

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.¹ 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

צִוָּה אָשֶׁר כִּי כָל יִשְׂרָאֵל יִשְׁעַת וְ
did And the children of Israel commanded
H6213 H1121 H3605 H834 H6680

שָׁבֵן וְיַהֲנֵּה אֶת מֵשֶׁה בְּקַרְבָּן מִשְׁעָנָה
according to all that the LORD Moses so they pitched
H3068 H853 H4872 H3651 H2583

לְמִשְׁפְּחָת וְאֶת יְדָגָלִים וְאֶת עַד וְאֶת יְמִינָה
by their standards and so they set forward every one after their families
H1714 H3651 H5265 H376 H4940

עַל בְּית אֲבָתֵּינוּ
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.