



The Exodus

Lesson 13: Israel Leaves Sinai

(Numbers 1-3, 9-12)

Before leaving Sinai, God told Moses to take a census and number all the male Israelites and the Levites who could do the work of the tabernacle, according to all their groups and families. The Lord also told the Israelites how they were to camp around the tabernacle. With so many people, God wanted things done in a certain way. So, the tribes of Judah, Isaachar, and Zebulun, along with Moses, Aaron, and the priests camped on the eastern side of the tabernacle. The tribes of Reuben, Simeon, and Gad, along with the Kohathites camped on the southern side of the tabernacle. The tribes of Ephraim, Manasseh, and Benjamin, along with the Gershonites camped on the western side of the tabernacle. Finally, the tribes of Dan, Asher, and Naphtali, along with the Merarites camped on the northern side of the tabernacle.

The Israelites would know that they needed to break camp and start on their journey whenever the cloud that covered the tabernacle (that looked like fire at night) lifted into the sky. Since the tabernacle was built, this cloud remained over it so that the Israelites would stay at Sinai. But, whenever it lifted, they were to go where the Lord would lead them. When it came to rest again, the people would stop traveling. Sometimes this would be a long time. Sometimes it would be a short time.

Moses was also told to make two silver trumpets. These trumpets would be used to send messages to the Israelites. Different sounds would be made with the trumpets to send different messages. Some messages meant that it was time for them to leave. Some messages meant that it was time for them to come together at the tabernacle. Some messages meant there was a battle. Then, the trumpets were also to be blown over some sacrifices and at certain festivals.

On the 20th day of the second month in the second year, the cloud was lifted above the tabernacle and the Israelites left the Wilderness of Sinai. Those who camped with Judah left first, with the Gershonites and the Merarites bringing the

tabernacle. Those who camped with Reuben left next, with the Kohathites bringing the holy objects of the tabernacle. Those who camped with Ephraim left next. Then, those who camped with Dan left last.

The ark of the covenant would go in front of the Israelites when they traveled. When the ark set out, Moses would say, “Arise, Lord! Let your enemies be scattered, and those who hate you flee from your presence” (Numbers 10:35). When it would come to rest, Moses would say, “Return, Lord, to the countless thousands of Israel” (Numbers 10:36).

While the Israelites were traveling, some people began to complain. This made God angry with the people and He sent fire to burn the outer part of the camp. Then, when the people cried out to Moses, Moses prayed and the fire died down. This place was called Taberah.

Then, some of the people kept complaining about food. Even though God was giving them manna, they wanted the kind of food they had back in Egypt (like fish, cucumbers, melons, leeks, onions, and garlic). This made God angry with them. But, God sent a great many quails to give meat to the people. However, because some people were greedy, God caused a severe plague among them and killed them. This place was called Kibroth-havattavah because they buried people who craved meat. Then, the Israelites traveled to Hazeroth.

Later, Aaron and Miriam complained against Moses. But, God told them that Moses was special because God spoke to him directly and he saw the form of God. So, God was angry with them and caused Miriam’s skin to become diseased and look white as snow. Then, they admitted they were wrong and Moses cried out for God to heal her. After this, the Israelites traveled to the Wilderness of Paran and camped there.

Discovering God’s Word Bible Study Series

Study Number: CS52

Written by Eric Krieg

Copyright: Copyright © 2018 GodSaidSo Press. Please use this material to God’s glory and honor. Feel free to copy and distribute this material in any way that will bring God glory and help souls to be saved. However, you may not take any of the material out of context or change the material in any way. Please provide the author with the proper credit for the material.

Scripture quotations: Unless otherwise indicated, all scripture quotations are taken from the Christian Standard Bible®, Copyright © 2017 by Holman Bible Publishers. Used by permission. Christian Standard Bible® and CSB® are federally registered trademarks of Holman Bible Publishers.

Study Questions:

- 1) How many tribes of the Israelites camped on each side of the tabernacle?
- 2) How would the Israelites know they needed to break camp?
- 3) How would the Israelites know they needed to stop traveling?
- 4) What were the two silver trumpets for?
- 5) What traveled in front of the Israelites?
- 6) What did God do when the people complained in Taberah?
- 7) What did God do when the people complained and were greedy in Kibroth-havattavah?
- 8) What did God do when Aaron and Miriam complained against Moses?

Memory Verse:

“...We’re setting out for the place the Lord promised: ‘I will give it to you.’ Come with us, and we will treat you well, for the Lord has promised good things to Israel” (Numbers 10:29).

Draw a picture of the lesson you learned about: