

Elder Vernon Johnson

Numbers

Twenty

Army Service began at 20 years of age

A number of scriptures indicate that when the children of Israel came out of Egypt into the wilderness that all those able bodied men would be expected to go to fight the wars and battles of Israel beginning at the age of 20 years:

1. Num. 1:3 "From twenty years old and upward, all that are able to go forth to war in Israel: thou and Aaron shall number them by their armies."

2. Num. 1:18 "And they assembled all the congregation together on the first day of the second month, and they declared their pedigrees after their families, by the house of their fathers, according to the number of the names, from twenty years old and upward, by their polls."

3. Num. 1:20 "And the children of Reuben, Israel's eldest son, by their generations, after their families, by the house of their fathers, according to the number of the names, by their polls, every male from twenty years old and upward, all that were able to go forth to war;"

4. Num. 1:22 "Of the children of Simeon, by their generations, after their families, by the house of their fathers, those that were numbered of them, according to the number of the names, by their polls, every male from twenty years old and upward, all that were able to go forth to war;"

5. Num. 1:24 "Of the children of Gad, by their generations, after their families, by the house of their fathers, according to the number of the names, from twenty years old and upward, all that were able to go forth to war;"

6. Num. 1:26 "Of the children of Judah, by their generations, after their families, by the house of their fathers, according to the number of the names, from twenty years old and upward, all that were able to go forth to war;"

7. Num. 1:28 "Of the children of Issachar, by their generations, after their families, by the house of their fathers, according to the number of the names, from twenty years old and upward, all that were able to go forth to war;"

8. Num. 1:30 "Of the children of Zebulun, by their generations, after their families, by the house of their fathers, according to the number of the names, from twenty years old and upward, all that were able to go forth to war;"

9. Num. 1:32 "Of the children of Joseph, namely, of the children of Ephraim, by their generations, after their families, by the house of their fathers, according to the number of the names, from twenty years old and upward, all that were able to go forth to war;"

10. Num. 1:34 "Of the children of Manasseh, by their generations, after their families, by the house of their fathers, according to the number of the names, from twenty years old and upward, all that were able to go forth to war;"

11. Num. 1:36 "Of the children of Benjamin, by their generations, after their families, by the house of their fathers, according to the number of the names, from twenty years old and upward, all that were able to go forth to war;"

12. Num. 1:38 "Of the children of Dan, by their generations, after their families, by the house of their fathers, according to the number of the names, from twenty years old and upward, all that were able to go forth to war;"

13. Num. 1:40 "Of the children of Asher, by their generations, after their families, by the house of their fathers, according to the number of the names, from twenty years old and upward, all that were able to go forth to war;"

14. Num. 1:42 "Of the children of Naphtali, throughout their generations, after their families, by the house of their fathers, according to the number of the names, from twenty years old and upward, all that were able to go forth to war;"

15. Num. 1:45 "So were all those that were numbered of the children of Israel, by the house of their fathers, from twenty years old and upward, all that were able to go forth to war in Israel;"

Several things stand out to us in these passages. First, the age of service in the army of Israel began at age 20. Second, only able men were to go to war. Third, there was a price to be paid for this service. Fourth, the men who were to go to war were numbered.

The nation of Israel is a type of the children of God in his church. While there is no particular age that God's children may serve him in his church here on earth, yet they are to be soldiers in the army of God to fight the wars and battles of the Lord:

1. 2 Tim. 2:3 "Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. 4 No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier."

2. 1 Cor. 9:26 "I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air:"

3. 1 Tim. 6:12 "Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses."

4. 2 Tim. 4:7 "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith:"

5. 2 Cor. 10:3 "For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: 4 (For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;) 5 Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ; 6 And having in a readiness to revenge all disobedience, when your obedience is fulfilled."

6. 1 Tim. 1:18 "This charge I commit unto thee, son Timothy, according to the prophecies which went before on thee, that thou by them mightest war a good warfare;"

7. 1 Pet. 2:11 "Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul;"

It is through the ability that God gives us and the instruction of his word that we are made able to fight the battles that he Lord sends us to fight:

1. 2 Cor. 3:6 "Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life."

2. 2 Cor. 9:8 "And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work:"

3. Eph. 3:20 "Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us,"

4. Eph. 6:11 "Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil."

5. Eph. 6:13 "Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand."

6. Eph. 6:16 "Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked."

7. 2 Tim. 2:2 "And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also."

8. 2 Tim. 3:15 "And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus."

9. Titus 1:9 "Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers."

Next, Jesus paid the price for our service. 1 Cor. 6:20 "For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's. 1 Cor. 7:23 "Ye are bought with a price; be not ye the servants of men." The price for our service was the precious blood of Jesus. Just as the price of each of the Old Testament soldiers of Israel was the same, so it is with us today. We are all redeemed by the same precious blood of Christ.

Just as the men who went to war in the Old Testament were numbered so we see in the book of Revelation that God's children in the church are numbered also: Rev. 7:3 "Saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads. 4 And I heard the number of them which were sealed: and there were sealed an hundred and forty and four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel. 5 Of the tribe of Juda were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Reuben were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Gad were sealed twelve thousand. 6 Of the tribe of Aser were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Nephthalim were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Manasses were sealed twelve thousand. 7 Of the tribe of Simeon were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Levi were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Issachar were sealed twelve thousand. 8 Of the tribe of Zabulon were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Joseph were

sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Benjamin were sealed twelve thousand." It is not our intention at this time to go into the meaning of the sign language presented here, but suffice it to say that God knows who all of his disciples are and has sealed them with the Holy Spirit of promise.