

"Take a census of the entire Israelite community." (1:2)

It appears remarkable that this new census yielded the identical total as the previous one taken some six months earlier (*Shemos 38:26*). What is even more notable is that the tribe of Levi, which was previously counted, is not included in the present census, since they were now counted separately. Apparently, during this six month period there were added to the ranks of Jewish males between the ages of twenty and sixty, a number equivalent to the tribe of Levi. When the tribe of Levi was chosen to devote their life entirely to the service of Hashem, they no longer could be included in the ranks of those who were eligible for service in the "Jewish Army". One may presume that due to this exclusion the number of members in the Jewish army would decrease, since a complete tribe was removed from its ranks. Therefore, at Hashem's command, a new census was organized to clearly indicate that the number of soldiers was intact. This is similar to Hashem's compassion throughout our tumultuous history; that despite the paucity of those who devote their entire life to *Torah* study and Hashem's service, there is no lack since Hashem always compensates.