they were numbered again, there were but three left of this large number, their carcasses falling in the wilderness because of their sins; and chiefly, as Aben Ezra observes, this sum was now taken to fix their standards, and for their better and more orderly journeying and encampment; for on the twentieth of this month they set forward on their journey from hence, (<sup><G0101></sup>Numbers 10:11,12); the word for the order is in the plural number, take ye, being given both to Moses and Aaron, who were to take the number, and did, (<sup><G0103></sup>Numbers 1:3);

*after their families*; into which their tribes were divided:

*by the house of their fathers*; for if the mother was of one tribe, and the father of another, the family was according to the tribe of the father, as Jarchi notes, a mother's family being never called a family, as Aben Ezra observes:

*with the number of [their] names*; of every particular person, whose name was inserted in a list or register:

*every male by their poll*; or head <sup>f2</sup>; for none but males were numbered: the Lord's spiritual Israel are a numbered people, written in the book of life, placed into the hand of Christ, and exactly known by him, even by name; yea, all that belong to him are numbered, and the very hairs of their heads,

**Ver. 3.** *From twenty years old and upwards*, etc.] All that had entered into their twentieth year, or, as it should rather seem, who were full twenty years of age, and all that were above it without any limitation; though some limit it to fifty, and others to sixty years, when men may be reasonably excused going to war; for to know who were fit for it seems to be a principal design of this order, as follows:

*all that are able to go forth to war in Israel*; who being about to journey, might expect to meet with enemies, with whom they would be obliged to engage in battle; and therefore it was proper to know their strength, and whom to call out upon occasion: Aben Ezra observes, that the phrase "in Israel" excepts the mixed multitude; those were not of Israel, and so not numbered, and perhaps not to be trusted or depended upon in war; nor were they mustered and marshalled by the standards of the several tribes; in

a mystical sense, those numbered may signify the valiant of Israel, the same as the young men in (<sup><014></sup>1 John 2:14); (see <sup><210></sup>Song of Solomon 3:7,8);

*thou and Aaron shall number them by their armies*; each tribe making a considerable army, (see Gill on “<sup><010></sup>Exodus 7:4”); these people were now typical of the church of God in its militant state in the wilderness, for which they are provided, and prepared, and accoutred.

**Ver. 4.** *And with you there shall be a man of every tribe*, etc.] Excepting Levi, of which Moses and Aaron were, to assist in taking the account, and to see that it was an exact and perfect one:

*everyone head of the house of his fathers*; and prince of the tribe he belonged to, as appears from (<sup><016></sup>Numbers 1:16) and (<sup><012></sup>Numbers 7:2), where an account is given of the same persons as princes of the tribes that offered at the dedication of the altar, who here assisted in the taking this account; the Targum of Jonathan calls them each a prince, as Prince Elizur, etc.

**Ver. 5.** *And these [are] the names of the men that shall stand with you*, etc.] Be present with Moses and Aaron when numbering the people; not merely as spectators of the affair, and inspectors of the accounts, but as assistants in the work; each man in his tribe, being best acquainted with the families and houses in it; and these men were not pitched upon by Moses and Aaron, nor chosen by their respective tribes, but were appointed and named by the Lord himself, which was doing them great honour:

*of [the tribe] of Reuben*: or “for Reuben”<sup>f3</sup>, for the taking the number of men in this tribe; and so of all the rest, (see <sup><014></sup>Numbers 1:44);

*Elizur the son of Shedeur*; from (<sup><015></sup>Numbers 1:5-15) the names of those several men are given, which were very proper for Moses and Aaron to know, though of little importance to us; nor the signification of their several names, given by Ainsworth and others; only, as Bishop Patrick observes, most of them show how much God was in the thoughts of those who, imposed these names on their children, several of them having in them “El” or “Eli”, “God” or “my God”, and “Shaddai”, “Almighty” or “all-sufficient”: to which may be added, that in some of them they seem to respect the Messiah, as Elizur, signifying “my God the rock”; and Shelumiel may be rendered, “God my peace”; and Zurishaddai, “my rock the Almighty”, or “all-sufficient”; and Pedazhur, “the rock redeemeth”: nor is there anything of any moment to be remarked, unless the order in which

the several tribes are placed; and first the children of Leah, beginning with Reuben, the firstborn; and the rest, Simeon and Judah, are ranked according to their birth; Levi being omitted, because that tribe was not now numbered, and besides, Moses and Aaron were of it; and then Issachar and Zebulun; after those the children of Rachel, because of her honour and glory above the handmaids, as Aben Ezra remarks; who further observes, that it begins with Ephraim, following Jacob our father, that is, because of the blessing of Jacob, who preferred Ephraim the younger to Manasseh the elder; and here Ephraim and Manasseh are set before Benjamin, because they were in the place of Joseph; and after that the account goes on with Dan, because, he was the firstborn of the handmaids; and after him Asher, though the second son of Zilpah, is placed before Gad, the first son, because, says the same Aben Ezra, the Lord knew that he would be the head of those that encamped by the standard of Dan, and so is placed next to him; and after him Gad, who was the firstborn of Leah's handmaid; and Naphtali last of all, the second son of Bilhah: this order seems to be designed to suit with their encampments, and the form of them.

**Ver. 6.** *Of Simeon; Shelumiel the son of Zurishaddai.* (See Gill on “Numbers 1:5”).

**Ver. 7.** *Of Judah; Nahshon the son of Amminadab.* (See Gill on “Numbers 1:5”).

**Ver. 8.** *Of Issachar; Nethaneel the son of Zuar.* (See Gill on “Numbers 1:5”).

**Ver. 9.** *Of Zebulun; Eliab the son of Helon.* (See Gill on “Numbers 1:5”).

**Ver. 10.** *Of the children of Joseph: of Ephraim; Elishama the son of Ammihud; of Manasseh; Gamaliel the son of Pedahzur.* (See Gill on “Numbers 1:5”).

**Ver. 11.** *Of Benjamin; Abidan the son of Gideoni.* (See Gill on “Numbers 1:5”).

**Ver. 12.** *Of Dan; Ahiezer the son of Ammishaddai.* (See Gill on “Numbers 1:5”).

**Ver. 13.** *Of Asher; Pagiel the son of Ocran.* (See Gill on “Numbers 1:5”).

**Ver. 14.** *Of Gad; Eliasaph the son of Deuel.* (See Gill on “<sup>(-0005)</sup>Numbers 1:5”).

**Ver. 15.** *Of Naphtali; Ahira the son of Enan.* (See Gill on “<sup>(-0005)</sup>Numbers 1:5”).

**Ver. 16.** *These [were] the renowned of the congregation,* etc.] The most famous and eminent among the people, for their birth and pedigree, or for their excellent qualities of wisdom, courage, and the like; or “the called of the congregation”<sup>f4</sup>, whom God had called by name and selected from the rest of the congregation to the above service, whereby great honour was done them: Aben Ezra says, the sense is, that the congregation did nothing until they had called them; with which agrees the note of Jarchi,

“who were called to every business of importance in the congregation:”

*princes of the tribes of their fathers;* as Elizur was prince of the children of Reuben, (<sup>(-0023)</sup>Numbers 7:30); the same is there said of the rest in their respective tribes:

*heads of thousands in Israel;* the congregation of Israel being divided into thousands, hundreds, fifties, and tens, by the advice of Jethro, (<sup>(-0282)</sup>Exodus 18:21); each of these divisions had a ruler over them, and thousands being the highest number, these princes were chiliarchs, rulers or heads of thousands.

**Ver. 17.** *And Moses and Aaron took these men,* etc.] They doubtless sent for them, and acquainted them with the nomination of them, by the Lord himself, for such a service; and they took them with them to the place where the number of the people was to be taken:

*which are expressed by [their] names:* in (<sup>(-0016)</sup>Numbers 1:16), and that as declared by the mouth of God himself.

**Ver. 18.** *And they assembled all the congregation together on the first [day] of the second month,* etc.] The month Ijar, as the Targum of Jonathan, answering to part of April and May: this was done on the selfsame day the Lord spake unto Moses about this affair, (<sup>(-0005)</sup>Numbers 1:1); so expeditious were he and Aaron in doing the will of God:

*and they declared their pedigrees;* either Moses and Aaron, according to Aben Ezra, who inquired when they were born, because of the

computation of twenty years; and then their birth was wrote down, as he says; or rather the people declared their pedigrees, of what tribe, family, and house they were, who their parents, when born, and so, of course, how old they were; Jarchi interprets it, they brought the books of their genealogies, and witnesses to confirm the birth of everyone of them, to show their genealogy according to their tribe; nor is it at all unlikely that every family and house, or master thereof, kept a register of those born to him in it, whereby their age could be ascertained as well as pedigree:

*after their famines, by the house of their fathers, according to the number of their names, from twenty years old and upwards, by their poll:* that is, every tribe gave an account of the families in it, every family what houses were in it, and every house what number of males were in it, and of what age; and such were numbered who were twenty years old and upward.

**Ver. 19.** *As the Lord commanded Moses,* etc.] In this Moses and David differed in numbering the people of Israel; the one did it by an express command from God, and in obedience to it; the other without one, and against his will, (<sup><13217></sup>1 Chronicles 21:17);

*so he numbered them in the wilderness of Sinai;* where they now were when this order was given, (<sup><0400></sup>Numbers 1:1); and from whence they removed the twentieth day of this month, (<sup><0400></sup>Numbers 10:11,12); so that in less than three weeks time, perhaps much sooner, this affair was finished; and it may be, that the place of numbering them at this time is expressly observed, to distinguish it from another numbering of them, recorded in this book, which was done in the plains of Moab, (<sup><0402></sup>Numbers 26:2,3).

**Ver. 20.** *And the children of Reuben, Israel's eldest son,* etc.] Were numbered first, and next to them those of Simeon and Gad, for they were numbered according to the order in which they were to be encamped; for under Reuben's standard were Simeon and Gad, and under Judah's Issachar and Zebulun, and under Ephraim's Manasseh and Benjamin, and under Dan's Asher and Naphtali; and according to their order were the tribes numbered:

*by their generations:* or "their generations", the birth, descent, and pedigree of them:

*after their families, by the house of their fathers:* according to the families and houses to which they belonged;

*according to the number of the names by their polls, every male from twenty years old and upward*; their names were taken down, the number of them counted by their heads, even all the males that were above twenty years of age:

*all that were able to go forth to war*; which phrase, as it suggests that before this age they were not reckoned able bodied men for war, in common, though some might; so it seems to except all infirm persons, by reason of age and otherwise: now in all the other account of the numbering of the rest of the tribes, the same forms of expression are used as here, only the tribe of Simeon, which is the next, these words are left out, “by their polls, every male”, which being twice observed, need not be repeated, since by these instances it might be sufficiently known that the number was taken by a poll, and only of males; so that in (<sup><0023></sup>Numbers 1:23-43), there is nothing material to observe, or anything different from what is in this verse, but the particular sums of each tribe numbered, which stand thus: of the tribe of Reuben 46,500; of the tribe of Simeon, 59,300; of the tribe of Gad, 45,650; of the tribe of Judah, 74,600; of the tribe of Issachar, 54,400; of the tribe of Zebulun, 57,400; of the tribe of Ephraim, 40,500; of the tribe of Manasseh, 32,200; of the tribe of Benjamin 35,400; of the tribe of Dan, 62,700; of the tribe of Asher 41,500; of the tribe of Naphtali, 53,400; in which may be observed the various increase of the tribes, agreeably to divine predictions, and according to the sovereign will and infinite wisdom of God: Reuben, the firstborn, did not excel in number, six of the tribes having more in number than he: Judah had by far the greatest increase of them all, from whom the chief ruler was to come, and even the King Messiah; and in process of time was to become a kingdom of itself; Ephraim, the younger son of Joseph, was much more fruitful than Manasseh, his elder, more than eight thousand being numbered of the former than of the latter, all which agree with Jacob’s prophecies, (<sup><0004></sup>Genesis 49:4,8-10,22 48:19,20); nor had they always the greatest number who had the most sons at their going down into Egypt; for though Simeon, who had then more sons than Reuben, had at this time a larger posterity; yet Gad, who had more than Simeon, had now fewer descendants; and Dan, who had but one son at that time, had now almost double the number of Benjamin, who then had ten sons: and it may be observed of other tribes, that their increase was not in proportion to the number of the sons of the patriarchs then; (see <sup><0408></sup>Genesis 46:8,24).



**Ver. 21.** *Those that were numbered of them, [even] of the tribe of Reuben, [were] forty and six thousand and five hundred.* 46,500 men. (See Gill on “Numbers 1:20”).

**Ver. 22.** *Of the children of Simeon, by their generations, etc.]* (See Gill on “Numbers 1:20”).

**Ver. 23.** *Those that were numbered of them, [even] of the tribe of Simeon, [were] fifty and nine thousand and three hundred.* 59,300 men. (See Gill on “Numbers 1:20”).

**Ver. 24.** *Of the children of Gad, by their generations, etc.]* (See Gill on “Numbers 1:20”).

**Ver. 25.** *Those that were numbered of them, [even] of the tribe of Gad, [were] forty and five thousand six hundred and fifty.* 45,650 men. (See Gill on “Numbers 1:20”).

**Ver. 26.** *Of the children of Judah, by their generations, etc.]* (See Gill on “Numbers 1:20”).

**Ver. 27.** *Those that were numbered of them, [even] of the tribe of Judah, [were] threescore and fourteen thousand and six hundred.* 74,600 men. (See Gill on “Numbers 1:20”).

**Ver. 28.** *Of the children of Issachar, by their generations, etc.]* (See Gill on “Numbers 1:20”).

**Ver. 29.** *Those that were numbered of them, [even] of the tribe of Issachar, [were] fifty and four thousand and four hundred.* 54,400 men. (See Gill on “Numbers 1:20”).

**Ver. 30.** *Of the children of Zebulun, by their generations, etc.]* (See Gill on “Numbers 1:20”).

**Ver. 31.** *Those that were numbered of them, [even] of the tribe of Zebulun, [were] fifty and seven thousand and four hundred.* 57,400 men. (See Gill on “Numbers 1:20”).

**Ver. 32.** *Of the children of Joseph, [namely], of the children of Ephraim, by their generations, etc.]* (See Gill on “Numbers 1:20”).

- Ver. 33.** *Those that were numbered of them, [even] of the tribe of Ephraim, [were] forty thousand and five hundred.* 40,500 men. (See Gill on “<sup>Q012</sup>Numbers 1:20”).
- Ver. 34.** *Of the children of Manasseh, by their generations, etc.]* (See Gill on “<sup>Q012</sup>Numbers 1:20”).
- Ver. 35.** *Those that were numbered of them, [even] of the tribe of Manasseh, [were] thirty and two thousand and two hundred.* 32,200 men. (See Gill on “<sup>Q012</sup>Numbers 1:20”).
- Ver. 36.** *Of the children of Benjamin, by their generations, etc.]* (See Gill on “<sup>Q012</sup>Numbers 1:20”).
- Ver. 37.** *Those that were numbered of them, [even] of the tribe of Benjamin, [were] thirty and five thousand and four hundred.* 35,400 men. (See Gill on “<sup>Q012</sup>Numbers 1:20”).
- Ver. 38.** *Of the children of Dan, by their generations, etc.]* (See Gill on “<sup>Q012</sup>Numbers 1:20”).
- Ver. 39.** *Those that were numbered of them, [even] of the tribe of Dan, [were] threescore and two thousand and seven hundred.* 62,700 men. (See Gill on “<sup>Q012</sup>Numbers 1:20”).
- Ver. 40.** *Of the children of Asher, by their generations, etc.]* (See Gill on “<sup>Q012</sup>Numbers 1:20”).
- Ver. 41.** *Those that were numbered of them, [even] of the tribe of Asher, [were] forty and one thousand and five hundred.* 41,500 men. (See Gill on “<sup>Q012</sup>Numbers 1:20”).
- Ver. 42.** *Of the children of Naphtali, throughout their generations, etc.]* (See Gill on “<sup>Q012</sup>Numbers 1:20”).
- Ver. 43.** *Those that were numbered of them, [even] of the tribe of Naphtali, [were] fifty and three thousand and four hundred.* 53,400 men. (See Gill on “<sup>Q012</sup>Numbers 1:20”).
- Ver. 44.** *These [are] those that were numbered, etc.]* Or, as the Targum of Jonathan, these are the sums of the numbers; namely, those before given of the several respective tribes:

*which Moses and Aaron numbered, and the princes of Israel, [being] twelve men*; for though the tribe of Levi was not numbered, yet Joseph having a double portion, his two sons are reckoned as distinct tribes; so that one out of each tribe made up the number twelve:

*each one for the house of his fathers*; for the tribe he belonged to, with which it might reasonably be supposed he was best acquainted, and could more readily take the number of them.

**Ver. 45.** *So were all those that were numbered of the children of Israel,* etc.] Of all the tribes, excepting Levi, that is, all the sums of the number of the children of Israel; all put together made the sum total given in the next verse:

*by the house of their fathers, from twenty years old and upward, all that were able to go forth to war in Israel*; all in every tribe, family, and house, that were above twenty years of age, healthful and strong, and fit for war.

**Ver. 46.** *Even all they that were numbered,* etc.] Of whom an account was taken, and their names set down in a book or register: were 603,550; which was exactly the number of them, when taken about seven months before this, when they were assessed for defraying the expenses of the tabernacle, (<sup><B335></sup>Exodus 38:26); so that it should seem not one person had died during that time; for though there were three that died a violent death in that compass of time, yet two of them were of the tribe of Levi, not now numbered; and the other was not an Israelite by the father's side; (see <sup><B101></sup>Leviticus 10:1,2 24:11,23); but it is not very probable, among such a vast number of people, that not one above twenty years of age should die in that time: some therefore are of opinion, that the tribe of Levi was numbered before, though not now; and that there was such an increase in that time among the other tribes as to equal the number of males of twenty years and upwards, in that tribe taken into the service of God, by which they were no losers.

**Ver. 47.** *But the Levites,* etc.] The tribe of Levi were excepted from this muster, they being employed in a kind of warfare, and therefore not to be engaged in another:

*after the tribe of their fathers, were not numbered among them*: the rest of the tribes; the reason follows.

**Ver. 48.** *For the Lord had spoken unto Moses,* etc.] Not to number the Levites, when he gave him the orders to number the rest of the tribes: this is observed, lest it should be thought that this was what Moses did of himself, out of affection to the tribe he was of, and to spare it, that it might not be obliged to go forth to war when others did; not that they were forbid to engage in war, or that it was unlawful for them so to do, for when necessity required, and they were of themselves willing to engage in it, they might, as appears in the case of the Maccabees, but they might not be forced into it; they were, as Josephus<sup>f5</sup> says, exempted from it; and so all concerned in religious service, both among Heathens and Christians, have always been excused bearing arms:

*saying*; as follows.

**Ver. 49.** *Only thou shall not number the tribe of Levi,* etc.] That is, along with the other tribes, for it might be numbered by itself, as it afterwards was, (<sup>00BB</sup>Numbers 3:43);

*neither take the sum of them among the children of Israel*; which confirms what is before observed: now this being the declared will of God clears Moses from all partiality to his own tribe, he doing nothing but what he had a command of God for it.

**Ver. 50.** *But thou shalt appoint the Levites over the tabernacle of testimony,* etc.] So called from the ark in it, in which was the law of God, which was a testimony of the will of God to his people:

*and over all the vessels thereof*; the candlestick, table: and altars, as Aben Ezra notes:

*and over all things that [belong] to it*; the vessels of vessels, as the same writer calls them; for the candlestick, shewbread table, and the two altars of incense and burnt offering had vessels appertaining to them:

*they shall bear the tabernacle, and all the vessels thereof*; carry them from place to place when needful:

*and they shall minister unto it*; by taking care of the instruments of it and the vessels in it, but not by doing any part of the priestly office in it, as offering sacrifice, burning incense, and the like:

*and shall encamp round about the tabernacle*; they were a sort of camp or army of themselves, and their station was around the tabernacle, which was

a kind of royal palace to God the King of kings; so that as they were the king's legion, and to be numbered alone, as Jarchi observes, in (<sup>1049</sup>Numbers 1:49), so they were a guard about his palace, and were placed between that and the camp of Israel.

**Ver. 51.** *And when the tabernacle setteth forward*, etc.] Or was about to set forward; that is, the congregation were about to journey, and take the tabernacle with them, as they always did, when and wherever they journeyed:

*the Levites shall take it down*; unpin it, take the boards and pillars out of their sockets, and the bars out of their places, and the whole into pieces, in order to be put into wagons prepared to carry them, of which mention is made in a following chapter;

*and when the tabernacle is pitched, the Levites shall set it up*; at whatsoever place the congregation encamped and took up their abode for any time: the tabernacle was pitched in the manner as tents are, when the Levites put the several parts together, laid the sockets, put in the boards and the bars, and also the pillars of the court and elsewhere, and hung the hangings upon them; and set the candlestick, tables, altars, ark, and all the vessels of the sanctuary in their proper places:

*and the stranger that cometh nigh*; to meddle with or touch the above things, to assist in taking down or setting up the tabernacle, or bearing any of the vessels of it: by a stranger is meant, not one of another nation, nor a proselyte, whether of the gate or of righteousness; but, as Aben Ezra interprets it, one that is a stranger from the sons of Levi, who is not of that tribe, even though an Israelite:

*shall be put to death*; either the sanhedrim or court of judicature shall condemn and put him to death, as the same writer observes; or he shall die by the hand of heaven, as Jarchi; that is, by the immediate hand of God, or with flaming fire from before the Lord, as the Targum of Jonathan; as Uzzah was smote, and died by the ark of God for touching it, (<sup>1086</sup>2 Samuel 5:6,7).

**Ver. 52.** *And the children of Israel shall pitch their tents, every man by his own camp*, etc.] There were four, unless every tribe was a camp, and so then there were twelve camps, besides the camp of the Levites: the Targum of Jonathan is,

“by the house of his troop,”

the regiment to which he belonged, every tribe or camp having various troops or regiments in it:

*and every man by his own standard throughout their hosts*; there were four standards, and three tribes to each standard, which were placed east, west, north, and south of the tabernacle, as is at large described in the following chapter.

**Ver. 53.** *But the Levites shall pitch round about the tabernacle of testimony*, etc.] Between the tabernacle and the camps of Israel, to guard the tabernacle and preserve the things in it, and to keep persons from going into it that should not, to pollute or plunder it: these were placed in like manner as the four living creatures round the throne, (<sup>4045</sup>Revelation 4:6); where the allusion seems to be to this situation of the Levites:

*that there be no wrath upon the congregation of the children of Israel*; that is, from the Lord, should any of them approach too near, or meddle with and touch what they had nothing to do with, or go where they should not; such wrath as came upon Uzzah for his error and transgression before observed:

*and the Levites shall keep the charge of the tabernacle of testimony*; the several things in it committed to their charge; (see <sup>4048</sup>Numbers 3:8).

**Ver. 54.** *And the children of Israel did according to all the Lord commanded Moses*, etc.] Pitched their tents by their own camps and standards; did not come near the tabernacle but kept at a proper distance from it, and did not meddle with things they had no concern, with, and which were peculiar to the Levites:

*so they did*; which is repeated to show how readily, punctually, and perfectly they observed the command of God with respect to this affair.