

## Numbers Chapter 10

Verses 1-10

Israel was also to be guided by the blowing of the two silver trumpets made by Moses.

Both a call to gather and a call to march were communicated with the trumpets.

“Two trumpets of silver” were used to coordinate the movements of the tribes on their march through the wilderness.

The cloud would guide them, but the trumpets would give more precise means of control.

They actually complete and complement the means of divine guidance given (in 9:15-23).

Trumpets like these were used in ancient Egypt from the sixteenth to the eleventh centuries B.C. in warfare and to summon people to worship.

With the tabernacle in the middle of the camp, and the tribes situated in battle formation, the silver trumpets declared that God’s people were in the army of the great King, preparing for a holy war of conquest.

The trumpets are pictured on the arch of Titus in Rome.

**Numbers 10:1 "And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,"**

When the following directions concerning the trumpets were given is not certain.

It may be at the time when the order of the camps of Israel was fixed, and is here recorded before the journeying of them, which was one use they were to be put unto (Num. 10:2).

"Saying":

As follows.

This is a break in the past message.

**Numbers 10:2 "Make thee two trumpets of silver; of a whole piece shalt thou make them: that thou mayest use them for the calling of the assembly, and for the journeying of the camps."**

“Trumpets”:

According to a Jewish tradition, these instruments were between 12 and 20 inches long and had a narrow tube that was flared at the end.

“Of a whole piece”:

The same description is given concerning the cherubim above the mercy seat.

See (Exodus 25:18; 37:7).

These trumpets of silver are the same type of trumpet that will be blown, when the Lord blows the trumpet in the sky, to call us to heaven.

"Silver" means redemption.

That trumpet will call us to our redemption from this earth.

These trumpets, in verse 2 above, are for the redeeming of the people as well.

He assembles them for worship.

He also blows those trumpets to cause them to follow Him.

Notice, these trumpets were of one piece.

They are not put together.

There is only one redemption, and that is found in Jesus.

By two, a thing shall be established.

Verses 3-4

“Blow with them ... one”:

The first function of the trumpets was to gather the people to the tabernacle.

When both trumpets were blown, all adult males of the congregation were to gather.

If only one trumpet was blown, the leaders were to come.

**Numbers 10:3 "And when they shall blow with them, all the assembly shall assemble themselves to thee at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation."**

With both the trumpets, in an even and continued sound, that is, the sons of Aaron.

"All the assembly shall assemble themselves to thee at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation":

To hear what was to be said unto them.

Blowing both the trumpets together was a token that the whole congregation was called to meet together at the tabernacle.

The door of which was the usual place of assembling.

Especially on religious counts, for there also the LORD met them (Exodus 29:42).

The location that it is blown, shows us the spiritual value of the blowing of the trumpet.

They assembled at the door of the tabernacle to hear from God.

When they blow with both trumpets, all the people are to gather.

**Numbers 10:4 "And if they blow [but] with one [trumpet], then the princes, [which are] heads of the thousands of Israel, shall gather themselves unto thee."**

With only one of them, or but once, with one sounding.

And that an even one as before.

"Then the princes, which are the heads of the thousands of Israel, shall gather themselves unto thee": And they only or alone, as Aben Ezra states.

By this token, or by this difference of blowing both trumpets, or only one.

It was, easily known when the whole congregation or when the princes only were to meet Moses at the same place, the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.

And all are to attend divine service, and the ministry of the word.

Even the whole church of God, and all the members of it, high and low, rich and poor, princes and people.

This blowing of one trumpet is just for the leaders to come.

It is interesting, to me, that all believers in Christ are "princes".

We rule with the King (Jesus), as His subordinates.

Matthew 25:21 "His Lord said unto him, Well done, [thou] good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

Revelation 20:6 "Blessed and holy [is] he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years."

**Numbers 10:5 "When ye blow an alarm, then the camps that lie on the east parts shall go forward."**

"Shall go forward":

The second purpose of the trumpets was to give a signal indicating that the tribes were to begin their march.

The exact difference between the blowing for the gathering at the tabernacle and for the march is not known.

Jewish tradition said the convocation sound was a long steady blast, while the advance signal was a succession of 3 shorter notes.

The blowing of the trumpet to move the camp and the blowing of the trumpet to assemble, were undoubtedly different sounds from the same trumpet.

The camps on the east were the tribes of Judah, Issachar, and Zebulun.

It appears, they have the first place in the march, as we studied earlier.

**Numbers 10:6 "When ye blow an alarm the second time, then the camps that lie on the south side shall take their journey: they shall blow an alarm for their journeys."**

Another "tara-tan-tara".

"Then the camps that lie on the south side shall take their journey":

The camps of Reuben, Simeon, and Gad, which were encamped on the south side of the tabernacle (Num. 2:10).

And, as Josephus says, at the third sounding of the alarm, that part of the camp which lay to the west moved, which were the camps of Ephraim, Manasseh, and Benjamin (Num. 2:18).

And at the fourth sounding, as he says, those which were at the north, the camps of Dan, Asher, and Naphtali (Num. 2:25).

Which, though not expressed in the Hebrew text, are added in the Septuagint version, as they are to be understood.

"They shall blow an alarm for their journeys":

For the journeys of the said camps, as a signal or token when they should begin to march.

The second blowing of the trumpet for moving the people was sounded, and those on the south moved.

These were made up of the tribes of Reuben, Simeon, and Gad.

If all of the people moved at the first blow of the trumpet, there would be utter confusion.

This is orderly.

**Numbers 10:7 "But when the congregation is to be gathered together, ye shall blow, but ye shall not sound an alarm."**

At the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, and not to move in separate camps or bodies one after another.

"You shall blow, but ye shall not sound an alarm":

Blow with an even and uninterrupted sound, and not with a broken and quavering one.

By which the congregation and camps were distinguished from one another.

The same certain sound being given to each constantly, whereby they knew which were called to motion (see 1 Cor. 14:8).

According to Ben Gersom blowing was a voice drawn out, and joined or continued.

An alarm, a voice not joined, but broken.

As we said earlier there was a different sound from the trumpet for the gathering of the people, and for the alarm.

The alarm was a shrill continuous sound, and the call to assemble was a different tone and shorter blasts from the trumpet.

**Numbers 10:8 "And the sons of Aaron, the priests, shall blow with the trumpets; and they shall be to you for an ordinance for ever throughout your generations."**

"For an ordinance":

The blowing of the horns was to be a perpetual ordinance in Israel, calling the people to worship or to war.

Aaron and his sons (the priests), were the ones with authority to blow the trumpets.

These silver trumpets were used for religious purposes.

Even in the case of an alarm, it would have come from them.

In the beginning, they had great authority over all aspects of the lives of the Israelites.

**Numbers 10:9 "And if ye go to war in your land against the enemy that oppresseth you, then ye shall blow an alarm with the trumpets; and ye shall be remembered before the LORD your God, and ye shall be saved from your enemies."**

That enters in to invade it, to besiege cities, and distress the inhabitants of it.

"Then ye shall blow an alarm with the trumpets":

A "tara-tan-tara" with both of them, to call the several tribes together to join against the enemy.

Or to call them to fasting and humiliation, to repentance and prayer.

And to seek the LORD in the exercise of these, and cry for help and assistance, for victory and salvation.

For, as Ben Gersom observes, by this alarm their hearts would be broken and become contrite, and they would return to the LORD.

And He would have mercy on them when they pray unto Him.

For such a sound makes a man's heart shake and tremble, according to (Amos 3:6; see Jer. 4:19).

This is a third use of the trumpets.

And in a mystical sense it may be observed, that saints are in a militant state.

And have many enemies that come in to them to oppress them, sin, Satan, and the world.

And the Gospel calls and encourages them to fight, furnishes them with armor, and assures them of victory.

And directs them where to fight and with whom, and bids them endure hardness as good soldiers of Christ.

"And ye shall be remembered before the LORD your God":

For a book of remembrance is written for them that fear God, humble themselves before Him, and pray unto Him.

"And ye shall be saved from your enemies":

As Israel from their temporal, so the people of God from their spiritual enemies, being made more than conquerors through Him that loved them.

When the trumpet was blown for the purpose of war, the priests blowing it showed God's approval of the battle, and they would not lose.

When God was with them in war, they did not lose.

**Numbers 10:10 "Also in the day of your gladness, and in your solemn days, and in the beginnings of your months, ye shall blow with the trumpets over your burnt offerings, and over the sacrifices of your peace offerings; that they may be to you for a memorial before your God: I [am] the LORD your God."**

When they should return from the enemy's country conquerors, or have vanquished the enemy that came against them into their own land.

And so would fix a day of rejoicing, like the days of Purim, and the seven days when Hezekiah rejoiced, as Aben Ezra observes.

And so any time of rejoicing on account of any extraordinary deliverance and salvation.

"And in your solemn days":

Or festivals, as the Passover, Pentecost, and Tabernacles, which were proclaimed by sound of trumpet (Lev. 23:2).

"And in the beginnings of your months":

Their new moons, especially on the first day of the seventh month, which was a feast of blowing of trumpets (Lev. 23:24).

"Ye shall blow with the trumpets over your burnt offerings, and over your peace offerings":

Expressing joy for the acceptance of them, and especially when they had, by faith, a view of the great sacrifice of Christ typified by them.

This is a fourth use of the trumpets, and may denote the spiritual joy had by believers, through the ministration of the Gospel.

And ordinances of it on the Lord's day, and other seasons.

And particularly at the feast of the Lord's supper, in the view of peace and reconciliation, and atonement made by the sacrifice of Christ.

"That they may be to you for a memorial before your God":

As it were, to put Him in mind of the promises He has made.

And the blessings He has laid up as a covenant God for His people.

"I am the LORD your God":

Who had a right to appoint such things to be observed by them, and by whom, as their covenant God, they were laid under obligation to regard them.

These very same trumpets, blown differently, were blown in remembrance of the holy days.

Some people believe that Aaron and his sons blowing the trumpets for these services symbolized the broadcasting (preaching), of the gospel by the preachers.

It certainly was part of their services to blow the trumpet, as we see above.

The solemn days, beginnings of months, and burnt offerings were all times when they focused completely upon God. These were memorable times.

#### Verses 11-36

Finally, in an orderly and obedient fashion, Israel departed from Sinai as the LORD commanded through Moses.

This portion begins the stage of the journey from Sinai to Kadesh-barnea (10:11 - 12:16).

They left after spending 11 months in "the wilderness of Sinai.

Paran" covered much of the northern Sinai Peninsula, some of the southern Sinai Peninsula (Negeb), and Arabah (Gen. 21:21; Num. 13:26; 1 Kings 11:18).

They journeyed "according to the commandment of the LORD by the hand of Moses (see verse 13; 9:23).

Moses asked "Hobab, the son of Raguel" (Moses' father-in-law, Reuel or Jethro), who had earlier given him valuable advice about organizing the people (Exodus chapter 18), to function as "eyes" for the Israelites.

(Judges 1:16), indicates he did as Moses requested.

The Midianites were a group of tribes living in the desert area surrounding Canaan.

Elsewhere Hobab's descendants are called Kenites, evidently a subgroup of the Midianites (Judges 1:16; 4:11).



Divine guidance does not exclude human help.

Moses' faith stands in direct contrast to the people's murmuring (in 11:1).

Note his words, "Let God arise, let his enemies be scattered."

Compare Psalm 68:1, as he started out in the morning, and then in the evening his words "Return, O LORD, unto the many thousands of Israel".

#### Verses 11-28

The people finally began to "set forward" for the Promised Land, 13 months after the Exodus and 11 months after they first came to Mount "Sinai".

The additional time was necessary to transform a huge band of refugees into a functioning people group that would work together in the arduous task of their collective journey.

Moses must have done an enormous amount of organizing and training – and he followed the good advice of Jethro, using many aids (Exodus 18:17-26).

**Numbers 10:11 "And it came to pass on the twentieth [day] of the second month, in the second year, that the cloud was taken up from off the tabernacle of the testimony."**

"Second year ... twentieth day of the second month":

Only 13 months after the Exodus from Egypt and 11 months after the arrival at Sinai, Israel began to march toward Canaan.

This is the beginning of a march.

The signal that it was time to move, was when the cloud moved.

The verse prior to this spoke of the time of close communion with God. Now we see they are to move, being led by the Spirit of God.

This was their first time to move after the tabernacle had been set up.

We must remember, that they had already been instructed in their order of march.

**Numbers 10:12 "And the children of Israel took their journeys out of the wilderness of Sinai; and the cloud rested in the wilderness of Paran."**

"The wilderness of Sinai":

According to 13:26, Kadesh was in the Wilderness of Paran, probably at its northern border.

This verse gives a summary of God's leading from Sinai to Kadesh.

It appears, that the wilderness of Paran was about a three day journey from the wilderness of Sinai.

We also must continue to remember the size of the group moved.

There were just under 3 million people in this march.

Notice the cloud rested.

This just means that it went this far and stopped.

Wherever the cloud stopped, was to be their place to rest.

**Numbers 10:13 "And they first took their journey according to the commandment of the LORD by the hand of Moses."**

Which was virtually contained in and signified by the taking up of the cloud (see Num. 9:18).

"By the hand of Moses":

By his means and ministry, who had informed them, that it was the will of God.

That when they saw the cloud taken up to set forward in their journey, and they were obedient thereunto.

This was a short journey.

Perhaps this was a test to see how they would handle the march.

"According to the commandment" is speaking of according to the plan He had given Moses for their march.

Verses 14-28

The order of march followed by Israel in these verses is in exact conformity to the details given (in 2:1-34).

**Numbers 10:14 "In the first [place] went the standard of the camp of the children of Judah according to their armies: and over his host [was] Nahshon the son of Amminadab."**

“Standard”:

See notes on 2:2.

“Nahshon”:

For the fourth, and final time in the book of Numbers, the 12 leaders of the first generation of Israel were noted (see chapters 1-2 and 7).

In accordance with (Gen. 49:8-12), the tribe of Judah was given preeminence as the ruling tribe.

It led the march into the Promised Land.

**Numbers 10:15 "And over the host of the tribe of the children of Issachar [was] Nethaneel the son of Zuar."**

See notes on Num. 10:14.

**Numbers 10:16 "And over the host of the tribe of the children of Zebulun [was] Eliab the son of Helon."**

See notes on Num. 10:14.

This is just saying, that the tribe of Judah led the way.

They raised their banner, and their people gathered and marched.

The three tribes of Judah, Issachar, and Zebulun had all been camped on the east side.

Each tribe had their own prince, but collectively the tribe of Judah was their leader.

We had mentioned before, that there would have been total confusion had each tribe not known exactly where to march.

**Numbers 10:17 "And the tabernacle was taken down; and the sons of Gershon and the sons of Merari set forward, bearing the tabernacle."**

By the Levites, as Aben Ezra says, and which appears to be their work (Num. 1:51).

This began to be done by them as soon as the cloud was perceived to move upwards.

And the camp of Judah was preparing to march.

And after Aaron and his sons had taken the holy vessels out of the Holy and most Holy Place, and had packed up and covered them as directed (Num. 4:5).

This was an emblem of the taking down of the Jewish church state.

The abolition of the service of the sanctuary, as well as of the changeable condition of the Gospel church in the wilderness. Which is not always in one and the same place, but is moved from place to place.

And that by the ministers of the word, signified by the Levites, who are sent and carry the Gospel here and there.

"And the sons of Gershon and the sons of Merari set forward, bearing the tabernacle":

The former, the hangings and vail, and the latter the boards, pillars, sockets, etc.

Each of them having wagons for their assistance.

These followed immediately after the camp of Judah.

We remember, that the tribe of Gershon was to take the curtains and that sort of thing.

The tribe of Merari was to take care of the boards and the heavy items.

The tribe of Kohath carried the Holy Things.

We remember, 6 wagons had been given to the sons of Gershon and Merari to carry their loads.

The tabernacle would be in the very middle of the march, so it would be protected from strangers.

The tribe of Kohath, hand-carried the Holy Things.

Actually, Kohath, Gershon, and Merari were all part of the Levitical tribe.

**Numbers 10:18 "And the standard of the camp of Reuben set forward according to their armies: and over his host [was] Elizur the son of Shedeur."**

Next proceeded the standard of Reuben, having under it the tribes of Simeon and Gad (see Numbers 10:19).

As "Reuben" signifies, "behold the son".

And he had the tabernacle borne before him and the Holy Things behind him, which way howsoever this camp looked, it had in view what was a type of Christ the Son of God, the object of faith, the ark.

"And over his host was Elizur the son of Shedeur":

Over which respective armies were the same captains as in (Num. 2:10).

**Numbers 10:19 "And over the host of the tribe of the children of Simeon [was] Shelumiel the son of Zurishaddai."**

See notes on (Num. 10:18).

**Numbers 10:20 "And over the host of the tribe of the children of Gad [was] Eliasaph the son of Deuel."**

See notes on (Num. 10:18).

All of these three tribes: Reuben, Simeon, and Gad, are camped on the south side.

They line up directly behind those from the east side.

**Numbers 10:21 "And the Kohathites set forward, bearing the sanctuary: and [the other] did set up the tabernacle against they came."**

After the standard of the camps of Reuben, and between that and the standard of the camp of Ephraim.

To which there is an allusion to in (Psalm 80:2).

"Bearing the sanctuary":

Or the Holy Things, as Jarchi states.

The ark, as Aben Ezra.

Though not that only, which indeed might be eminently called so, it standing in the Most Holy Place.

Over which were the mercy seat and cherubim, the residence of the divine Majesty.

But all the Holy Things in the Holy Place, the candlestick, showbread table, and the two altars, the altar of incense in the Holy Place, and the altar of burnt offerings in the court these they bore on their shoulders.

And had no wagons allowed for their assistance.

"And the other did set up the tabernacle against they came":

That is, the sons of Gershon and Merari, who went before between the standard of Judah and the standard of Reuben, carrying the heavier and more cumbersome parts of the tabernacle.

Which, when Judah pitched their tents, at the signal of the cloud, they immediately put together, and erected.

And got it ready, by such time as the Kohathites came up to them, that so the ark and other Holy Things might be at once put into it and set in their proper places.

The Kohathites were carrying the Holy Things.

They had no wagons.

They carried everything by hand.

On the heavier pieces, they ran rods down through loops and carried the rods.

The tabernacle was carried in the middle of the march.

**Numbers 10:22 "And the standard of the camp of the children of Ephraim set forward according to their armies: and over his host [was] Elishama the son of Ammihud."**

Next followed the standard of the camp of Ephraim, under which were Manasseh and Benjamin (Num. 10:23).

"And over his host was Elishama the son of Ammihud":

Over whom were the same captains, as in (Num. 2:18).

**Numbers 10:23 "And over the host of the tribe of the children of Manasseh [was] Gamaliel the son of Pedahzur."**

See notes on (Num. 10:22).

**Numbers 10:24 "And over the host of the tribe of the children of Benjamin [was] Abidan the son of Gideoni."**

See notes on (Num. 10:22).

The tribes of Ephraim, Manasseh, and Benjamin were camped in the west.

They were the third group of tribes, but were to march just after the tabernacle.

We got into all of the names of the people earlier, so we will not dwell on that here.

**Numbers 10:25 "And the standard of the camp of the children of Dan set forward, [which was] the rearward of all the camps throughout their hosts: and over his host [was] Ahiezer the son of Ammishaddai."**

Next after that of Ephraim, the last of all.

Which was the rearward of all the camps throughout their host.

Which brought up the rear, and was fittest for that purpose, being the most numerous, next to that of Judah.

Which led the van; or, the gatherer up of all the camps, under which were collected and brought on all that belonged to the other tribes.

As all under twenty years of age, which were not taken into the camps.

And the women and children, and weak and sickly persons, the mixed multitude, and all stragglers.

These were all under the care and charge of this camp, and under the standard of which were Asher and Naphtali (Num. 10:26).

Over whom were the same captains as in (Num. 2:25).

**Numbers 10:26 "And over the host of the tribe of the children of Asher [was] Pagiel the son of Ocran."**

See notes on (Num. 10:25).

**Numbers 10:27 "And over the host of the tribe of the children of Naphtali [was] Ahira the son of Enan."**

See notes on (Num. 10:25).

These three tribes: Dan, Asher, and Naphtali, had all been camped in the north.

They were the last of the groups of tribes in the march.

There were six tribes marching in front of the tabernacle, and 6 tribes marching behind the tabernacle.

**Numbers 10:28 "Thus [were] the journeyings of the children of Israel according to their armies, when they set forward."**

Or this was the order of them, as Jarchi states.

In this form and manner, they marched, and a most wise, beautiful, and regular order it was.

First the standard of Judah, a camp consisting of 186,400 able men fit for war, then followed the Gershonites and Merarites with six wagons carrying the heavier parts of the tabernacle.

Next to them the standard of the camp of Reuben, having in it 151,450 warlike men.

Next to them were the Kohathites, bearing the Holy Things of the sanctuary on their shoulders.

Who were followed by the standard of the camp of Ephraim, which was formed of 108,100 men fit for military service.

And last of all the standard of the camp of Dan, which consisted of 157,600 men, able to bear arms, and which had under their care all that were not able which belonged to the other tribes.

An emblem of the church of God in its militant state, walking according to the order of the Gospel.

And in all the ordinances of it, which is a lovely sight to behold (SOS 6:4).

Thus they marched;

"According to their armies":

Ranged under their several standards.

"When they set forward":

In their journey through the wilderness; as now.

So, at all other times, this order was carefully observed by them.

This is the way they were to march each time the cloud moved.

They were not to vary the march.

God had established each person in his place.

It would be difficult to understand how the small children and the elderly could keep up with the march, but God had taken all of that into consideration.

The younger people had great respect for the elderly, and they helped them.

It appears from these instructions, that the boards and curtains were carried between the tribes of the east and the tribes of the south.

The tabernacle was carried in the middle of the march.

This perhaps, was so that the outside of the tabernacle could be set up and ready for the Holy Things, when they arrived.



Verses 29-32

Moses urged his brother-in-law “Hobab” to go with the Israelites, knowing that his knowledge of “wilderness” survival could help the people on their journey.

This younger brother of Zipporah would be the family leader after his father, “Reuel” (also known as Jethro; Exodus 2:16-22).

For him to leave his responsibilities would have been as difficult as it was for Abram (see Genesis 12:1).

Moreover, for “Hobab” to join Israel would mean his conversion to the true worship of Yahweh – an example of evangelization in the days of the Law.

Hobab must have agreed, because (Judges 1:16), reports these Midianites dwelling among the Hebrew people in the land of Israel.

**Numbers 10:29 "And Moses said unto Hobab, the son of Raguel the Midianite, Moses' father in law, We are journeying unto the place of which the LORD said, I will give it you: come thou with us, and we will do thee good: for the LORD hath spoken good concerning Israel."**

“Hobab”:

As the son of Reuel, Hobab was Moses’ brother-in-law.

Reuel”:

Reuel was the father-in-law of Moses (see Exodus 2:18).

“Come thou with us”:

Moses sought Hobab’s help in leading Israel through the wilderness.

He promised Hobab a portion of the inheritance of Israel within the Land if he would come.

The text of Numbers does not explicitly state whether Hobab responded to Moses or not.

But Judges 1:16 implies that Hobab agreed to Moses’ request.

Later, he joined with Judah in the conquest of the land and did receive the blessing of dwelling in the land.

Hobab is the brother-in-law of Moses.

Raguel and Jethro are the same person.

He is spoken of as Reuel (in Exodus chapter 2 verse 18).

The name Jethro is, probably, a title, and the name Reuel was his name.

Moses is encouraging his brother-in-law to join them on their trip to the Promised Land.

**Numbers 10:30 "And he said unto him, I will not go; but I will depart to mine own land, and to my kindred."**

Which was a very peremptory answer.

He seemed determined, and at a point about it for the present.

Though it is, probable he afterwards changed his mind.

Like the young man in the parable (Matt. 21:29).

"But I will depart to mine own land, and to my kindred":

Which were prevailing motives with him, his native country, his relations, and father's house.

To this resolution he came, both because of his substance, and because of his family, as Jarchi states.

This was a terrible decision on the part of Hobab.

**Numbers 10:31 "And he said, Leave us not, I pray thee; forasmuch as thou knowest how we are to encamp in the wilderness, and thou mayest be to us instead of eyes."**

That is, Moses.

He replied to Hobab, unwilling to take him at his word and go without him.

"Leave us not, I pray thee":

Or "not now"; as the Targums of Onkelos and Jonathan state.

At this present time, under our present difficulties, while we are in the wilderness.

Though Jarchi says the particle signifies beseeching or supplication.

"Forasmuch as thou knowest how we are to encamp in the wilderness":

That this will be our case.

That we shall be obliged, before we get to the Promised Land.

To pitch our tents in the wilderness, in our passage through it.

And thou knowest which are the best and most convenient places for that purpose.

And therefore must entreat thee to go with us.

"And thou mayest be to us instead of eyes":

Not to show the way, as Aben Ezra notes.

Or guide and direct them in the road through the wilderness.

For the cloud by day and the fire by night were of that use to them.

As well as when it rested, it directed them when and where to pitch their tents.

Rather to assist with his advice in difficult matters, when they should be in pressing circumstances.

The Targum of Jonathan says, "thou hast been dear unto us, as the apple of our eyes, and therefore we cannot part with thee."

Moses tries to persuade him to stay.

He has, possibly, been with them for a while.

Moses was saying, that even though God gave them direct directions of how they were to camp and how they were to march, they still needed human hands to carry out the wishes of God.

"Eyes" symbolize wisdom.

In this particular instance, it is speaking of someone to watch and see God's wishes are carried out.

**Numbers 10:32 "And it shall be, if thou go with us, yea, it shall be, that what goodness the LORD shall do unto us, the same will we do unto thee."**

This repetition is for the confirmation of it, more strongly assuring him of what follows.

"That what goodness the LORD shall do unto us, the same will we do unto thee":

Signifying that whatsoever they enjoyed in the land of Canaan he should have his share with them.

The Targum of Jonathan adds, "in the division of the land."

Jarchi says, when the land was divided, the fatness of Jericho was given to the sons of Jethro, to Jonadab, the son of Rechab (see Judges 1:16).

From whence, however, as well as from other places (Judges 4:11).

It appears that the posterity of this man had a settlement in the land of Canaan.

And from his silence it may be thought that he was prevailed upon to go along with Moses.

Or if he departed into his own country, as he said he would, he returned again.

At least some of his children did.

This is the same thing as all nations being blessed through faithful Abraham.

The fact that this brother-in-law would be with the Israelites, would bring him the same blessings as the Israelites.

#### Verses 33-36

Now that the journey to Canaan had commenced, Moses the songwriter crafted poetic texts that celebrated both the leading of the LORD for their departure and the direction of the LORD upon their settlement: "Rise up, LORD ... Return, O LORD".

In both words and symbols – including "The ark" and "The Cloud" – Yahweh assured the people that they were under His protective care and guidance.

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

"Journey ... three days":

The Israelites traveled for 3 days from Sinai before they encamped for more than one night.

The ark of the Covenant was the dwelling place of God with the people.

God decided where they would camp.

**Numbers 10:34 "And the cloud of the LORD [was] upon them by day, when they went out of the camp."**

Not only upon the tabernacle, and upon the ark particularly, but it spread itself in journeying over the whole body of the people.

And therefore said to be a covering to them from the heat of the sun (Psalm 105:39).

As well as it was a guide unto them, and a token of the divine Presence with them (see Isa. 4:5).

"When they went out of the camp":

Or out of the place of their encampment, when they removed from Sinai.

And appears from, hence that it was in the daytime.

The presence of God was in the cloud by day, and the fire by night.

Verses 35-36

As Israel and encamped, Moses prayed that the LORD would give victory and that His presence would be among her.

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

Each forward movement and each rest of the ark was made to bear a sacramental character.

The one betokened the going forth of God against His enemies.

The other, His gathering of His own people to Himself.

The one was the pledge of victory, the other the earnest of repose.

"Numbers 10:36 may be translated: "Restore" (i.e. to the land which their fathers sojourned in).

"O LORD, the ten thousands of the thousands of Israel."

Compare Psalm 85:4, where the verb in the Hebrew is the same).

"Rise up, LORD, and let thine enemies be scattered": The sixty-eighth Psalm, which we have learnt to associate with the wonders of Pentecost and the triumphs of the Church on earth, seems to be an expansion of Moses' morning prayer.

"And let them that hate thee flee before thee":

The same petition expressed in different words, but to the same sense.

Enemies, and those that hate the LORD, are the same, as their defeat, conclusion, and destruction, are signified by their flight and dispersion.

And it may be observed, that those who were the enemies and haters of Israel were reckoned the enemies and haters of God Himself.

As the enemies of Christ's people, and those that hate them, are accounted Christ's enemies, and such that hate Him.

Every battle that God sent them into, the ark went with them, and they won the battle with no loss of men.

God is all-powerful.

There is no enemy of God that has not been already defeated by the presence of God.

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

The ark, and the cloud over it.

"He said":

Moses stood and prayed, as before, according to the above Targums, in the following manner.

"Return, O LORD, unto the many thousands of Israel":

Who were six hundred thousand footmen, besides women and children (Num. 11:21).

The import of this petition is, that upon the resting of the ark God would take up His abode with them, grant them His presence, and manifest His love, grace, mercy, and goodness unto them.

Or, as it may be rendered, that He would "return the many thousands of Israel"; that is, to the land which he had sworn to their fathers, as Ben Gersom interprets it.

And who observes that the word "return" is used, because of the holy fathers who dwelt in the land of Israel.

Or else, as the same writer further observes, the sense of the petition is, that it might be the will of God to turn the thousands of Israel into myriads, or increase and multiply them ten times more than they were.

And so the Targum of Jerusalem says, "bless the myriads, and multiply the thousands of the children of Israel.

"Perhaps Moses, under a spirit of prophecy, might have a further view.

Even to the conversion of the Jews in the latter day, when they shall return and seek the true Messiah, and be turned to Him, and when all Israel shall be saved.

The presence of God in the cloud by day and the fire by night, went ahead of the marchers leading the way.

When the tabernacle was set up in the midst of the people for a time of rest, God entered the Holy of Holies and dwelt in the midst of the people.

### **Numbers Chapter 10 Questions**

1. How many silver trumpets were to be made?
2. "Silver" means \_\_\_\_\_.
3. What were these trumpets used for?
4. These trumpets are of \_\_\_\_\_ piece.
5. By \_\_\_\_\_, a thing shall be established.
6. Where are the trumpets blown?
7. What does the location of their blowing show us?
8. What is the signal for all the people to assemble?
9. Who are the "princes"?
10. All believers in Christ are \_\_\_\_\_.
11. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the \_\_\_\_\_ resurrection.
12. When the trumpet blows, which tribes go first?
13. When the trumpet is blown the second time, which tribes take their journey?
14. Who were the tribes on this side?
15. What is different about the blowing of the trumpet for gathering, and the blowing of the trumpet for war?
16. Who actually blow the trumpets?
17. What did the blowing of the trumpet for war, by the priest, show?
18. For what special occasions of worship would the trumpet be blown?

19. What do some people believe the spiritual meaning of Aaron and his sons blowing the trumpet has?
20. When was the cloud taken up from off the tabernacle of the testimony?
21. What was the signal to move?
22. They are being led by the \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_.
23. Where did they leave, and where did they go?
24. What does "according to the commandment" mean?
25. What tribe led the way?
26. Who carried the tapestry of the tabernacle?
27. Who carried the boards of the tabernacle?
28. How many wagons did they use to carry the tabernacle?
29. Who carried the Holy Things?
30. Who were camped in the west?
31. Where was the tabernacle located in the march?
32. Who was Hobab?
33. Raguel and \_\_\_\_\_ are the same person.
34. Jethro is, probably, a \_\_\_\_\_.
35. Why does Moses try to persuade Hobab to stay?
36. Who decided where they would camp?
37. Where was the presence of God?
38. Rise up LORD, and let thine \_\_\_\_\_ be scattered.
39. When the ark was with them, they \_\_\_\_\_ the battle.