

Numbers 1 and 26

The Lord spoke to Moses in the tent of meeting in the Desert of Sinai on the first day of the second month of the second year after the Israelites came out of Egypt. He said: 2 “Take a census of the whole Israelite community by their clans and families, listing every man by name, one by one. 3 You and Aaron are to count according to their divisions all the men in Israel who are twenty years old or more and able to serve in the army. 4 One man from each tribe, each of them the head of his family, is to help you. 5 These are the names of the men who are to assist you:

44 These were the men counted by Moses and Aaron and the twelve leaders of Israel, each one representing his family. 45 All the Israelites twenty years old or more who were able to serve in Israel’s army were counted according to their families. 46 The total number was 603,550.

47 **The ancestral tribe of the Levites, however, was not counted along with the others.** 48 The Lord had said to Moses: 49 “You must not count the tribe of Levi or include them in the census of the other Israelites. 50 Instead, appoint the Levites to be in charge of the tabernacle of the covenant law—over all its furnishings and everything belonging to it. They are to carry the tabernacle and all its furnishings; they are to take care of it and encamp around it. 51 Whenever the tabernacle is to move, the Levites are to take it down, and whenever the tabernacle is to be set up, the Levites shall do it. Anyone else who approaches it is to be put to death. 52 The Israelites are to set up their tents by divisions, each of them in their own camp under their standard. 53 The Levites, however, are to set up their tents around the tabernacle of the covenant law so that my wrath will not fall on the Israelite community. The Levites are to be responsible for the care of the tabernacle of the covenant law.”

54 The Israelites did all this just as the Lord commanded Moses.

26 After the plague the Lord said to Moses and Eleazar son of Aaron, the priest, 2 “Take a census of the whole Israelite community by families—all those twenty years old or more who are able to serve in the army of Israel.” 3 So on the plains of Moab by the Jordan across from Jericho, Moses and Eleazar the priest spoke with them and said, 4 **“Take a census of the men twenty years old or more,** as the Lord commanded Moses.”

52 The Lord said to Moses, 53 “The land is to be allotted to them as an inheritance based on the number of names. 54 To a larger group give a larger inheritance, and to a smaller group a smaller one; each is to receive its inheritance according to the number of those listed. 55 Be sure that the land is distributed by lot. What each group inherits will be according to the names for its ancestral tribe. 56 Each inheritance is to be distributed by lot among the larger and smaller groups.”

57 These were the Levites who were counted by their clans:

(Kohath was the forefather of Amram; 59 the name of Amram’s wife was Jochebed, a descendant of Levi, who was born to the Levites[e] in Egypt. To Amram she bore Aaron, Moses and their sister Miriam. 60 Aaron was the father of Nadab and Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar. 61 But Nadab and Abihu died when they made an offering before the Lord with unauthorized fire.)

62 All the male Levites a month old or more numbered 23,000. They were not counted along with the other Israelites because they received no inheritance among them.

63 These are the ones counted by Moses and Eleazar the priest when they counted the Israelites on the plains of Moab by the Jordan across from Jericho. 64 Not one of them was among those counted by Moses and Aaron the priest when they counted the Israelites in the Desert of Sinai. 65 For the Lord had told those Israelites they would surely die in the wilderness, and not one of them was left except Caleb son of Jephunneh and Joshua son of Nun.

1. Why did God command Moses to count the men?
2. Why did God exclude the Levites?
3. What was different the second time God asked them to count? Why?

James 1:12-18

¹² Blessed is the one who perseveres under trial because, having stood the test, that person will receive the crown of life that the Lord has promised to those who love him.

¹³ When tempted, no one should say, “God is tempting me.” For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt anyone; ¹⁴ but each person is tempted when they are dragged away by their own evil desire and enticed. ¹⁵ Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death.

¹⁶ Don't be deceived, my dear brothers and sisters. ¹⁷ Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows. ¹⁸ He chose to give us birth through the word of truth, that we might be a kind of first fruits of all he created. *James 1:12-18 NIV*

1. What does it mean to persevere? Is this something we can do alone? What if we fail?
2. Where does temptation come from? What does it mean "Lead us not into temptation?"
3. Is desire a bad thing?
4. What are "good and perfect gifts" that come from God?

Mark 1:9-15

⁹ At that time Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. ¹⁰ Just as Jesus was coming up out of the water, he saw heaven being torn open and the Spirit descending on him like a dove. ¹¹ And a voice came from heaven: "You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased."

¹² At once the Spirit sent him out into the wilderness, ¹³ and he was in the wilderness forty days, being tempted by Satan. He was with the wild animals, and angels attended him.

¹⁴ After John was put in prison, Jesus went into Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God. ¹⁵ "The time has come," he said. "The kingdom of God has come near. Repent and believe the good news!" *Mark 1:9-15 NIV*

1. Why did the Spirit send Jesus into the Wilderness? Did Jesus go willingly or was he forced?
2. What's up with the wild animals?
3. When did the angels come?
4. What did Jesus leave us to fight Satan with?
5. Why did Jesus wait for John to be imprisoned?