

THE TORAH OF LEADERSHIP

Leadership by the Numbers | Erica Brown | January 20, 2022



Edward John Poytner, "The Jews in Egypt" (1867)

Exodus 1:1-9

וְאֵלֶּה שְׁמוֹת בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל הַבָּאִים מִצְרָיִם אֶת יַעֲקֹב אִישׁ וּבֵיתוֹ בָּאוּ:

רְאוּבֵן שְׁמֵלוֹן לֵוִי וַיהוּדָה

יִשְׁשַׁכָּר זְבוּלֹן וּבִנְיָמִן:

דָּן וַנַּפְתָּלִי גָד וְאָשֶׁר:

וַיְהִי כָּל־גִּפְשׁ יִצְחָק יִרְדֵּי־יַעֲקֹב שִׁבְעִים גִּפְשׁ וַיּוֹסֶף הֵימָּה בְּמִצְרָיִם:

וַנִּמֵּת יוֹסֵף וְכָל־אֶחָיו וְכָל הַדּוֹר הַהוּא:

וּבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל פָּרוּ וַיִּשְׁרְצוּ וַיִּרְבּוּ וַיַּעֲצֻמוּ בְּמֵאָד בְּמֵאָד וַתִּמְלֵא הָאָרֶץ אֹתָם:

וַיִּקַּם מֶלֶךְ־חֲדָשׁ עַל־מִצְרָיִם אֲשֶׁר לֹא־יָדַע אֶת־יוֹסֵף:

וַיֹּאמֶר אֶל־עַמּוֹ הַזֶּה עַם בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל רַב וַעֲצוּם מִמֶּנּוּ:

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These are the names of the sons of Israel who came to Egypt with Jacob, each coming with his household: Reuben, Simeon, Levi, and Judah; Issachar, Zebulun, and Benjamin; Dan and Naphtali, Gad and Asher. The total number of persons that were of Jacob's issue came to seventy, Joseph being already in Egypt. Joseph died, and all his brothers, and all that generation. But the Israelites were fertile and prolific; they multiplied and increased very greatly, so that the land was filled with them. A new king arose over Egypt who did not know Joseph. And he said to his people, "Look, the Israelite people are much too numerous for us.

Reflective Question

When have numbers been particularly important to you in your leadership? Describe.

Leadership Challenge

Where, in your exercise of leadership right now, can you make people rather than numbers count?