

Numbers 2:34

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And the children of Israel did according to all that the LORD commanded Moses: so they pitched by their standards, and so they set forward, every one after their families, according to the house of their fathers.

Analysis

And the children of Israel did according to all that the LORD commanded Moses: so they pitched by their standards, and so they set forward, every one after their families, according to the house of their fathers.' This verse summarizes Israel's obedience to God's organizational commands. The repetition of 'according to' emphasizes exact conformity to divine instruction in both camping and marching. The phrase 'every one after their families, according to the house of their fathers' shows that God's order respects family structures and tribal identities while uniting all under His sovereignty. Their obedience demonstrates that when God's people submit to His design, unity and order result. This obedience stands in contrast to later rebellion (Numbers 16). The verse teaches that God's blessings flow when His people organize and conduct themselves according to His word. Reformed theology emphasizes covenantal structure—God's people should order church life biblically, not pragmatically.

Historical Context

This summary statement concludes the camp organization section (Numbers 2), confirming Israel's compliance with God's detailed instructions. The obedience occurred during the Sinai encampment before the wilderness wanderings began. The arrangement continued throughout the forty-year period, though the people's

spiritual obedience often faltered even when external organization remained. The phrase echoes similar summary statements throughout the Pentateuch marking completed obedience to divine commands (Exodus 39:32, 42-43). Ancient Near Eastern annals often concluded sections with summary statements confirming completion of royal commands. The detailed organization here contrasts with the golden calf incident (Exodus 32) and upcoming rebellions, showing that external order doesn't guarantee internal faithfulness. The camp arrangement became traditional in Israel's memory, influencing later organizational thinking.

Related Passages

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Study Questions

1. What does Israel's careful obedience to organizational details teach about honoring God in practical, administrative matters?
2. How can churches today balance the need for biblical order with avoiding empty formalism?

Interlinear Text

וַיַּעַשׂ ו	בְּנֵי י	יִשְׂרָאֵל ל	כָּ כָל	אֲשֶׁר	צָוָה
did	And the children	of Israel	H3605	H834	commanded
H6213	H1121	H3478			H6680
	יְהוָה ה	אֶת	מֹשֶׁה ה	כֵּן	חָנּוּ ו
according to all that the LORD	H853	Moses	H3651	so they pitched	
H3068		H4872		H2583	
לְדִגְלֵיהֶם	וְכָל	נָס עו	אִישׁ	לְמִשְׁפַּחַת יו	
by their standards	H3651	and so they set forward	every one	after their families	
H1714		H5265	H376	H4940	
עַל	בֵּית	אֲבוֹתָיו:			
H5921	according to the house	of their fathers			
	H1004	H1			

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 119:6 (Parallel theme): Then shall I not be ashamed, when I have respect unto all thy commandments.

Luke 1:6 (References Lord): And they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless.

Numbers 24:2 (References Israel): And Balaam lifted up his eyes, and he saw Israel abiding in his tents according to their tribes; and the spirit of God came upon him.