

Numbers 26:7

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

These are the families of the Reubenites: and they that were numbered of them were forty and three thousand and seven hundred and thirty.

Analysis

These are the families of the Reubenites: and they that were numbered of them were forty and three thousand and seven hundred and thirty (43,730)—this tribal total represents a decrease from the first census (46,500 in Numbers 1:21), a reduction of 2,770 men. Reuben's numerical decline may reflect divine judgment, including the Dathan and Abiram rebellion from this tribe (Numbers 16:1; 26:9-11).

The precision of the count—43,730, not a rounded number—emphasizes historical accuracy and God's comprehensive knowledge: **the LORD knows those who are His** (2 Timothy 2:19). Despite Reuben's diminished numbers and lost birthright, the tribe survives and receives land east of the Jordan (Numbers 32). God's covenant is not conditional on numerical success but on His sovereign faithfulness.

Historical Context

Reuben's tribal territory would be east of the Jordan in Gilead (Numbers 32), along with Gad and half of Manasseh. The tribe faced constant threats from Moabite neighbors and eventually disappeared from historical records after the Assyrian captivity. The decline from 46,500 to 43,730 fighting men suggests significant losses during the 38 wilderness years.

Related Passages

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Study Questions

1. How does Reuben's numerical decline yet continued covenant inclusion demonstrate that God's faithfulness does not depend on human strength or numbers?
2. What do the specific census numbers reveal about God's intimate knowledge of His people?
3. When your spiritual community experiences decline or setback, how does God's covenant promise sustain hope?

Interlinear Text

וְהָיוּ	הַרְאֵיבִי	מִשְׁפְּחֹת	אֵלֶּה
H1961	H7206	H4940	H428
	of the Reubenites	These are the families	
וּשְׁבַע	אֶלֶף	אַרְבָּעִים	שְׁלֹשָׁה
H7651	H505	H705	H7969
and seven	thousand	of them were forty	and three
			and they that were numbered
			H6485
וּשְׁלֹשִׁים	מֵאָה		
H7970	H3967		
and thirty	hundred		

From KJV Study • kjvstudy.org