

Numbers 26:18

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

These are the families of the children of Gad according to those that were numbered of them, forty thousand and five hundred.

Analysis

Forty thousand and five hundred (אֶרְבָּעִים אֶלָף וּמִשְׁמִשׁ מֵאוֹת)—Gad's census total shows a dramatic decrease of 5,150 men from the first census (45,650 in Numbers 1:25). This decline likely resulted from plague judgments during the wilderness rebellions, particularly Korah's rebellion (ch. 16) and Baal-Peor's immorality (ch. 25). Only Simeon suffered a larger percentage loss.

The phrase **according to those that were numbered** (le-pheqūdehem) emphasizes precision—this wasn't estimation but exact military registry of males twenty years and older. Despite population decline, Gad still fielded a substantial army, demonstrating that God's purposes don't depend on numerical superiority (cf. Gideon's 300).

Historical Context

This census occurred approximately 38 years after the first (Numbers 1), measuring the second generation who would conquer Canaan. The population decline served as sobering testimony to divine judgment—those who rebelled at Kadesh-Barnea died in the wilderness. Only Caleb and Joshua survived from the first generation of fighting men.

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Study Questions

1. What does Gad's population decline teach about the consequences of covenant unfaithfulness and corporate sin?
2. How does God's continued use of Gad despite their reduced numbers demonstrate that faithfulness matters more than strength?
3. In what ways do census numbers in Scripture serve both practical (land distribution) and theological (judgment/blessing) purposes?

Interlinear Text

אֵלֶּה	מִשְׁפָּחֹת	תֵּן	בָּנִים	גָּד
H428	These	are	the	families
			of	the
			children	of
				Gad
	H4940		H1121	H1410
לִפְנֵי	מִצְמָצָה	אֶלָּא	אֶת	מֵאֲתָה
according	to	those	that	were
				numbered
H6485		H705	H505	H2568
אֶת	אֶרְבַּע	אֶלָּא	וְ	וְ
four	thousand	and	five	hundred
H1121	H505	H1410	H3967	

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