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### The Position of the Tribes

The twelve tribes, in groups of three, were divinely situated at a certain distance around the tabernacle. Four of the tribes, Judah, Reuben, Ephraim and Dan were recognized as tribal leaders. Each had its own standard or banner identifying it as a tribal head while the other tribes had ensigns, a lesser type of banner.

It is important to note that Jacob (the father of the 12 tribes) had prophesied that the senior position in his family would belong to the people of Judah:

*Gen 49:10 The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh comes; and to Him shall be the obedience of the people.*

Judah occupied the greatest area which was on the eastern side facing the tabernacle entrance behind the tents of Aaron. To their right was the tribe of Issachar and on the other side Zebulun. The tabernacle itself was always found in the very center of the camp with the tents of the various tribes set up at a certain distance. Judah (with Issachar and Zebulun) on the east numbering 186,400 men. Reuben (with Simeon and Gad) in the south numbering 151,450 men. West was Ephraim (with Manasseh and Benjamin) numbering 108,100 men. On the