

# Numbers 1:32

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Of the children of Joseph, namely, of the children of Ephraim, by their generations, after their families, by the house of their fathers, according to the number of the names, from twenty years old and upward, all that were able to go forth to war;

## Analysis

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Ephraim's census at 40,500 made it smaller than Manasseh's 32,200 (verse 35) at this time, yet Jacob's prophecy elevated Ephraim above his older brother (Genesis 48:19-20). This reversal of natural order—the younger superseding the elder—appears repeatedly in Scripture (Jacob over Esau, Joseph over his brothers, David over his brothers, Christ over Adam) to demonstrate that God's electing grace follows His sovereign choice rather than natural privilege or human expectation.

## Historical Context

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Ephraim would become the most prominent northern tribe, so much so that 'Ephraim' became synonymous with the northern kingdom of Israel after the division. Joshua came from Ephraim, as did Jeroboam, the first northern king.

## Related Passages

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**1 John 4:8** — God is love

**1 Corinthians 13:4** — Characteristics of love

## Study Questions

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1. How does the pattern of the younger superseding the elder throughout Scripture demonstrate God's sovereign election?
2. What does Ephraim's eventual prominence despite initial smaller numbers teach us about God's timing and purposes?

## Interlinear Text

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מֹתְּבָּה	וַיֹּסֶף	מֹתְּבָּה	אַפְּכָן	תּוֹלְדָתָם
Of the children	of Joseph	Of the children	of Ephraim	by their generations
H1121	H3130	H1121	H669	H8435
בְּמִסְפֵּר מִלְּמִשְׁפָחָת מִלְּבָית מִלְּאָבֶת מִלְּבָית מִלְּאָבָת מִלְּבָית מִלְּאָבָת	לְמִשְׁפָחָת מִלְּבָית מִלְּאָבֶת מִלְּבָית מִלְּאָבָת	לְמִשְׁפָחָת מִלְּבָית מִלְּאָבֶת מִלְּבָית מִלְּאָבָת	לְמִשְׁפָחָת מִלְּבָית מִלְּאָבֶת מִלְּבָית מִלְּאָבָת	בְּמִסְפֵּר מִלְּבָית מִלְּאָבֶת
after their families	by the house	of their fathers	according to the number	
H4940	H1004	H1	H4557	
כְּלַיְמָד שְׁמָתָה	שְׁמָתָה	שְׁנָה	שְׁנָה	כְּלַיְמָד שְׁמָתָה
of the names	Of the children	from twenty	years	and upward
H8034	H1121	H6242	H8141	H3605
אֲצַפְּנָה:	אֲצַפְּנָה:			
all that were able to go forth	to war			
H3318	H6635			

## Additional Cross-References

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**Deuteronomy 33:17** (Parallel theme): His glory is like the firstling of his bullock, and his horns are like the horns of unicorns: with them he shall push the people together to the ends of the earth: and they are the ten thousands of Ephraim, and they are the thousands of Manasseh.