



Lesson 36 – From Sinai to Kadesh

based on Numbers 11 and 12.

The Children of Israel had just spent a year at the foot of Mt Sinai. There God's law was given and instructions for a Tabernacle and rules of a civil government. Now they were ready to embark on to the promised land.

God was the center of authority and government, the sovereign of Israel. Moses stood as their visible leader, by God's appointment, to administer the laws in His name. From the elders of the tribes a council of seventy was afterward chosen to assist Moses in the general affairs of the nation. Next came the priests, who consulted the Lord in the sanctuary. Chiefs, or princes, ruled over the tribes. Under these were **“captains over thousands, and captains over hundreds, and captains over fifties, and captains over tens,”** and, lastly, officers who might be employed for special duties. **Deuteronomy 1:15.**

1) What did the Levites do?

Numbers 1:50 But thou shalt appoint the Levites over the tabernacle of testimony, and over all the vessels thereof, and over all things that belong to it: they shall _____ the tabernacle, and all the _____ thereof; and they shall minister unto it, and shall encamp round about the tabernacle.

2) Where did they camp in relation to the Tabernacle?

Numbers 3:38 But those that encamp before the tabernacle toward the _____, even before the tabernacle of the congregation eastward, shall be _____, and Aaron and his sons, keeping the charge of the sanctuary for the charge of the children of Israel; and the stranger that cometh nigh shall be put to death.

The Levites were separated into three divisions, the descendants of the three sons of Levi, and each was assigned its special position and work. In front of the tabernacle, and nearest to it, were the tents of Moses and Aaron. On the south were the Kohathites, whose duty it was to care for the ark and the other furniture; on the north Merarites, who were placed in charge of the pillars, sockets, boards, etc.; in the rear the Gershonites, to whom the care of the curtains and hangings was committed.

So it was with each of the tribes of Israel, each was to camp in a specific order relative to the Tabernacle.

3) When the Cloud lifted from the Tabernacle, how were they to disembark?

Numbers 2:2,17 Every man of the children of Israel shall pitch by his own _____, with the ensign of their father's house: far off about the tabernacle of the congregation shall they pitch... ..Then the tabernacle of the congregation shall set forward with the camp of the Levites in the midst of the camp: as they encamp, so shall they set _____, every man in his place by their standards.

4) Why were there standards for cleanliness and order in the camp?

Deuteronomy 23:14 For the LORD thy God _____ in the midst of thy camp, to deliver thee, and to give up thine enemies before thee; therefore shall thy camp be holy: that he see no _____ thing in thee, and turn away from thee.

5) When they were on the move, what went before them?

Numbers 10:33 And they departed from the mount of the LORD three days' journey: and the _____ of the _____ of the LORD went before them in the three days' journey, to search out a resting place for them.

Borne by the sons of Kohath, the sacred chest containing God's holy law was to lead the van. Before it went Moses and Aaron; and the priests, bearing silver trumpets, were stationed near. These priests received directions from Moses, which they communicated to the people by the trumpets. It was the duty of the leaders of each company to give definite directions concerning all the movements to be made, as indicated by the trumpets.



- 6) What did Moses say as they embarked?

Numbers 10:35 And it came to pass, when the ark set forward, that Moses said, Rise up, LORD, and let thine enemies be _____; and let them that hate thee flee before thee.

- 7) ...and when they got to their destination?

Numbers 10:36 And when it rested, he said, _____, O LORD, unto the many thousands of Israel.

Israel encamped around Sinai for over a year and now were to go to the promised land. Yet it was almost with reluctance that many left the place where they had so long encamped. They had come almost to regard it as their home. Within the shelter of those granite walls God had gathered His people, apart from all other nations, to repeat to them His holy law. They loved to look upon the sacred mount, on whose hoary peaks and barren ridges the divine glory had so often been displayed. The scene was so closely associated with the presence of God and holy angels that it seemed too sacred to be left thoughtlessly, or even gladly.

- 8) What was their journey like?

Jeremiah 2:6 ...that led us through the wilderness, through a land of deserts and of pits, through a land of _____, and of the shadow of death, through a land that no man passed through, and where no man dwelt...

The rocky gorges, far and near, were thronged with men, women, and children, with beasts and wagons, and long lines of flocks and herds. Their progress was necessarily slow and toilsome; and the multitudes, after their long encampment, were not prepared to endure the perils and discomforts of the way.

After three days' journey, complaints were heard. These originated with the mixed multitude, many of whom were not fully united with Israel, and were continually watching for some cause of censure. The complainers were not pleased with the direction of the march, and they were continually finding fault with the way in which Moses was leading them, though they well knew that he, as well as they, was following the guiding cloud. Dissatisfaction is contagious, and it soon spread in the encampment.

- 9) What did they do?

Psalms 78:18-19 And they tempted God in their heart by asking meat for their _____. Yea, they spake against God; they said, Can God _____ a table in the wilderness?

- 10) ...and God?

Psalms 78:20-21 Behold, he smote the rock, that the waters gushed out, and the streams overflowed; can he give bread also? can he provide _____ for his people? Therefore the LORD heard this, and was wroth: so a _____ was kindled against Jacob, and anger also came up against Israel;

Numbers 11:1 And when the people complained, it displeased the LORD: and the LORD heard it; and his anger was kindled; and the fire of the LORD burnt among them, and _____ them that were in the uttermost parts of the camp.

Murmuring and tumults had been frequent during the journey from the Red Sea to Sinai, but in pity for their ignorance and blindness God had not then visited the sin with judgments. But since that time He had revealed Himself to them at Horeb. They had received great light, as they had been witnesses to the majesty, the power, and the mercy of God; and their unbelief and discontent incurred the greater guilt. Furthermore, they had covenanted to accept Jehovah as their king and to obey His authority. Their murmuring was now rebellion, and as such it must receive prompt and signal punishment, if Israel was to be preserved from anarchy and ruin.

- 11) Did the people understand?

Numbers 11:2-3 And the people cried unto Moses; and when Moses _____ unto the LORD, the fire was quenched. And he called the name of the place Taberah: because the _____ of the LORD burnt among them.



12) Were things better now?

Numbers 11:4-6 And the mixt multitude that was among them fell a lusting: and the children of Israel also wept _____, and said, Who shall give us flesh to eat? We remember the fish, which we did eat in Egypt freely; the cucumbers, and the melons, and the leeks, and the onions, and the garlick: But now our soul is dried away: there is nothing at all, beside this _____, before our eyes.

The heart of Moses sank.

13) What did he plead before God?

Numbers 11:11 And Moses said unto the LORD, Wherefore hast thou _____ thy servant? and wherefore have I not found favour in thy sight, that thou layest the burden of all this people upon me?

Numbers 11:13-14 Whence should _____ have flesh to give unto all this people? for they weep unto me, saying, Give us flesh, that we may eat. I am not able to _____ all this people alone, because it is too heavy for me.

14) What did God tell Moses to do?

Numbers 11:16 And the LORD said unto Moses, Gather unto me seventy men of the _____ of Israel, whom thou knowest to be the elders of the people, and officers over them; and bring them unto the tabernacle of the congregation, that they may _____ there with thee.

Numbers 11:17 And I will come down and talk with thee there: and I will take of the spirit which is upon _____, and will put it upon _____; and they shall bear the burden of the people with thee, that thou bear it not thyself alone.

The Lord permitted Moses to choose for himself the most faithful and efficient men to share the responsibility with him. Their influence would assist in holding in check the violence of the people, and quelling insurrection; yet serious evils would eventually result from their promotion. They would never have been chosen had Moses manifested faith corresponding to the evidences he had witnessed of God's power and goodness. But he had magnified his own burdens and services, almost losing sight of the fact that he was only the instrument by which God had wrought. He was not excusable in indulging, in the slightest degree, the spirit of murmuring that was the curse of Israel. Had he relied fully upon God, the Lord would have guided him continually and would have given him strength for every emergency.

15) The people asked for flesh, what did God reply?

Numbers 11:18 And say thou unto the people, _____ yourselves against to morrow, and ye shall eat flesh: for ye have wept in the ears of the LORD, saying, Who shall give us flesh to eat? for it was well with us in Egypt: therefore the LORD will give you flesh, and ye shall _____.

16) For how long?

Numbers 11:19-20 Ye shall not eat one day, nor two days, nor five days, neither ten days, nor twenty days; But even a _____, until it come out at your nostrils, and it be loathsome unto you: because that ye have _____ the LORD which is among you, and have wept before him, saying, Why came we forth out of Egypt?

17) Did Moses see how God was going to do this?

Numbers 11:21-22 And Moses said, The people, among whom I am, are six hundred thousand footmen; and thou hast said, _____ will give them flesh, that they may eat a whole month. Shall the flocks and the herds be _____ for them, to suffice them? or shall all the fish of the sea be gathered together for them, to suffice them?

18) God replied:

Numbers 11:23 And the LORD said unto Moses, Is the LORD'S hand waxed _____? thou shalt see now whether my word shall come to pass unto thee or not.



Moses repeated to the congregation the words of the Lord and announced the appointment of the seventy elders.

19) What did he charge them to do?

Deuteronomy 1:16-17 So I took the chief of your tribes, wise men, and known, and made them heads over you, captains over thousands, and captains over hundreds, and captains over fifties, and captains over tens, and officers among your tribes. And I charged your judges at that time, saying, _____ the causes between your brethren, and _____ righteously between every man and his brother, and the stranger that is with him.

20) What followed?

Numbers 11:25 And the LORD came down in a cloud, and _____ unto him, and took of the spirit that was upon him, and gave it unto the seventy elders: and it came to pass, that, when the spirit rested upon them, they _____, and did not cease.

21) Were all seventy present at this?

Numbers 11:26 But there remained two of the men in the _____, the name of the one was Eldad, and the name of the other Medad: and the spirit rested upon them; and they were of them that were written, but went not out unto the tabernacle: and they _____ in the camp.

Two of the seventy, humbly counting themselves unworthy of so responsible a position, had not joined their brethren at the tabernacle; but the Spirit of God came upon them where they were, and they, too, exercised the prophetic gift. On being informed of this, Joshua desired to check such irregularity, fearing that it might tend to division.

22) What transpired?

Numbers 11:27-28 And there ran a young man, and told Moses, and said, Eldad and Medad do prophesy in the camp. And Joshua the son of Nun, the servant of Moses, one of his young men, answered and said, My lord Moses, _____ them.

23) Was Moses selfish?

Numbers 11:29 And Moses said unto him, Enviest thou for my sake? would God that _____ the LORD'S people were prophets, and that the LORD would put his spirit upon them!

24) Did the people get flesh to eat?

Numbers 11:31 And there went forth a wind from the LORD, and brought _____ from the sea, and let them fall by the camp, as it were a day's journey on this side, and as it were a day's journey on the other side, round about the camp, and as it were two _____ high upon the face of the earth.

Numbers 11:32 And the people stood up all that day, and all that night, and all the next day, and they gathered the quails: he that gathered least gathered _____: and they spread them all abroad for themselves round about the camp.

God gave the people that which was not for their highest good, because they persisted in desiring it; they would not be satisfied with those things that would prove a benefit to them. Their rebellious desires were gratified, but they were left to suffer the result. They feasted without restraint, and their excesses were speedily punished.

25) What became of all that?

Numbers 11:33-34 And while the flesh was yet between their _____, ere it was chewed, the wrath of the LORD was kindled against the people, and the LORD smote the people with a very great _____. And he called the name of that place Kibrothhattaavah: because there they buried the people that lusted.

26) What was Moses tested with in Hazeroth?

Numbers 12:1-2 And Miriam and Aaron spake _____ Moses because of the Ethiopian woman whom he had married: for he had married an Ethiopian woman. And they said, Hath the LORD indeed spoken only by Moses? hath he not spoken also by _____? And the LORD heard it.



In the appointment of the seventy elders Miriam and Aaron had not been consulted, and their jealousy was excited against Moses. At the time of Jethro's visit, while the Israelites were on the way to Sinai, the ready acceptance by Moses of the counsel of his father-in-law had aroused in Aaron and Miriam a fear that his influence with the great leader exceeded theirs. In the organization of the council of elders they felt that their position and authority had been ignored.

Though called an "Ethiopian" (Numbers 12:1), the wife of Moses was a Midianite, and thus a descendant of Abraham. In personal appearance she differed from the Hebrews in being of a somewhat darker complexion. Though not an Israelite, Zipporah was a worshiper of the true God. She was of a timid, retiring disposition, gentle and affectionate, and greatly distressed at the sight of suffering; and it was for this reason that Moses, when on the way to Egypt, had consented to her return to Midian. He desired to spare her the pain of witnessing the judgments that were to fall on the Egyptians.

When Zipporah rejoined her husband in the wilderness, she saw that his burdens were wearing away his strength, and she made known her fears to Jethro, who suggested measures for his relief. Here was the chief reason for Miriam's antipathy to Zipporah. Smarting under the supposed neglect shown to herself and Aaron, she regarded the wife of Moses as the cause, concluding that her influence had prevented him from taking them into his counsels as formerly.

27) How did God feel about this disunity?

Numbers 12:4-5 And the LORD spake suddenly unto Moses, and unto Aaron, and unto Miriam, Come out ye _____ unto the tabernacle of the congregation. And they three came out. And the LORD came down in the pillar of the cloud, and _____ in the door of the tabernacle, and called Aaron and Miriam: and they both came forth.

Their claim to the prophetic gift was not denied; God might have spoken to them in visions and dreams.

28) What approval did God give Moses?

Numbers 12:7-8 My servant Moses is not so, who is faithful in all mine house. With him will I speak _____ to mouth, even apparently, and not in dark speeches; and the similitude of the LORD shall he behold: wherefore then were ye not afraid to speak _____ my servant Moses?

29) What happened?

Numbers 12:10 And the cloud departed from off the tabernacle; and, behold, Miriam became _____, white as snow: and Aaron looked upon Miriam, and, behold, she was leprous.

Aaron was spared, but he was severely rebuked in Miriam's punishment. Now, their pride humbled in the dust, Aaron confessed their sin and entreated that his sister might not be left to perish by that loathsome and deadly scourge. In answer to the prayers of Moses the leprosy was cleansed. Miriam was, however, shut out of the camp for seven days. Not until she was banished from the encampment did the symbol of God's favor again rest upon the tabernacle. In respect for her high position, and in grief at the blow that had fallen upon her, the whole company abode in Hazeroth, awaiting her return.

30) Should we speak evil of others?

James 4:11 Speak not _____ one of another, brethren. He that speaketh evil of his brother, and judgeth his brother, speaketh evil of the law, and judgeth the law: but if thou judge the law, thou art not a _____ of the law, but a judge.

31) Who is the only righteous judge?

1 Corinthians 4:5 Therefore judge _____ before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of _____, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts: and then shall every man have praise of God.

He who has placed upon men the heavy responsibility of leaders and teachers of His people will hold the people accountable for the manner in which they treat His servants. We are to honor those whom God has honored. The judgment visited upon Miriam should be a rebuke to all who yield to jealousy, and murmur against those upon whom God lays the burden of His work.

Can you see God really is in control?

Would you like to finally get to the promised land?

When is it time to stop looking to others and start looking up?