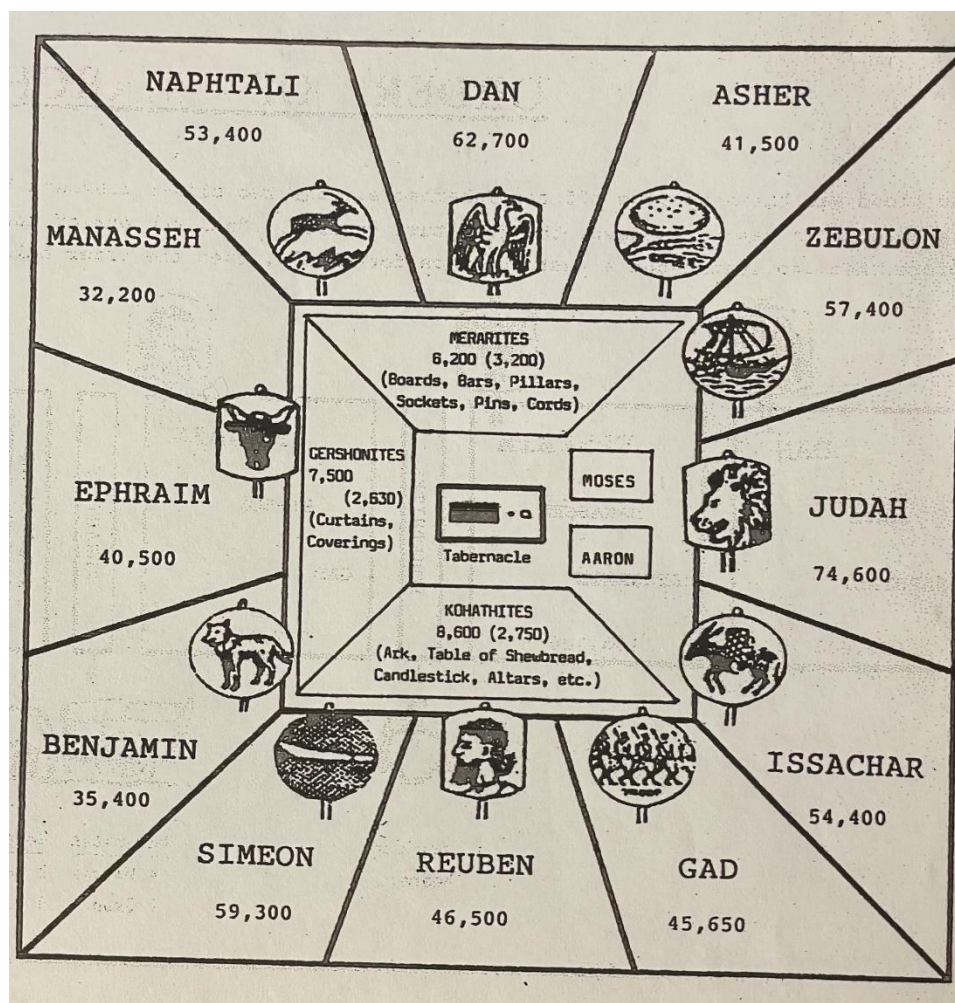




One thing that is striking is the language that is used in the numbering of Israel and in the order, is of a military nature; for example: the camps around the Tabernacle of the various tribes are described as divisions, and each with their standard. The men who were counted we note in the first chapter, were from 20 years old and upward and fit enough to serve in the army, the phrase used in the KJV is *all that are able to go forth to war ...* they were not counted fit enough to be farmers or builders or labourers but soldiers. They were numbered as men of war which was an ominous declaration of the events which would come on the nation long before they would become shepherds or crop growers. True is the

word of Luke under divine inspiration *we must through much tribulation enter in to the Kingdom of God.* (Acts 14:22)

As this chapter describes, particular postings are made for each tribe into distinct quadrants, 3 tribes into each quadrant. In the vanguard encamped towards the rising of the sun were posted Judah, Issachar and Zebulun. On the right wing, southward, Reuben Simeon and Gad and in the rear, westward, Ephraim, Manasseh and Benjamin, and on the left or northward, Dan Asher and Naphtali. The Tabernacle was to be located in the centre.



Such what was the disposition and arrangement of things that even a doubter such as Balaam was caused to exclaim: *How goodly are thy tents, O Jacob, and thy tabernacles, O Israel! As the valleys are they spread forth, as gardens by the river's side, as [the trees of lign] aloes*

which the Lord hath planted, and as cedar trees beside the waters (Numbers 24:5,6). Once appointed to its station, no tribe was allowed to camp where it pleased. Right down to each household within each family, each knew its place. It is God that appoints us the bounds of our habitation and it is for us to therewith be content, (Philippians 4:11) within the limitations of the circumstances and particular situation we each find ourselves.

With the same order displayed as natural Israel, the Spiritual Israel will be perceived with Christ at the centre- *as terrible as an army with banners*, as the Song of Solomon reminds us- (6:4,10). We see this in the organisation of this consecrated assembly, that each family, tribe and quadrant were to pitch by their standards. The prophet Ezekiel, in vision, was encouraged, as he sat a captive, a stranger in a strange land, taken out of the land of his inheritance, when Israel was no longer a beautiful emblem to the nations, but instead a charred ruin of a nation, - yet the day would come when Israel would again stand an exceeding great army (Ezekiel 37: 10) but before this he was shown a vision of spiritual Israel: Ezekiel 1:5,6: *Also out of the midst thereof came the likeness of four living creatures. And this was their appearance; they had the likeness of a man. And every one had four faces, and every one had four wings.* This vision was of the four living ones, the Cherubim, glorified Israel after the Spirit - with four faces; characteristics pertaining to the singular seed of promise of which once

Tabernacle spoke. These emblems or faces were also aspects which related the standards of the tribes of Israel. Beginning with Judah, the standard of lion, Followed by Reuben, the face of a man, and moving around the camp in order given by Ezekiel the ox would correspond with the camp of Ephraim



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and then Dan to the north the symbol of the eagle, - as shown in the chart above. These four characteristics were supposed to have been manifest by Israel in the wilderness. The Lion symbolised rulership, Man symbolised the image of God, the ox symbolised a life of service and the eagle the ability to see afar off.

Brother Terry