

God-Centered

Text: Numbers 2:1-2

2 The Lord said to Moses and Aaron: **2** “The Israelites are to camp around the tent of meeting some distance from it, each of them under their standard and holding the banners of their family.”

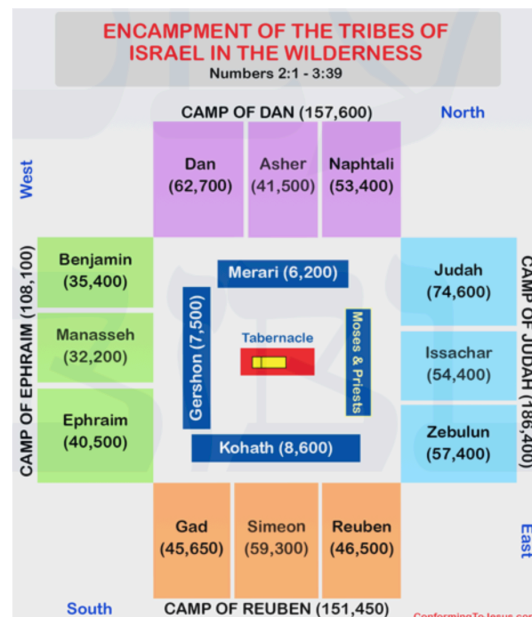
Background:

Prior to the Exodus, Israel had never been a nation. Israel began as the family of Abraham and Sarah and their descendants, prospered as a clan under Joseph’s leadership, but fell into bondage as an ethnic minority in Egypt. The Israelite population in Egypt grew to become nation-sized ([Exod. 12:37](#)) but, as an enslaved people, they were permitted no national institutions or organizations. They had departed Egypt as a barely organized refugee mob ([Exod. 12:34-39](#)) who now had to be organized into a functioning nation.

God-Centered Model

The Tabernacle was at the center of the camp. Their tents are facing the Tabernacle according to God’s direction.

Slide - Picture of the Camp with Tabernacle in the middle.



After the ancient **Israelites** left Egypt and came out of slavery, God commanded Moses to have them set up their **Wilderness Camp** in a specific way. The **Encampment Layout of the Tribes of Israel** was set up according to groups of tribes placed together on each of the camp's four sides (Numbers 2).

The **Camps of Judah, Issachar and Zebulon** were located on the **eastern side** of the tabernacle and were collectively under Judah's standard.

The **Camps of Reuben, Simeon and Gad** were placed together on the **southern side** of the tabernacle and were collectively under Reuben's standard.

The **Camps of Ephraim, Manasseh and Benjamin** were located on the **western side** of the tabernacle and were collectively under Ephraim's standard.

The **Camps of Dan, Asher and Naphtali** were placed together on the **northern side** of the tabernacle and were collectively under Dan's standard.

The Tabernacle was at the center of the camp?



“Tabernacle literally means '**place of dwelling**'”

Exodus 19:1-6 (NIV)

19 On the first day of the third month after the Israelites left Egypt—on that very day—they came to the Desert of Sinai. **2** After they set out from Rephidim, they entered the Desert of Sinai, and Israel camped there in the desert in front of the mountain.

3 Then Moses went up to God, and the Lord called to him from the mountain and said, “This is what you are to say to the descendants of Jacob and what you are to tell the people of Israel:

4 ‘You yourselves have seen what I did to Egypt, and how I carried you on eagles’ wings and brought you to myself.

5 Now if you obey me fully and keep my covenant, then out of all nations you will be my treasured possession. Although the whole earth is mine,

6 you^[a] will be for me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.’ These are the words you are to speak to the Israelites.”

Leviticus 26:11-13 - (The Message)

“I’ll set up my residence in your neighborhood; I won’t avoid or shun you; I’ll stroll through your streets. **I’ll be your God; you’ll be my people.** I am God, your personal God who rescued you from Egypt so that you would no longer be slaves to the Egyptians. I ripped off the harness of your slavery so that you can move about freely.

Exodus 25:1-2; 8-9 (NIV)

1The Lord said to Moses, **2** “Tell the Israelites to bring me an offering. You are to receive the offering for me from everyone whose heart prompts them to give

8 “Then have them make a sanctuary for me, and I will dwell among them. **9** Make this tabernacle and all its furnishings **exactly like the pattern** I will show you.

Worship requires understanding God's pattern and protocol.

- **Pattern:** a plan or diagram used as a guide to making something; prototype.
- **Protocol:** code of behavior, etiquette , rules of conduct
- Prophetic - Foretelling, Forecast.

What can we learn from this model?

Everyone and everything was done in relation to the presence of God.

God could have described where the tribe of Judah was in relation to the tribe of Dan, but He did not. The reference point was always God Himself.

- a. It is hard to underestimate the trouble people get into in their walk with God because they position and measure themselves in reference to other people instead of God. God is to be our focus, not other people.

God is a God of order. He requires us to live according to his order.

Our resistance to God's order and organization is almost always the product of simple selfishness – wanting to do things our own way, instead of the LORD's way. For hundreds of years, the Israelites lived as slaves in Egypt, and slaves don't need to worry much about order and organization. They are told what to do, and often have no personal investment in the success of their work. In contrast, free men must be taught the principles of order and organization, and they must submit to these principles.

Application:

1. Return to a God-centered life.
2. Reorient (change the focus or direction of) your life to focusing on God and Word.
3. Seek and watch what God is doing, find your place and join him.