

Tabernacle Camp Emplacements

A Foreshadow of The Cross

From Numbers, Chapter Two

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Prophecy – The Ultimate Morale Booster:

From time to time I come across interesting factoids that I feel could help to bolster the faith of other believers or maybe even prove to those who are searching for the truth that the God of the Bible is the one true God, and that His ways are perfect.

Of course, God has already done this in His word, The Bible, but there are so many people (Christians inclusive) that for whatever reason can't or won't pick up the Good Book. I also feel that there are some who thirst for such things and God is faithful to give such revelation. Now, I cannot say that I take any credit for what is written below. As a matter of fact, I have heard something on the subject sometime in the past, but the Lord brought it to mind and told me to write and expound on it.

One of the surest things that we have to boost our morale in the faith department is prophecy, and the fulfillment thereof. I've always been impressed by God's track record with prophecy. You really can't argue over 100 percent after all. But the things that most impress me is the subtle little things that sometimes get looked over. The things that almost look like code, or the foreshadowing things that one has to dig and find are the things that excite me.

**Gather Round The Tabernacle Boys, or;
The Numbers that Numbers, Numbers:**

God led the Israelites out of Egypt and after a period of adjustment and testing He gave the Law which was a code to govern Israel. We here in America and other parts of the world have laws that derive from the laws that the Almighty laid down for Israel.

The laws that God gave to His People were very precise. He was judicious about everything, from simple laws about what to eat, to medicinal laws and also civil and capital laws. One set of commands that God gave was to dictate how His People should camp around the Tabernacle. For those who do not know what the Tabernacle was; it was a sort of traveling temple that the Israelites carried around. It was a place of worship and sacrifice and atonement. It was utilized until Solomon was given the chore of building a more permanent structure called the Temple; once the Jewish people were stabilized in the land.

The first thing that perplexed me about the camping situation was; why have any form of camping arrangement at all. People tend to stay with their own kind anyway. Also, I thought that it would be better to have the campers encircling the Tabernacle, sort of akin to the early settlers of America circling their wagons when they camped at night. It just made more sense to me to do things otherwise. But, I have to remember that God always has better ideas than me and He has a purpose for everything.



So, upon examination, I noticed that God gave instructions for certain families to stay in certain areas. He told Judah, Issachar and Zebulun to camp in one area; Reuben, Simeon and Gad in another; Ephraim, Benjamin and Manasseh in a third, and Dan, Asher and Naphtali in a fourth

area. The Levites stayed with the Tabernacle because it was their job to be Priests and caretakers of everything concerning the worship center. The Tabernacle was the heart or the center of the camp.

Numbers 2

The Arrangement of the Tribal Camps

¹ *The LORD said to Moses and Aaron:*

² *“The Israelites are to camp around the Tent of Meeting some distance from it, each man under his standard with the banners of his family.”*

³ *On the east, toward the sunrise, the divisions of the camp of Judah are to encamp under their standard. The leader of the people of Judah is Nahshon son of Amminadab.*

⁴ *His division numbers 74,600.*

⁵ *The tribe of Issachar will camp next to them. The leader of the people of Issachar is Nethanel son of Zuar.*

⁶ *His division numbers 54,400.*

⁷ *The tribe of Zebulun will be next. The leader of the people of Zebulun is Eliab son of Helon.*

⁸ *His division numbers 57,400.*

⁹ *All the men assigned to the camp of Judah, according to their divisions, number 186,400. They will set out first.*

¹⁰ *On the south will be the divisions of the camp of Reuben under their standard. The leader of the people of Reuben is Elizur son of Shedeur.*

¹¹ *His division numbers 46,500.*

¹² *The tribe of Simeon will camp next to them. The leader of the people of Simeon is Shelumiel son of Zurishaddai.*

¹³ *His division numbers 59,300.*

¹⁴ *The tribe of Gad will be next. The leader of the people of Gad is Eliasaph son of Deuel. ^[1]*

¹⁵ *His division numbers 45,650.*

¹⁶ *All the men assigned to the camp of Reuben, according to their divisions, number 151,450. They will set out second.*

¹⁷ *Then the Tent of Meeting and the camp of the Levites will set out in the middle of the camps. They will set out in the same order as they encamp, each in his own place under his standard.*

¹⁸ *On the west will be the divisions of the camp of Ephraim under their standard. The leader of the people of Ephraim is Elishama son of Ammihud.*

¹⁹ *His division numbers 40,500.*

²⁰ *The tribe of Manasseh will be next to them. The leader of the people of Manasseh is*

Gamaliel son of Pedahzur.

²¹ *His division numbers 32,200.*

²² *The tribe of Benjamin will be next. The leader of the people of Benjamin is Abidan son of Gideoni.*

²³ *His division numbers 35,400.*

²⁴ *All the men assigned to the camp of Ephraim, according to their divisions, number 108,100. They will set out third.*

²⁵ *On the north will be the divisions of the camp of Dan, under their standard. The leader of the people of Dan is Ahiezer son of Ammishaddai.*

²⁶ *His division numbers 62,700.*

²⁷ *The tribe of Asher will camp next to them. The leader of the people of Asher is Pagiel son of Ocran.*

²⁸ *His division numbers 41,500.*

²⁹ *The tribe of Naphtali will be next. The leader of the people of Naphtali is Ahira son of Enan.*

³⁰ *His division numbers 53,400.*

³¹ *All the men assigned to the camp of Dan number 157,600. They will set out last, under their standards.*

³² *These are the Israelites, counted according to their families. All those in the camps, by their divisions, number 603,550.*

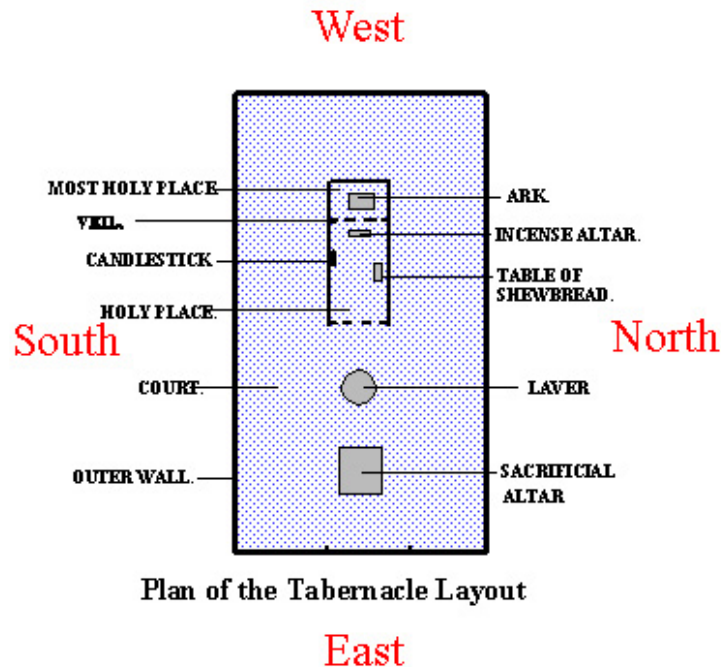
³³ *The Levites, however, were not counted along with the other Israelites, as the LORD commanded Moses.*

³⁴ *So the Israelites did everything the LORD commanded Moses; that is the way they encamped under their standards, and that is the way they set out, each with his clan and family.*

Now before we go any farther, we have to realize something. The numbers that are used below refer only to the men of the tribe. That would be every male that was fighting age, middle age and elderly. With that in light, let us proceed.

I also noticed that God was specific about the locations. For instance, He told the group associated with Judah, whose population by way of numbered men was the largest at 186,400 persons, that they had to camp east of the Tabernacle, in the direction of the rising sun. Now it is clear that God tells them to camp on the East side. So, let's picture a rectangle for where the Tabernacle would reside. This includes the four walls of the Tabernacle compound and everything inside. A rectangle has four sides. Now, let's picture that the rectangle's sides are a fixed width.

We know the dimensions of the Tabernacle compound. God told Moses that the length of the compound (the south side) was to be 100 cubits long. A cubit is the measurement from the fingertip of the outstretched hand to the end of the elbow. Most scholars consider this to be around 18 inches. That is the measurement we will use for our figures. If you do the math, the sum total of the length is 150 feet. God said that the east side should be 50 cubits long which works out to be 75 feet. We have a 2 to 1 ratio in the measurements.



So, on the eastern direction the population would stretch eastward for as long as it takes the whole number of persons to live comfortably, and likewise with the other directions. Now, we must remember one thing. God specified the direction of east. That is a tight quadrant because just a few degrees from east in either direction you run into different coordinates. Getting off the mark to the north would put someone at east north east; or in the other direction east south east. God is always specific on what He would have His people do, so I believe that when the Israelites complied with His wishes, they were exact in their measurements. So, if the eastern direction was five miles in length, it would remain the same width for the whole line until the population of that group had come to an end point. The same would be true for the other directions with their respective lengths and populations.

Now it is interesting to note that directly on the other side of the Tabernacle was the smallest group in population. It was the group who was under Ephraim, whose total population

or men was 108,100. If a line were drawn from the end of the Judah group to the end of the opposite group, Judah's group would comprise 63% of that line while the Benjamin side would comprise 37% of the line. So, let's take another line and cross our first line right around the two thirds mark on our first line. You'll see that it makes a cross!

So, you're probably wondering where I'm going with all of this. You'll see in a few minutes.

We must now focus our attention on the other two sides of the Tabernacle; the north and south sides. On the north side was the group we'll refer to the Dan group. Their number was 157,600 persons. Their opposites directly on the other side of the Tabernacle; the group we'll call the Reuben group numbered 151,450 persons; a difference of 6150 people, which in a setting this large is really negligible, considering it's only around a 2% difference.

I know that 2% is almost trivial, but it still didn't jive with what I am trying to find. If the layout of the Camp arrangements is a foreshadowing of the Cross which Jesus hanged on then it would have to be precise. Knowing that one side of the horizontal is longer than the other by 2% had to have an answer. There could be an answer in the total populations of the groups. We have to do a bit of math here, so bear with me.

Before we look at populations, we have to take several things into account. The Israelites had just come out of bondage, and it was a harsh bondage overseen by a brutal Pharaoh. It is doubtful that very many elderly persons existed in the population because they would have been pressed into service of Egypt too, and just like in Nazi Germany, there was probably no regard for those of substantial age. Therefore, those exiting Egypt were probably young, with the oldest being at best what we today call "middle aged." So, elderly people should not factor too much in our calculations. Now we remember that the numbers listed in the scriptures are only the men. So, add to each man a wife and to be conservative, we will add two children to each man, making a family unit of four. That would mean that the Dan group would comprise 630,400 people. Adding any elderly people who would have survived the brutality of Pharaoh and the number increases. Doing the same thing to the Reuben group increases their number to 605,800 persons.

Now, this number still leaves us the same percentile as we had above; a 2% difference. You don't have to be Einstein to figure that out. But we have to make other considerations. Some men in any given group might not be married. Some families might consist of more or less than two children. Death by disease or natural causes could have reduced some families or groups. So,

it is not out of the realm and perhaps very conclusive that although the size of the groups are different where counting them by the number of men is concerned, the size in total of the whole of the population could be exactly the same, or within decimals that would be ludicrous to count. Thus, the line that ran north and south from the tabernacle could have been of equal on both sides of the line that ran east and west.

But for argument sake, let's just say that the populations were different, still by two percent. The skeptic would say, "ah ha, I've got you now," meaning that God had made an imperfect cross and that it can't represent a type of prophecy of, what at the time of the Tabernacle, was still a future event. So, being as inquisitive as I am, I had to do some figuring.

At first, I thought about attributing an error to the makers of the actual cross that Yeshua would have hung on. Perhaps they made a 2 percent mistake when measuring the center of the horizontal piece of the cross. That is still a possibility, but I doubt it in this instance. The Romans were remarkable engineers, and I doubt that those in the same empire that built the Coliseum and the aqueducts with incredible tolerances would have trouble centering on a piece of wood. Even the least adept in construction knows that to find a center you draw a line from catty-corner to catty-corner, from all four corners and you'll find the center of something. But we do have to factor in that a human made the cross and humans do error, so I don't totally discount this explanation, but I have a more esoteric explanation.

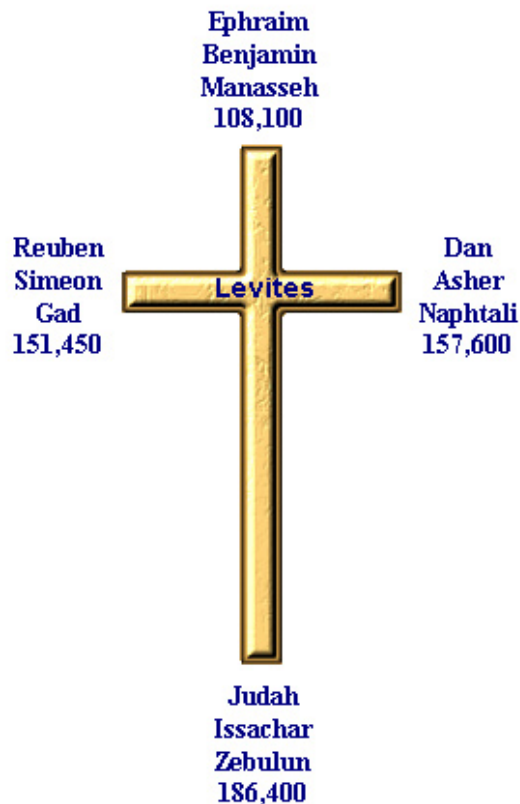
Remembering that the purpose of this article is to explain that the encampment of the Israelites around the Tabernacle was foreshadow of the cross, I had to look at the human physique. We are not symmetrical by any means. Almost everyone has one foot that is larger than the other. Most have a leg that is longer than the other and, in my case, one ear is unnoticeably lower than the other. Our internal organs are the same way. With the exception of our kidneys, we have just one of each internal organ. And that brings us to the heart, which is off center from the midline of our chest.

It is interesting to note that God likes to refer to our hearts. He searches our hearts, writes His laws on them and when we come to faith in Yeshua, He gives us a new heart.

The sacrifices of God [are] a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise. Psalm 51:17

For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name [is] Holy; I dwell in the high and holy [place], with him also [that is] of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones. Isaiah 57:15

A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. Ezekiel 36:26



God pays a lot of attention to the heart. He uses the term to denote the very center of our being.

If we want to go a bit deeper into the mysteries of God, we can look at the position of our physical hearts and see how it is representative of our spiritual heart. As we have mentioned, our hearts are a bit off center from our sternum. But what else in our lives is off center?

Let's take at the word sin itself. Where did the word come from and what did it mean in the old English vernacular? The word is actually an old archery term. Back in the days of knights and fair damsels one sport was to target shoot with arrows. The popularity of the event was right up there with jousting and sword fighting. The targets were very similar to the ones that are used today. There was a target to shoot at and it had a center spot. The word "bullseye," wasn't actually used back then. It is a 17th century word that denotes a dot that's smaller than a circle which protrudes to look like a bull's eye.

Anyway, the objective of this game was to see if one could hit the center spot with one or more arrows, and the one who did that the most won the game. Of course, more people missed than hit the center spot. When a person shot an arrow and they missed they were said to have sinned. The word actually means "off of center." So, when we sin, as we know it in its present form, it means that we're not quite right; we're off center and we can't attain perfection, at least without Yeshua.

So perhaps, and this is only my speculation; our hearts are off center because we are born with a sin nature and the very essence of a man's being is off center with what is right in God's eyes.

The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it? Jeremiah 17:9

Now this two percent might still sound like a small amount to be off, but let's look at something. Instead of percentage, let's look at it in geometric terms. Let's take a protractor and place it on a horizontal line. If the protractor were big enough it would have a 2-degree mark on it. We'll make a line from the two-degree mark and carry the line out. At first it seems like a small difference, almost infinitesimal. But as we move in the directions of both lines, we notice that the lines start to move farther and farther away from each other. The two-degree line is like sin, it cannot ever join the horizontal line unless someone intervenes and corrects situation. Yeshua is our master drafting person. When we accept Him as Lord and Savior, through a born-again action, he erases the 2-degree line and draws us on the zero-degree line, or perhaps for most of us it is 180 degrees. But I digress.

Another Possibility:

There could be another reason though, why there is a 2 percent difference between the populations on each side of the tabernacle. To investigate this, we have to associate someone very special with a cross. Of course, we associate the cross with the crucifixion of Yeshua Ha Mashiach, and pretty much the world has for the past two thousand years.

Yeshua would have been hung on the vertical centerline of the cross. If he was on that centerline, as I suppose, His heart would have been off centerline because that is the way that we are built.

I did a little experiment one day to prove something to myself. I measured the total girth of my outstretched arms, fingertip to fingertip, and the measurement is 69 inches. That would make the center of my sternum 34.5 inches. I then looked at a lot of x-rays and anatomical pictures and such to see just how far off center the heart tends to be. I surmised that in my case that the center of my heart is just short of 1 and 1/2 inches from the center of my sternum. I then did some math and came up with the sum of the difference (1.325 inches) was 1.92 percent. Now, that's pretty close to 2 percent.

So, if my postulation is true, then the populations of tribes in their positioning around the Tabernacle was a direct prophecy of a one-day future Messiah, God Himself, hanging as a sacrifice for all mankind. No correction has to be made for family numbers, number of offspring or elderly populations. Praise the Lord of Heaven and Earth!!

In Closing:

In closing I'd just like to make a couple of encouragements. First, I would like to encourage anyone who, before this, was sort of waffling on a commitment to follow Yeshua as the Messiah. We all know that God went through a lot of effort in supplying Yeshua as the Lamb for the crucifixion. That in itself is enough to come to faith in Him. But, knowing that He went to such detail to point mankind in the right direction so many times by way of pre-type examples is truly astounding. So, I encourage you, if you haven't made that decision yet to do so right now. If you want to know more about doing this, just go to the "saved" link on the front page of this website.

If you are a believer in Yeshua, and have become Born of The Spirit then I encourage you to look at the Bible; the wonderful plan that He's given to us. There are infinite things in His Word to refresh us every morning. Ask our Lord to reveal to you all of the majestic wonders that He has to brighten our minds and bolster our faith. I promise to keep posting them on this site and pray that as they come to you, you'll share them with me and allow me to share them with others on this site.

And in closing, let me bestow on you blessing from God our Father, and our Lord Yeshua Ha Mashiach.

David Ben Ya'akov