

Passover and Instructions for the Journey (Chapter 9)

Celebrating the Passover (9:1-14)

At the beginning of chapter nine, we are still in a "flashback." Notice that the events of this chapter took place a month before the census of chapter one (9:1, 1:1). It had been a year since the Israelites had left Egypt and it was time to celebrate the Passover in order to commemorate God's deliverance. They celebrated it on the fourteenth day of the first month according to the instructions given them by Moses (Ex 12).

Some were concerned because they were either ceremonially unclean or away on the journey at the appointed time for the Passover. The Lord said that those people could celebrate it instead on the fourteenth day of the *second* month. Those who did not have a good reason for missing the Passover, however, were to be cut off from their people if they failed to observe it.

The Passover was:

- 1)
- 2)

Can You Remember?

Israel had been out of Egypt for a year. What things had happened during that time? How had the people seen the mighty hand of God?

The Journey to the Promised Land (9:15-23)

This section gives details about the pillar of fire and cloud that would accompany the Israelites on their travels to the promised land.

- # If you were to choose a "theme" for this section, what would it be?
- # How could the pillar of cloud and fire be a comfort to the Israelites?
- # In what ways do we place our daily plans in the hands of the Lord?

Departure for Canaan (Chapter 10)

The Silver Trumpets (10:1-10)

We have noticed how orderly God was in preparing the people for entrance into the promised land. He counted the number of fighting men, He determined where each tribe should camp, and he set an order for marching. The last thing to do before departure was to organize *when* everyone should move. For this purpose, He had Moses make two silver trumpets. If *both* trumpets were sounded, the whole community was to assemble at the entrance to the Tent of Meeting. If *one* trumpet sounded, then only the leaders were to gather. When another particular signal on the trumpets was heard, they knew it was time to move camp. With four trumpet blasts, each of the four divisions of the camp were to proceed at the Lord's direction.

The trumpets were to be sounded on two other occasions as well: When Israel entered battle and at times of celebration.

- # Even in our tradition today, trumpets mark times of celebration (e.g. weddings and high festivals).
- # Why do you think the Lord would have them blow the trumpet when they entered a battle?

Departure (10:11-36)

Finally all is ready! It is time to leave the desert of Sinai and move up into the promised land of Canaan. On the twentieth day of the second month, the cloud lifted from above the tabernacle, the trumpets sounded, and they were on their way in the marching order God had prescribed for them.

Moses asks Hobab, his brother-in-law to accompany the Israelites. He felt that Hobab would be a great help to them since He had much experience living in the desert (Midian). He would be able to help them discover water and resting places that the Lord would provide for them. Hobab declined, but Moses kept on insisting. Actually, we are not told in this chapter whether he joined them or not, but it seems that he did since later on in Judges 1:16 arrangements are made for the descendants of Hobab to receive a portion of the promised land.

They set out and traveled for three days toward the Desert of Paran (v12). The Ark of the Covenant was carried in front of them each day. Each day Moses expressed His confidence in the LORD with the verses here at the end of the chapter (vv35-36).

- # These verses of Moses might well be our prayer at the beginning and end of every day.