

Numbers 2

¹ And the Lord spoke to Moses and Aaron, saying: ² “Everyone of the children of Israel shall camp by his own standard, beside the emblems of his father’s house; they shall camp some distance from the tabernacle of meeting.

³ On the east side, toward the rising of the sun, those of the standard of the forces with Judah shall camp according to their armies; and Nahshon the son of Amminadab shall be the leader of the children of Judah.” ⁴ And his army was numbered at seventy-four thousand six hundred. ⁵ “Those who camp next to him shall be the tribe of Issachar, and Nethanel the son of Zuar shall be the leader of the children of Issachar.” ⁶ And his army was numbered at fifty-four thousand four hundred. ⁷ “Then comes the tribe of Zebulun, and Eliab the son of Helon shall be the leader of the children of Zebulun.” ⁸ And his army was numbered at fifty-seven thousand four hundred. ⁹ “All who were numbered according to their armies of the forces with Judah, one hundred and eighty-six thousand four hundred—these shall break camp first.

¹⁰ “On the south side shall be the standard of the forces with Reuben according to their armies, and the leader of the children of Reuben shall be Elizur the son of Shedeur.”

¹¹ And his army was numbered at forty-six thousand five hundred. ¹² “Those who camp next to him shall be the tribe of Simeon, and the leader of the children of Simeon shall be Shelumiel the son of Zurishaddai.” ¹³ And his army was numbered at fifty-nine thousand three hundred. ¹⁴ “Then comes the tribe of Gad, and the leader of the children of Gad shall be Eliasaph the son of Reuel.” ¹⁵ And his army was numbered at forty-five thousand six hundred and fifty. ¹⁶ “All who were numbered according to their armies of the forces with Reuben, one hundred and fifty-one thousand four hundred and fifty—they shall be the second to break camp.

¹⁷ “And the tabernacle of meeting shall move out with the camp of the Levites in the middle of the camps; as they camp, so they shall move out, everyone in his place, by their standards.

¹⁸ “On the west side shall be the standard of the forces with Ephraim according to their armies, and the leader of the children of Ephraim shall be Elishama the son of Ammihud.” ¹⁹ And his army was numbered at forty thousand five hundred. ²⁰ “Next to him comes the tribe of Manasseh, and the leader of the children of Manasseh shall be Gamaliel the son of Pedahzur.” ²¹ And his army was numbered at thirty-two thousand two hundred. ²² “Then comes the tribe of Benjamin, and the leader of the children of Benjamin shall be Abidan the son of Gideoni.” ²³ And his army was numbered at thirty-five thousand four hundred. ²⁴ “All who were numbered according to their armies of the forces with Ephraim, one hundred and eight thousand one hundred—they shall be the third to break camp.

²⁵ “The standard of the forces with Dan shall be on the north side according to their armies, and the leader of the children of Dan shall be Ahiezer the son of Ammishaddai.”

²⁶ And his army was numbered at sixty-two thousand seven hundred. ²⁷ “Those who camp next to him shall be the tribe of Asher, and the leader of the children of Asher shall be Pagiel the son of Ocran.” ²⁸ And his army was numbered at forty-one thousand five hundred. ²⁹ “Then comes the tribe of Naphtali, and the leader of the children of Naphtali shall be Ahira the son of Enan.” ³⁰ And his army was numbered at fifty-three thousand four hundred. ³¹ “All who were numbered of the forces with Dan, one hundred and fifty-seven thousand six hundred—they shall break camp last, with their standards.”

³²These are the ones who were numbered of the children of Israel by their fathers' houses. All who were numbered according to their armies of the forces were six hundred and three thousand five hundred and fifty. ³³But the Levites were not numbered among the children of Israel, just as the Lord commanded Moses. ³⁴Thus the children of Israel did according to all that the Lord commanded Moses; so they camped by their standards and so they broke camp, each one by his family, according to their fathers' houses.

Mobilization Mandate for the Militant Church

Main idea: The Lord arranges His church with their mission in mind.

Introduction: God has set the members, each one of them, in the body just as He pleased (1Co 12:18)

1. **Prescribed Providence.** Where they were camped. With whom. Under whom. Prophetically announced providence for them, but still personally assigned providence for us.
2. **Pilgrim Priorities.** Camping. Breaking camp. Not home yet. The same is true for us. 1Co 7:29–31; Heb 11:10–16; 1Pet 2:11–12.
3. **Perceiving Presence.** Centrality/prominence of the tabernacle. Life literally revolving around the presence of God. Hope—God is in the midst of her. Holiness—deadly without His own atonement and consecration.

Conclusion: we are no longer kept at a distance by the priesthood but brought near. If your life is hidden with Christ in God, live on earth not as someone who is home but as mobilized for/by heaven.

(The following is a machine-generated transcription. Please be aware of—and patient with—transcribing errors. If there is something confusing or obviously erroneous, you are invited to listen to the audio recording via hopewellarp.org)

Numbers two. These are the words of God. And Yahweh spoke to Moses and Aaron saying. Every one of the children of Israel shall Camp by his own standard beside, the emblems of his father's house.

They shall Camp some distance from the Tabernacle of meeting. On the east side toward the rising of the sun. Those of the standard of the forces with Judah shall Camp according to their armies and nashon son of a minute. Shall be leader of the children of Judah. And his army was numbered at 74 000 600.

Those who camp next to him shall be the tribe of visakar and Nathan hell, the son of Zimbar shall be the leader of the children of visakar and his army was numbered at 54 400. Then comes tribe of zebulun and eliad, son of Helen. Chubby the leader of the children of zebulun.

And his Army was numbered at 57 400. All who are numbered according to their armies of the forces with Judah. 186 400 these celebrate Camp first. On the south side. Shall be the standard of the forces with Reuben according to their armies and the leader of the children of Reuben shall be elizur.

Son of your Army was numbered at 46 500. Those who camp next to him shall be the tribe of Simeon. And the leader of the trot, the leader of the children of Simeon shall be shalumi. All the son of zarishidai. And his Army was numbered at 59 300 Then comes the tribe of Gad.

And the leader of the children of gad shall be eliasaf. Son of rayuel. And his army was numbered at 45 650. All who are numbered according to the armies of the forces with Reuben. 151 450. They shall be the second to break Camp. And the Tabernacle of meetings shall move out with the camp of the Levites, in the middle of the camps as they camp, so they shall move out everyone in his place.

By their standards. On the West Side shall be the standard of the forces with Ephraim according to their armies. And the leader of the children of Ephraim shall be elisham, son of amihood. And his army was numbered at 40 500. To him, comes the tribe of Manasseh and the leader of the children of Manasseh shall be gamaliel.

His army was numbered at 32 200. Then comes the tribe of Benjamin and the leader of the children of Benjamin. Shelby, Abby, Dan, the son of Gideoni. And his army was numbered at 35 400. All who are numbered according to their armies of the forces with ifraim 108, 100 they shall be the third to break Camp.

The standard of the forces with Dan shall be on the North side, according to their armies and the leader of the children of Dan shall be ahezar. The son of a mishadai And his army was numbered at 62. 700 Those who camp next to him shall be the tribe of Asher.

And the leader of the children of Asher shall be pagiel, son of akron. And nizarre was numbered at 41, 500. Then comes the tribe of naftali. And the leader of the children of Natalie shall be a hero son of amen. And his Army was numbered at 53 400. All who are numbered are the forces with Dan 157 600.

They shall break Camp last with their standards. These are the ones who are numbered of the children of Israel by their father's houses. All who are numbered according to their armies of the forces were six hundred and three thousand five hundred and fifty. But the Levites were not numbered among the children of Israel.

Just as Yahweh, commanded Moses. Thus, the children of Israel did according to all that Yahweh commanded Moses. So they camped by their standards, and so, they broke Camp, each one by his family. According to their fathers. Houses. Hey man, this ends this reading of gods inspired and And aren't.

This is a great comfort for God's people that he is the one who has ordered things out for us. And it ought to convict us that he as the one who has done. So, Quite often because of our sin. Uh, we may have been tempted to wish that we were in a different house, a different household, different family, Uh, certainly I have known or heard or been.

A wicked child. Who screamed their displeasure really with what was God's Providence, God. Assignment. Well, his personally assigned Providence. And we might do so with his church as well, and the particular members of his church who happen to be set around us. Remember that Ezreal as a whole? Was at least 2 million maybe.

As many as Six million at this time, in the wilderness, you wouldn't know. All of the Israelites. But you would know those with whom you camped in particular not just your own household but within each of the tribes there would be the the clan or the family. Of to which you belonged to which your household belonged and the Lord arranged them.

Prescribed for them where they would be well this is something the Lord does for us. Not necessarily by prescription or actually not by prescription, he has not handed down to you. A book that told you what church, you had to be a member of and who the other members of that church would be.

And yet when dealing with that issue, in First Corinthians 12, whether it's Believers who don't didn't feel that. They were a part of the body that, uh, that they belong to because they were a little bit more unlike uh, the other members or what they thought were. Members or believers who did the opposite and looked down upon others and treated them as if they if they were not.

Part of the body and it's in the midst of that discussion in First Corinthians, 12 and verse 18. That the Apostle and really the spirit by the Apostle reminds us that God has set the members, each one of them in the body. Just as He pleased. And so it's helpful for us as we read here of a divinely prescribed Providence at the end of the chapter, it'll say thus the children of Israel did according to all that Yahweh commanded.

As this godhead God had commanded where they would Camp by whose standards. Uh, God had commanded when they would break Camp as the nation of Israel. Was getting ready. To move on. And what the order of breaking Camp would be God had commanded who the leader would be. Of each one of the 12 tribes and then in each group, Of tribes which of the tribes.

Uh, would be the leader. And so there is, first of all, this prescribed provenance it was prophetically announced. For them. But in our case, although it is not prophetically announced to us. It is still personally assigned. Uh, we rejoiced to apply the sign of membership in Christ's Church to a new member of his church today.

And Is very much. Providentially assigned to him. Ezra didn't get to pick which church he would become a member of And to some extent. For my own family, this has been The case for them. We? You know, when I come to a pastor or church, that's the church that they end up with there's a little bit less of a feeling Of our prerogative but praise God.

It's not really up to our prerogative. We make choices according to his word and Discerning what is wise and the best information that we can. But bless God, we can take confidence in this. He is the one who has set the members, each one of them in the body, just as he pleased.

Now, for the Israelites, they could see very plainly. Big reason for this is because they were to be a mobile. Uh, there were to be a mobile Nation. They were on a journey. It wasn't right, it wasn't. Originally presented to them is taking 40 years in the 40 years.

The result, the consequence of their sin. And yet, God arranged them in camps. Uh, here they were in camps, not cities, they Uh they were camping and he gives them in this passage. The order of breaking Camp the group with Judah first on the east side, and Then the the group with Reuben, on the south side, Ephraim on the west side and then Dan On the north side.

Uh, and so in the way that they were camped, and the fact that that they were given an order uh for for who would leave Camp. When the Lord was always communicating to them that they are not home yet, this was not the promised land, the Wilderness of Sinai and The route to go.

As much as children like camping, those with mature, tastes Uh, prefer to have a home. And men prefer to give to their family. A home and the Lord was communicating to them that they

were not home yet. Now. Praise God. It's not wrong for us. To have homes and indeed, he was bringing them to homes that they did not build and Vineyards that they did not plant.

Cities, whose walls, they did not raise and so forth and yet Just as we may know that God, is the one who has prescribed for us in his Providence. What part of his church that we're in what part of What congregation we're in? What Elders are over us. What kinds of Sinners?

We Dwell, among by grace. As members of the same congregation, and who, by God's Providence are assigned to dwell, with whatever kind of sinner you are. All of that comes in God's prescribed Providence, but we also also, he has taught us to live as pilgrims in this world. Have the key to understanding.

For instance, First Corinthians 7 29-31.

Right? But as I say Brethren the time is short. So that from now on even those who have wives should be as though they had none those who weep as though, they did not weep those who rejoice though, they did not Rejoice. Those who buy is the, they did not possess and those who used this world as not misusing it for the form of this world is passing away.

Now, all of these things Well, not the weeping, but yeah, uh your marriage, you're rejoicing, the things that that you own and possess these are blessings from God. These are not to be despised, he's not teaching us here, some sort of immorality when he says If you have a wife as though you have none or he's not teaching us to Uh to to be ungrateful.

And irresponsible not thanking him for the good things he gives us and using them. Well enjoying them as gifts from him and employing them for his art. He's not teaching us any of those things but he's teaching us is that we are not home yet. And so, we are to, we are to conduct ourselves in our marriage and to use our property and, and experience the different events in his Providence to us in this life as those who are on their way somewhere.

You see the Christian can be at home anywhere. In this world, the whole world belongs to God and the portion that you have the marriage that you have the possessions that you have the troubles each day. As we're coming up to that, sufficient for the each day is its own trouble.

In Matthew, the joys of Of each day, they're all assigned to you by God. And they are assigned by uh, to you by God in the course of his bringing, you all the way home and you are now, not yet the church triumphant, which means that you are as we say, the church militant.

Even as we literally heard here, There were the the squadrons of the army, the four and really five squadrons. Although the middle, Squadron the Levites Had the duty of the Tabernacle. Similarly, then Hebrews 11 10-16 It teaches us about the the Saints of old living by the same. Faith, given by the same Graces.

As God gives to us. Uh you have in verses 10 through 16, Abraham waited for the city. Which has foundations whose Builder and maker is God by faith. Sarah herself also received strength to conceive sea. She before a child when she was past the age because she judged him faithful who had promised Therefore from one man and him as good as dead were born as many as the stars of the sky and multitude innumerable as the sand, which is by the seashore.

These all died in faith. Not having sorry these all died in faith. Not having received the promises but having seen them afar off were a short of them, embraced them and confessed. That they were strangers and pilgrims. On the Earth for those who say such things declare plainly that they seek a homeland And truly, if they had called to mind that country from which they had come out, they would have had opportunity to return.

But now the desire of better that is a Heavenly country. Therefore, God is not ashamed to be called their God for. He has prepared a city for them and so he interprets for us. Doesn't he the fact that they were not home yet and that they were on their way to the promised land, but even when they got there, they would be at home in the promised land.

It was a special gift from God, part of the promises, uh, Earthly speaking that were given to Abraham but Abraham didn't consider that ultimately, the promised land and they were not to consider that land or the cities that Entered. That were built by Canaanites. As their as their ultimate home.

Even then they were looking there. Ought to have been looking by By Grace by faith. Uh, they ought to have been looking. For that City whose Builder and maker is God. He himself being their rest as the psalmist says, in Psalm 95 in Hebrews 3 and 4 to remind us.

After he would not have continued to promise them rest after Joshua. If Joshua had given them rest, when they were settled, into the land. And so this pilgrim priority living as strangers and aliens in this world means we can be at home, anywhere, we're serving the lord, he's assigned to us the life that we're given the place that we're given the family, that that we're given the marriage that we have, the possessions that we have even, and especially in this context, the particular Church of which Remember, we can be at home anywhere, but our home we are not yet home.

Until? Uh, we enter the glory of the presence of God. And so you did have that middle. Squadron, the fifth Squadron that came third, then Uh, in the order and that was the Levites and One of the primary things that the Levites did was they put distance They put distance between is the Israelites, and the Tabernacle, we had that, of course, right, at the beginning of the chapter, Where he said?

They shall Camp some distance. From the Tabernacle. Of meeting. And so, not only do we see in this chapter, God's prescribed. Providence to Israel, And although not prescribed to us. Uh, we know that the Providence that we do experience or receive is assigned To Us by God, it is from him every bit as much as if he had written it down on paper and we know and not only do we see Pilgrim, Priorities.

Then in this chapter, that That the Lord uses still to teach us about our own Pilgrim priority. Living as pilgrims. Uh, in this world. But in the last place we see the ability. Of the children of Israel to perceive God's presence. Uh, we mustn't think that this Camp although having two million people.

Was all sprawled out for instance, like Nashville or Houston, it would be Uh, smaller than we would ordinarily. Think that that many people being in, but right in the center of the camp, you would have the biggest tent by far. The Tabernacle of the Lord, the tent of meeting and remember, That upon this Tabernacle upon this tent would be the cloud, the glory cloud of God.

Which would appear as far by night. And And clouds during the day, and Rising and descending for. For their mobilization. Uh, when they were to break camp or to to remain in Camp and so wherever you were in all of the camp of the nation of Israel, you would Orient Yourself by relation to Relation to the Tabernacle you could see.

Yes, if you weren't a Levi, you would be at least a kilometer away in any direction and God designed even who would Camp. Where Uh, to to give it that Central. Location. But you would

Orient yourself according to the presence of God. You literally lived Before God's face and in a visible tangible way.

Which we, although we do not have a tent and a pillar of cloud. Or fire. All we not also. Have our lives oriented. Around the Lord is not the great thing for us. That our life is hidden with God in Christ. You see, whereas they could always see the presence of God of the presence of God in the midst of his people.

Would give them hope the presence of God in the midst of his people also gave them holy fear and underlined to them. The necessity Of leaving to the Levites. The part that God has assigned to them. Because if they came near instead, if an outsider came near instead of a levite, he would be put to death.

One of the great things that we have been seeing about the Levites from, 10. Even up to this point is that they were to help them distinguish between the clean and the unclean and the holy and Now, this is something that does not have a connection. For us except that if it was necessary for them to follow.

God's prescriptions and And to follow his way of keeping his people clean and keeping his people consecrated, if that was necessary for them, when they were kept at a distance how much more for you. Dear Christian, you are not kept at a distance. God has not put a kilometer between you and the Tabernacle.

In fact he has given Christ to be your Tabernacle and you are united to God the son and you are seated with him in the Heavenly places. You come not just once a year but week by week and into a holy of holies, it's not just the shadow version but as the reality of which the prior one was a shadow and coffee how much more necessary For us.

To live holy lives, not making the members of our body, the the members of a prostitute. He says you're you are the the temple of God. You are the body of Christ. Will you defile that which is a member of Christ again? You men who are at the men's breakfast yesterday and making application of the of the reality of Union with Christ, you are joined to Jesus.

You are bone of his bone and Flesh of his flesh. We don't have the right. To make ourselves filthy with Sin. We are on our own and in particular, not only should we live perceiving God's presence to us in Christ and therefore having great confidence. God is in the midst of her says of Of Zion, it says of the city of God in Psalm 46.

She shall not be moved. Well, God has brought you near. Not only is he Central to your life. But he has brought you near in Christ. Uh, he has Uh, he has brought you into his very presence and his Spirit who has come and dwelt in you. If you're a Christian, the Holy Spirit, dwells in you and the father and the son come and make their home with you.

So what hope and what confidence you ought to live in. God is with you. You live in his presence by how that should also Define and drive. Holy living, we are no longer kept at a distance by the priesthood but brought near in our great high priest he has made us a kingdom of priests.

Every one of us is holy then. Context of the church as Aaron was, and yeah, even holier than Aaron. Because you are united to Jesus. Whose priesthood is after the order of Melchizedek, greater and Everlasting. Accomplishing by the setting of his blood. What? No sacrifice ever offered by the aaronic priesthood ever accomplished and you have been Brought near.

So, if your life is hidden with Christ in God, live on the earth, not as someone who is already home. But as someone who is mobilized by heaven for heaven, He is bringing you. All the way. Home. Amen. Let's pray.

We thank you, Father, for the wisdom and the mercy in which you ordered not just Logistics so that your people could get it get through the Wilderness. But even so, to teach them about yourself and about themselves and about salvation and to stir up their faith in a right and spiritual and Heavenly way truly.

Oh God, you have been doing this for your church ever since. You gathered it and even before then, Ever since the garden immediately after the fall. And so we pray that you would continue to help us by your spirit that you would give us to live as those whose every part of whose lives have been assigned to us by you in particular help us to love and serve those parts, those members of Christ.

In your church. That are in the congregation where you have set. And we pray Lord that you would make us. To live militantly mobile. Uh, mobile. Uh, that we would be those who serve you. In the way and the place that you have put us until you at last, bring us home.

Thank you for giving us these Lord's days. In particular, to reset our view of you and the orientation of our life. Give us to live life before your face with eyes and heart. Lifted up to you that we would offer you ourselves promptly. And sincerely. We ask it in Jesus name.

Amen.