

Numbers 26:50

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

These are the families of Naphtali according to their families:
and they that were numbered of them were forty and five
thousand and four hundred.

Analysis

Forty and five thousand and four hundred (45,400)—Naphtali maintained almost exactly its first census number (53,400 in Numbers 1:43 was likely a scribal error for 45,400, or this represents an 8,000 decline). Among the dramatic population shifts—Simeon's collapse, Manasseh's explosion—Naphtali held steady. Stability is sometimes the greatest miracle.

The Hebrew phrase וּפְקֻדֵּיהֶם ("and their numbered ones") emphasizes these aren't random people but counted, known individuals. God's people aren't a mob but a numbered flock. Jesus said, "I know my sheep" (John 10:14)—and He knows them by exact count, down to the hundred.

Historical Context

Naphtali's 45,400 warriors would later produce Barak, the judge who defeated Sisera (Judges 4-5). This census numbered the grandfathers of those who would sing Deborah's victory song. Every census is a prophecy—these numbers represent future deliverers, future worshipers, future witnesses.

Related Passages

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Study Questions

1. Why might stability (maintaining numbers) be as significant as dramatic growth in God's economy?
2. How does God's precise numbering of Naphtali demonstrate that He knows and values each believer individually?
3. What future purposes was God preparing through these 45,400 Naphtalites that wouldn't be revealed for generations?

Interlinear Text

לְמִשְׁפְּחֹתָם אֵלֶּה לְמִשְׁפְּחֹתָם בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל
H428 These are the families of Naphtali These are the families
H4940 H5321 H4940

וּפִקְּדוּן דִּיהֶם חֲמִשָּׁה וְאַרְבָּעִים אָלֶּף וְאַרְבָּע
and they that were numbered and five of them were forty thousand and four
H6485 H2568 H705 H505 H702

מֵאוֹת:
hundred
H3967