

Chapter 3

The Leuites are afsumed to the feruice of the Tabernacle, 14. numbered by their feural families, and their offices diftinguished, 45. they are taken to God in place of the firft borne of the children of Ifrael. The refidue of the firft borne, aboue the number of Leuites, are redemed with price.

Thefe are the generations of Aaron and Moyfes in the day that our Lord fpake to Moyfes in Mount Sinai. ² And thefe be the names of the fonnes of Aaron: his firft begotten Nadab, then Abiu, and Eleazar, and Ithamar. ³ Thefe are the names of the fonnes of Aaron the priefts that were anointed, and whofe handes were filled and cōfēcrated, to doe the function of priefthood. ⁴ For Nadab and Abiu died, when they offered the ftrange fire in the fight of our Lord, in the defert of Sinai, without children: and Eleazar and Ithamar did the function of priefthood in the prefence of Aaron their father. ⁵ And our Lord fpake to Moyfes, faying: ⁶ Bring the tribe of Leui, and make them ftand in the fight of Aaron the prieft to minifter vnto him, and let them watch, ⁷ and obferue whatfoeuer pertaineth to the feruice of the multitude before the tabernacle of teftimonie, ⁸ and let them keepe the veffel of the tabernacle, feruing in the minifterie therof. ⁹ And thou fhalt geue the Leuites for a gift, ¹⁰ to Aaron and to his fonnes, to whom they are deliuered of the children of Ifrael. But Aaron and his fonnes thou fhalt appoint ouer the feruice of priefthood. ^a)The ftranger, that approacheth to minifter, fhall die. ¹¹ And our Lord fpake to Moyfes, faying: ¹² I haue taken the Leuites from the children of Ifrael, for euerie firft borne, that openeth the matrice among the children of Ifrael, and the Leuites fhall be mine. ¹³ For the firft borne is mine: fince I ftroke the firft borne in the Land of Ægypt: I haue

^a As none but Leuites might ferue in the tabernacle: fo none but of Aarons ftock might do the office of Priefthood.

sanctified to me whatsoever is first borne in Israel from man unto beast, they are mine: I the Lord. ¹⁴ And our Lord spake to Moyses in the desert of Sinai, saying: ¹⁵ Number the houses of Leui by the houses of their fathers and their families, euerie male from one month and upward. ¹⁶ Moyses numbered, as our Lord had commanded, ¹⁷ and there were found the houses of Leui by their names, Gerson and Caath and Merari. ¹⁸ The houses of Gerson: Lebni and Semei. ¹⁹ The houses of Caath: Amram, and Ishaar, Hebron and Oziel. ²⁰ The houses of Merari: Moholi and Mufi. ²¹ Of Gerson were two families, the Lebnetical, and Semeitical: ²² of whom were numbered the people of male sexe from one month and upward, seven thousand five hundred. ²³ These shall pitch behind the tabernacle on the West, ²⁴ vnder their prince Heliasaph, the house of Lael. ²⁵ And their charge shall be in the tabernacle of couenāt, ²⁶ the tabernacle it selfe and the couer thereof, the hanging that is drawne before the doores of the rooffe of couenant, and the curtines of the court: the hanging also that is hanged in the entrie of the court of the tabernacle, and whatsoever pertaineth to the rite of the altar, the cordes of the tabernacle, and al the furniture thereof. ²⁷ The kindred of Caath shall haue the peoples of the Amramites, and Ishaarites, and Hebronites, and Ozielites. These are the families of the Caithites reckened by their names: ²⁸ al of the male sexe from one month and upward, eight thousand six hundred, they shall haue the gard of the Sanctuarie, ²⁹ and shall campe on the fourth side. ³⁰ And their prince shall be Elizaphan the house of Oziel: ³¹ and they shall keepe the arke, and table and the candlestick, the altars, and the vessel of the Sanctuarie, wherein the ministracion is, and the veile, and al such kind of implements. ³² And ^athe prince of the princes of the Leuites, Eliazar, the house of Aaron the priest, shall be ouer them that watch for the custodie of the Sanctuarie. ³³ But of Merari shall be the peoples of the Moholites, and Mufites,

^a One chiefe Monarch in the Church to whom al other Superiors are subordinate.

reckened by their names: ³⁴ al of the male kind from one moneth and vpward, fix thoufand two hundred. ³⁵ Their prince Suriel the fonne of Abihaiel: they shal campe on the north fide. ³⁶ Vnder their cuftodie shal be the bordes of the tabernacle, and the barres, and the pillers and their feete, and al thinges that pertaine to this kind of feruice: ³⁷ and the pillers of the court round about with their feete, and the pinnes with the cordes. ³⁸ Before the tabernacle of couenant, that is to fay, on the east fide, shal ^a)Moyfes and Aaron campe, with ^b)their fonnes, hauing the cuftodie of the Sanctuarie, in the middes of the children of Ifrael. What ftranger foeuer cometh therto, shal die. ³⁹ Al the Leuites, that Moyfes and Aaron numbered according to the precept of our Lord by their families in the male kinde from one moneth and vpward, were [†]twentie two thoufand. ⁴⁰ And our Lord faid to Moyfes: Number the firft borne of the male fex of the children of Ifrael, from one moneth and vpward, and thou shalt haue the fumme of them. ⁴¹ And thou fhalt take the Leuites vnto me for al the firft borne of the children of Ifrael, I am the Lord: and their cattel for al the firft borne of the cattel of the children of Ifrael. ⁴² Moyfes reckened, as our Lord had commanded, the firft borne of the children of Ifrael. ⁴³ And the males by their names, from one moneth and vpward, were twentie two thoufand two hundred feuentie three. ⁴⁴ And our Lord fpake to Moyfes, faying: ⁴⁵ Take the Leuites for the firft borne of the children of Ifrael, and the cattel of the Leuites for their cattel, and the Leuites fhall be mine. I am the Lord. ⁴⁶ But for the price of two hundred feuentie three, of the firft borne of the children of

^a Moyfes is ftill counted, and hath chiefe place and office among the Prieftes, which were abfurde, faieth S. Auguftin (*in Pſal. 98.*) if he were not a priefte.

^b The fonnes of Moyfes were with him fo long as he liued, but after his death they ferued the Priefts, as other Leuites did, and were numbred with the Caathites. *1. Paral. 23. v. 12.*

Israël, ^a)that exceede the number of the Leuites, ⁴⁷ thou shalt take fiue sicles for euerie head, after the measure of the Sãctuarie. A sicle hath twentie oboles. ⁴⁸ And thou shalt giue the money to Aaron and to his sonnes the price of them that are aboute. ⁴⁹ Moyfes therefore tooke their money, that were aboute, and whom he redemed of the Leuites, ⁵⁰ for the first borne of the children of Israël, a thousand three hundred fixtie fiue sicles, according to the weight of the Sanctuarie, ⁵¹ and gaue it to Aaron and his sonnes, according to the word that our Lord had commanded him.

ANNOTATIONS

39 Twentie two thousand.) Immediately before were numbered of Gerfonites (*v. 22.*) 7500. of Caathites (*v. 28.*) 8600. and of Merarites (*v. 34.*) 6200. which make in all 22300. Why then are 300. left out of the total summe? especially being by and by (*v. 43.*) a smaller, and other odd numbers of 273. are expressed, and therupon inferred (*v. 46.*) that the first borne of the Israelites did so much exceede the Leuites. Whereas if the whole number of Leuites had bene also expressed in the general summe, as it is contained in the three particular summes, the Leuites should exceede the first borne of Israelites by the number of 27. For answer to this difficultie, some suppose that the first borne of the Leuites were iust 300. and therefore so manie supplying only their owne places, there remained iust twentie two thousand to supplye the places of the first borne of other Israelites, and so the Leuites were fewer then those for whom they were taken vnto Gods seruice, by the number of 273. But that the first borne of Leuites were neither more nor fewer then 300. is not euident by the text. Howsoever therefore this doubt be solved, sure it is, by S. Hieroms iudgement (cited in the *argument*) that these numbers are myfical. And the iust number of 22. thousand Leuites may signifie (saith *Origen, homil. 4. in Num.*) perfection, required in those that are designed to the particular seruice of God; as there be also iust 22. Hebrew letters; and 22. Patriarches from Adam to Iacob, from whom the Israelites descended.

Why 300. are omitted in the total summe of the Leuites.

Perfect numbers signifie perfection.

^a This number exceedeth the other by reason that 300. Leuites are omitted in the general summe, otherwise the number of Israelites should exceede the first borne by 27. See the *Annotation*.