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Parashat Bamidbar: Counting the Armies of the Almighty

Numbers 3:14-16: The counting of the Levites.

Numbers 1:2-3 The counting of the Armies of Israel.

Numbers 3:40-41 The counting of the redeemed firstborn.

Kings generally take a census of their armies before going to war. Why take a census of the Levites who would never pick up a sword?

From **First Fruit of Zion's** commentary on Parashat Bamidbar

http://ffoz.org/resources/edrash/bamidbar/the_hosts_above_and_the_hosts.php

*That which is in heaven is reflected on earth. Traditional Jewish teaching and the book of Hebrews both teach us that the Tabernacle on earth is a copy of the true heavenly Tabernacle above—the eternal dwelling place of the living God. The book of Hebrews also teaches that the priesthood of the Tabernacle has an equivalent priesthood in the Tabernacle above; namely, the priesthood of the Messiah. Thus, earthly institutions ordained by the Torah are reflections of heavenly realities. Read **Hebrews 7:21***

This is true of the hosts of Israel as well. In the opening of the book of Numbers, the Torah offers us a long look at the hosts of Israel. We see them numbered and counted. We see them divided into tribal identities. We see them camped about the Tabernacle.

If that which is below is a reflection of that which is above, then these hosts on earth must correspond to the hosts in heaven. In the rabbinic tradition, the encampments of Israel described in these passages are said to correspond to the placement of the angels around God's throne. The mustering of the hosts of Israel can be compared to the mustering of the hosts of heaven.

Chapter 19 (read verses 11-16) of the book of **Revelation** offers us a glimpse of that future. There we see the Messiah as commander of the LORD's hosts prepared for battle. He rides at the head of the host of heaven. As in the beginning of the book of Numbers, the hosts of the LORD are arrayed for war, ready to swoop into action. The heavenly hosts that accompany Messiah into battle at the second coming seem to be the angels. Numerous texts refer to the Master's command over those angel legions. **Matthew 26:53** tells us that Yeshua has twelve legions of angels at His disposal. The twelve legions correspond to the twelve tribes.

Revelation 19:14 describes "armies which are in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean." The reference to the fine linen seems to suggest more than just angels. **Revelation 19:7-8** describes the righteous bride of Messiah as those clothed "in fine linen, bright and clean, for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints." (**Revelation 19:8**) Perhaps the ranks of the heavenly cavalry, mounted upon the white horses, are not angels at all—but the righteous of the generations.

From the Kleinman Edition: A Daily Dose of Torah, Artscroll Series, Torah Thought for the Day for Parashat Bamidbar, page 2, Sunday, 3rd paragraph and page 17, Tuesday, 2nd paragraph.

Ephesians 6:10-18 What sort of warfare is suggested here?