

## Numbers 9:1-14

### **Numbers 9:1**

*Now the Lord spoke to Moses in the Wilderness of Sinai, in the first month of the second year after they had come out of the land of Egypt, saying:*

### **Once again Moses hears the voice of the Lord.**

It is worth noticing that the book of Numbers organizes the children of Israel into a nation and for ministry. It should not surprise us how often we read that the Lord spoke to Moses giving him instructions. Healthy ministry is Spirit led and Biblically ordered

Here Moses receives instruction regarding the celebration of Passover.

- Passover was the first feast in the Calendar year of Israel. It was designed to commemorate deliverance from Egypt and is a picture of the work Jesus accomplished on the cross.
- It is unique in that it predates the Law. This feast illustrates how we are saved the remaining feasts illustrate what happens to the saved
- The instructions for how to celebrate Passover are recorded in Exodus 12 and Leviticus 23. We learn that on the 14th day of the first month Israel celebrated by offering a Lamb as a sacrifice and having a feast. A 7-day festival reflecting upon the Lord's delivering Israel from Egypt followed this feast.

### **Exodus 12:14**

*'So this day shall be to you a memorial; and you shall keep it as a feast to the Lord throughout your generations. You shall keep it as a feast by an everlasting ordinance.*

### **Numbers 9:4-5**

*So Moses told the children of Israel that they should keep the Passover. 5 And they kept the Passover on the fourteenth day of the first month, at twilight, in the Wilderness of Sinai; according to all that the Lord commanded Moses, so the children of Israel did.*

One can only imagine the celebration that took place as Israel gathered for the first time as a nation around the Tabernacle to celebrate Passover.

- On the 10<sup>th</sup> day of the month each family selected a lamb and brought it to the priest for inspection

- On the 14<sup>th</sup> of the month each family sacrificed the Lamb and partook of it's meat reflecting upon their deliverance.
- From the 15 – 22 the nation celebrated the feast of unleavened bread and reflected back on the stories of the adventures with the Lord.

An interesting wrinkle appears in the celebration of Passover

**Numbers 9:6-7**

*Now there were certain men who were defiled by a human corpse, so that they could not keep the Passover on that day; and they came before Moses and Aaron that day. And those men said to him, "We became defiled by a human corpse. Why are we kept from presenting the offering of the Lord at its appointed time among the children of Israel?"*

A group of men had become religiously defiled because they touched a corpse. It is possible that they were all part of the same family and someone in the family died. This would force them to go through the burial processes and as a result they were unclean and unable to partake in the feast. Not wanting to miss out on the celebration these men approached Moses asking why they could not partake in the festival.

Back in Exodus 18, Jethro the father in law of Moses encouraged him to set up a system where the smaller day to day issues between the people would be taken to other able men who would hear their cases and pass judgment. The only problem with that system is it meant that the cases that came to Moses were always the big ones. Here we find him face to face with a difficult decision.

Moses rightly responded:

**Numbers 9:8**

*And Moses said to them, "Stand still, that I may hear what the Lord will command concerning you."*

Later we read

**Numbers 19:11**

"He who touches the dead body of anyone shall be unclean seven days.

Moses did not attempt to understand the feelings of the people or to see what might be a popular decision with the whole congregation. Instead Moses sought the Lord

Two very important principles are highlighted here.

- First Moses got alone with the Lord in order to seek the mind of the Lord.

This was the practice of Jesus who was accustomed to break away from the crowds in order to spend time with His Father

This was the custom of the followers of Jesus. On one occasion Paul chose to travel by foot as the rest of his party boarded a ship. Presumably he did this to give himself time alone with the Lord. We know for certain that he spent 3 years in the desert seeking Christ

This will be the practice of godly men and women in every age.

My pastor taught us that “Late nights take away early mornings with God” he encouraged us to make it a daily practice to get alone with Jesus and get to know Him and His word

- Second, Moses waited to hear the Word of the Lord

His quiet time was not spent only in meditation or contemplative thought, he listened for the Word of the Lord.

We now have the written Word. When we want to receive direction from God it is wrong to do so without considering the Word. Keep in mind that countless lives have been given to ensure that it was written, preached and preserved for future generations

Moses actions have provided a good pattern for every believer when attempting to make good and godly decisions.

- First we should make time to seek the Lord
- Second we should look into His word to determine what guidelines He has already provided
- Third we should implement whatever He tells us to do

Let's be careful not to project the voice of the Lord into our situation when He really hasn't spoken. This is a particularly dangerous practice when it comes to relationships. I have had too many encounters with people that tell me the Lord told them to get married only to find them separated or divorced sometime later. I am left to wonder what happened to listening to the voice of God.

There is another important principle illustrated in this text

### **Numbers 9:9-11**

*Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, **10** "Speak to the children of Israel, saying: 'If anyone of you or your posterity is unclean because of a corpse, or is far away on a journey, he may still keep the Lord's Passover. **11** On the fourteenth day of the second month, at twilight, they may keep it. They shall eat it with unleavened bread and bitter herbs.*

There is an open door for those who show up late.

Passover is a picture of the cross and the celebration of it a picture of a person who has trusted Christ. When a group had failed to partake because they were unclean, provision was made for them to still come. They came late, but they came through the same door.

But the means for salvation never changes. There will not arise another way for those who have failed to come through the cross, but there remains time for them to still come.

God desires everyone to be saved

1 Timothy 2:4

**4** who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.

John 3:16

**16** For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

John 6:37

**37** All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will by no means cast out.

Isaiah 1:8-9

**"Come** now, and **let us reason** together," Says the Lord, "Though your sins are like scarlet, They shall be as white as snow; Though they are red like crimson, They shall be as wool.

Acts 2:21

And it shall come to pass *That* **whoever calls on the name of the Lord** Shall be saved.'

## But the way of Salvation never changes

Acts 4:12

**Nor** is there salvation in any **other**, for there is **no other name** under heaven given among men by which we must be saved."

Matthew 20:1:16

Jesus told a parable about a landowner who hired men to work in his vineyard. The first group was hired early in the morning, a second group was hired later in the day followed by a third and a fourth until final at the 11<sup>th</sup> hour he went out once again and hired a final group of workers. When the sun set and the men gathered for their wages they were all paid the same regardless of how long they had worked.

This parable is a beautiful picture of the grace of God given to man. Heaven is a gift given to all who respond to Christ no matter how late in the day we respond. Young Timothy and the thief hanging next to Jesus were both recipients of God's manifold grace. Both will forever live under the banner of king Jesus, walk the streets of gold, and experience the glories of heaven.

That being said, I am struck by the condition of those who responded later.

Matthew 20:3

*And he went out about the third hour and saw others standing **idle** in the marketplace*

Matthew 20:6

*And about the eleventh hour he went out and found others standing **idle**, and said to them, 'Why have you been standing here **idle** all day?'*

We read that they were "standing idle." The word idle means to be free from work. We use the word to speak of a car that is sitting at a stop sign, the motor is running but the car is going nowhere. It is not being used to its fullest or to accomplish what it was designed for. The person who responds to Christ in the 11th hour will receive freely the gifts of eternity but will have lived life idly not fulfilling the purposes for which God designed them

Charles Spurgeon had this to say about vanity or being idle

There are divers kinds of vanity. The cap and bells of the fool, the mirth of the world, the dance, the lyre, and the cup of the dissolute, all these men know to be vanities; they wear upon their forefront their

proper name and title. Far more treacherous are those equally vain things, the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches. A man may follow vanity as truly in the counting-house as in the theatre. If he be spending his life in amassing wealth, he passes his days in a vain show. Unless we follow Christ, and make our God the great object of life, we only differ in appearance from the most frivolous

What about you?

- Have you received Christ and been filled with His Spirit
- Are you living life for the glory of God?
- Are you storing up treasures in heaven by living life to please king Jesus?

If not you can trust Christ today and not only be given the free gift of eternal life but also be given purpose in the life you are living today

Numbers 9:13

But the man who is clean and is not on a journey, and ceases to keep the Passover, that same person shall be cut off from among his people, because he did not bring the offering of the Lord at its appointed time; that man shall bear his sin.

- While God provides another time for the Passover He does not provide another way.
- God will give you another chance to come to Him but He will not provide another way
- If you have refused Christ because there is something about the message that you do not like remember it will not change.

**Numbers 9:15**

*Now on the day that the tabernacle was raised up, the cloud covered the tabernacle, the tent of the Testimony; from evening until morning it was above the tabernacle like the appearance of fire.*

Exodus ended with the construction of the Tabernacle. When it was erected the glory of the Lord filled the tent and God's presence resided above it like a cloud and a fire. This was not just for show but served the practical purpose of being the means by which Israel would know when to move and when to camp.

For the past several months Israel remained encamped because the cloud

had remained above the tabernacle. This was about to change so Moses reminds the people that the cloud and the fire would serve as their guide through the wilderness.

From time to time I am sure we have all wished for a cloud to show us the will and ways of God. Wouldn't it be wonderful if we could determine what to do by a fire that lit the sky or a cloud that provided shade? Let's examine things a bit more carefully.

Israel, with this manifestation of the glory of God still struggled to obey. They struggled in the wilderness to trust that God would protect and provide. When they came to the bank of the Jordan they struggled to believe God would give them victory so they refused to enter the Land. Once in the land they struggled to overthrow the enemy and take possession of what God had promised them. The real problem was not knowing what the will of God was, but rather trusting Him enough to perform it.

Pastor Chuck would often say, "*When you don't know what to do fall back on what you do know*"

More likely than not if you are in a state of uncertainty there are plenty of things you know God does want you to do that you are failing to practice.

Before you receive further direction you need to act upon what His word has already revealed

What if the Bible actually was a light that revealed the will of God to our lives?

What if it told us what to do with our

- **Mornings**

**Psalm 63:1**

O God, You *are* my God; early will I seek You;  
My soul thirsts for You; My flesh longs for You  
In a dry and thirsty land where there is no water.

**Psalms 119:147**

I rise before the dawning of the morning,  
And cry for help;  
I hope in Your word.

- **And throughout the day**

**Psalms 55:17**

Evening and morning and at noon  
I will pray, and cry aloud,  
And He shall hear my voice.

- **Children**

**Ephesians 6:4 NLT**

*Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger by the way you treat them. Rather, bring them up with the discipline and instruction that comes from the Lord.*

Deuteronomy 6 explains how

- **Spouse**

**Ephesians 5:22**

Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord.

**Ephesians 5:25**

Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her,

**1 Peter 3:7**

Husbands, likewise, dwell with them with understanding, giving honor to the wife, as to the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life, that your prayers may not be hindered.

**1 Corinthians 7:3**

Let the husband render to his wife the affection due her, and likewise also the wife to her husband.

- **At work or school**

**Col 3:23-25**

*"Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men, since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving." (ESV)*

- **Hands**



**Eph 4:28**

Let him who stole steal no longer, but rather let him labor, working with *his hands* what is good, that he may have something to give him who has need.

- Feet

**Rom 10:15**

And how shall they preach unless they are sent? As it is written: "How **beautiful** are the **feet** of those who preach the gospel of peace, Who bring glad tidings of good things!"

- Eyes

**Job 31:1**

"I have made a **covenant with my eyes**; Why then should I look upon a young woman?"

- Ears

**Rev 2:11**

"He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.

- Mouth

**Eph 4:29**

Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but what is good for necessary **edification**, that it may impart grace to the hearers.

- Finances

**Psalms 24:1-2**

The earth *is* the Lord's, and all its fullness,  
The world and those who dwell therein.  
For He has founded it upon the seas,  
And established it upon the waters.

If we see all that we have as belonging to the Lord, we will be more likely to give back to Him for the work of the ministry

Clearly the cloud is moving, the question is are you following?

# Numbers 10

## The sound of the trumpet

The trumpets will be used to direct the congregation and were blown for several specific reasons.

### **Numbers 10:2**

*“Make two silver trumpets for yourself; you shall make them of hammered work; you shall use them for **calling the congregation** and for **directing the movement** of the camps.*

- For calling the congregation
- For directing the movement

### **Numbers 10:5**

*When you **sound the advance**, the camps that lie on the east side shall then begin their journey.*

- For sounding the advance

### **Numbers 10:9**

*“When you go to war in your land against the enemy who oppresses you, then you shall sound an alarm with the trumpets, and you will be remembered before the Lord your God, and you will be saved from your enemies.*

- For going to battle

### **Numbers 10:10**

*Also **in the day of your gladness**, in your appointed **feasts**, and at the beginning of your months, you shall blow the trumpets over your burnt offerings and over the sacrifices of your peace offerings; and they shall be a memorial for you before your God: I am the Lord your God.”*

- For celebrating the Lord

Over the years we find Israel using the trumpets as described

- For war

When Moses sent them to against the Midianites

**Numbers 31:6**

*Then Moses sent them to the war, one thousand from each tribe; he sent them to the war with Phinehas the son of Eleazar the priest, with the holy articles and the signal **trumpets** in his hand.*

Later when Jeroboam fought against Judah

**2 Chronicles 13:14**

*And when Judah looked around, to their surprise the battle line was at both front and rear; and they cried out to the Lord, and the priests sounded the **trumpets**.*

- Celebrating

**When** Israel brought the ark to Jerusalem as a sign that the Lord would be at the center of the nation

**1 Chronicles 15:28**

*Thus all Israel brought up the ark of the covenant of the Lord with **shouting** and with the sound of the horn, with **trumpets** and with cymbals, making music with stringed instruments and harps.*

**When** Hezekiah restored the temple

**2 Chronicles 29:27**

*Then Hezekiah commanded them to offer the burnt offering on the altar. And when the burnt offering began, the song of the Lord also began, with the **trumpets** and with the instruments of David king of Israel.*

**When** the foundation of Ezra's temple was laid

**Ezra 3:10**

*When the builders laid the foundation of the temple of the Lord, the priests stood in their apparel with **trumpets**, and the Levites, the sons of Asaph, with cymbals, to praise the Lord, according to the ordinance of David king of Israel.*

**When** the Nehemiah's wall was built

**Nehemiah 12:40**

*So the two thanksgiving choirs stood in the house of God, likewise I and the half of the rulers with me; and the priests, Eliakim, Maaseiah, Minjamin,[a] Michaiah, Elioenai, Zechariah, and Hananiah, with trumpets;*

The New Testament also speaks of the use of trumpets

**1 Corinthians 15:52**

In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet, for the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and **we** shall be changed.

**1 Thessalonians 4:16**

*For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the **trumpet** of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. **17** Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord.*

This event is illustrated in the book of Revelation

**Revelation 4:1**

*After these things I looked, and behold, a door standing open in heaven. And the first voice which I heard was like a **trumpet** speaking with me, saying, "Come up here, and I will show you things which must take place after this."*

These trumpets will announce the rapture of the church when the believers will be called home to heaven.

Then in a Revelation 8-9 we read of several blasts from the trumpets

**Revelation 8:7**

*The first angel **sounded**: And hail and fire followed, mingled with blood, and they were thrown to the earth. And a third of the trees were burned up, and all green grass was burned up.*

It is important to distinguish between the Trumpets predicted by Paul and illustrated in the calling of John to heaven from the trumpets sounded by the angels during the tribulation period.

- The former is a sound to call the believer home
- The latter is a sound to call the forces of heaven and earth to execute judgment on sinful man

The Bible Knowledge commentary puts it this way

### **1 Corinthians 15:52**

*In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.*

*There is no basis for post-tribulationists equating this trumpet with the seventh trumpet in Rev. 11:15–19. The trumpets in Rev. pertain to judgments during the Tribulation, whereas the trumpet in 1 Corinthians is related to the church.*

*Like the dead, the living will exchange the temporal and imperfect for the eternal and perfect. For those who belong to Christ, death's power will be removed.*

The Bible knowledge commentary has this to say when referring to the blast described in 1Thesalonians

### **1 Thessalonians 4:16**

*For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first.*

*The trumpet call of God—is difficult to interpret.*

*Who will voice the loud shout? Will it be Jesus Himself or the archangel Michael or another angel?*

*Is this a literal trumpet call, or was Paul speaking figuratively in describing the call of God by which He will announce the Advent of His Son?*

*Though one's curiosity about these aspects of the Rapture is not fully satisfied in this passage, **one thing is clear**: Christ's return for His saints will be announced from heaven forcefully and dramatically.*

### **Numbers 10:11-12**

*Now it came to pass on the twentieth day of the second month, in the second year, that the cloud was taken up from above the tabernacle of the Testimony. **12** And the children of Israel set out from the Wilderness of Sinai on their journeys; then the cloud settled down in the Wilderness of Paran. **13** So they started out for the first time according to the command of the Lord by the hand of Moses*

Verses 11 through 13 are give us a quick overview of Israel's journey to Paran, and then from 10:14 to 12:16 we will see the details of this journey.

As the cloud starts moving, the priests sound the trumpets, the people begin packing up their stuff, **but our attention is drawn to the actions of Moses:**

<sup>29</sup> **Now** Moses said to Hobab the son of Reuel the Midianite

Hobab is the father in law of Moses, he is a Midianite (not an Israelite) yet Moses invites him to join them as they travel to the promised land

Numbers 10:29

*"We are setting out for the place of which the LORD said, 'I will give it to you.' **Come with us**, and we will treat you well; for the LORD has promised good things to Israel."*

In the midst of all the hurrying to get ready to go Moses seeks out his father in law and invites him to join them in their journey.

Moses is setting a very good example for regarding how to reach the lost

- Just as Israel was awaiting the trumpet to sound and to be called to the Land God prepared for them, we also are waiting for our trumpet blast to be called to the place Jesus has prepared for us.
- Just as Moses was not content to go without first reaching out to his father in law neither should we be content to go with out reaching out to those around us.

A friend of mine was getting baptized at her church so she put together very formal invitations and sent them out to her friends and family who were not believers. She made it clear in the invitation that this was a very important event for her and that she really wanted them to be a part of it. When the day of her baptism arrived, her pastor explained what baptism represents, then he gave her an opportunity to address the congregation. In short she said, "I have trusted Jesus and I am going to heaven, but I love all of you so much I do not want to go alone. Will you please accept Jesus so that you can come to heaven with me!" I have to tell you it was one of the most powerful evangelistic messages I have ever heard.

If you have received Jesus Christ then you are saved and going to heaven, seek to bring as many along with you as you can. I recall a

song we used to sing when I first got saved one line went; “*with one hand reach out to Jesus with the other bring a friend...*” Moses is not so consumed with packing for the trip that he neglects to invite Hobab.

## Notice How Moses attempts to influence Hobab’s decision

Verse 29

*“We are setting out for the place of which the LORD said, ‘I will give it to you.’ Come with **us**, and **we will treat you well**; for the LORD has promised good things to **Israel**.”*

- Moses invites Hobab to become part of the family of God?

I remember one of my first experiences with the family of God. I was 19 years old and had and was invited to a Bible study with the youth group. I had met the pastor once before at the beach about a year earlier. That night when I entered the room he called me by name. I felt so welcome and was amazed that he remembered who I was. Later I found out that they had been praying for me for months. They knew my name because they had been talking to the Father about me. I considered myself so blessed to be part of the greatest family on earth. The family of God where all over the world I can meet people who are born-again and in a moment be in love with them and have everything in common with them.

- Moses refers to the promises of God.

Some of the conditional promises found in the Bible include

- The love of God being shed abroad in our hearts
- The guilt of sin being removed
- A reboot in life
- The peace of God filling our hearts and mind
- The joy of the Lord being our strength

The condition that must be met is receiving Christ. If you want to experience the promises of God, then give your life to Christ

<sup>30</sup> And he said to him, “**I will not go**, but I will depart to my *own* land and to **my relatives.**”

Hobab’s response is a pretty common one.

- He wanted to go back to what he was comfortable with. Perhaps the people of God made him feel uncomfortable.
- He wanted to return to his old life and his old friends

Moses is not content to leave it alone, he continues

<sup>31</sup> So *Moses* said, “**Please** do not leave,

Moses, the man of God, resorts to begging him. Paul did the same thing:

2Cor 5:20

*Now then, we are **ambassadors** for Christ, as though God were pleading through us: we implore you on Christ’s behalf, be reconciled to God.*

- Imagine the apostle Paul on his knees begging people to follow Jesus.
- Imagine Moses the leader of the nation of Israel on his knees pleading with his father in law
- When is the last time you pleaded with someone to consider Christ?
- When is the last time you did not take no for an answer and kept praying and reaching out to someone for the sake of their soul

A few years ago myself and another pastor were invited to the palace of the chief of a village in Northern Ghana. The palace was a mud hut, but the invitation was quite an honor. We sat down with the chief and elders of the village and thanked them for the privilege of being able to share Christ with his people. It did not take long



for the conversation to turn into an opportunity to share Christ with the chief and his elders. After clearly presenting the gospel and giving an opportunity to respond the chief politely refused. Instead of stopping, my friend shared the same truths another way and gave another opportunity to respond. When he once again refused my friend asked why. What was it that made him refuse? Then he began to address that head on. It wasn't long before the chief and a few of the elders responded to the Gospel. Persistence paid off. They were refusing because there were things they did not understand. Once those were answered they welcomed Christ into their lives.

*<sup>31</sup>Inasmuch as you know how we are to camp in the wilderness, and you **can be our eyes**. <sup>32</sup> And it shall be, if you go with us—indeed it shall be—that whatever good the LORD will do to us, the same we will do to you.”*

Moses gives **two reasons** why Hobab should follow.

**Number 1:** he says, *“If we go, you can help lead.”*

Think about that, did Moses need Hobab's help?

If you have “The Ark” with the Word of God in it; a cloud and a fire showing you when to go and when to stop and a priesthood that hears from God and blows a trumpet, do you need Hobab's compass or his experience?

God didn't need Hobab but He wanted him and he let Hobab know that He had a purpose for him.

Do you know that God has called you with a purpose and that He has a wonderful plan for your life?

He places great value on you and wants to use you to have an eternal impact on the lives of others.

The beauty of the church is that God uses individuals with unique gifts to accomplish his purposes in the world

It is not that God needs us but He certainly wants to use us. The greatest experiences of my life have been serving Christ.

When Hobab rejected the offer he was actually going back to a life without purpose. But if he joins Israel he will enter into a life of meaning and value.

Moses gives Hobab a second reason why he should join them, verse 32, he says:

*“Whatever good the LORD will do to us, the same we will do to you.”*

In other words, “Do you see what God is doing on in us? Do you see the change that God’s brought about in us? God wants to do that in you. God wants to do a work in you.”

Our experience of the Lord is often the best tool we have in seeking to convince others to come to Christ. When Paul was witnessing before the king he did not resort to apologetics, or theology but rather to his own experience in the Lord. The fact the he had met Jesus face to face and that the Lord transformed him from an angry Pharisee to a loving shepherd.

“So **they** departed from the mountain of the Lord on a journey...”

When we get to the book of Judges we read of the descendants of Hobab and realize that Moses convinced him. He heard the trumpet, saw the cloud, heard about the plan of God and he joined the march.