

Numbers Chapter 9 Commentary

1 And the LORD spake unto Moses in the wilderness of Sinai, in the first month of the second year after they were come out of the land of Egypt, saying, 2 Let the children of Israel also keep the passover at his appointed season. 3 In the fourteenth day of this month, at even, ye shall keep it in his appointed season: according to all the rites of it, and according to all the ceremonies thereof, shall ye keep it. 4 And Moses spake unto 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 even in the wilderness of Sinai: according to all that the LORD commanded Moses, so did the children of Israel.

In verses 1-5; God now commands Israel to observe the Passover feast at its appointed time. The Passover feast is now a memorial feast, to bring the children of Israel into remembrance of how God delivered them from the death of their first born children and beast, and from Egyptian bondage.

Christ has given us the same type imagery in the Lord's Supper, as He changed the picture by his participation. Christ told his disciples that as oft as you do this, do it in remembrance of me; seen in: ***Lu 22:19-20; 19 "And he took bread, and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me. 20 Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you."***

For Israel, it was to remember that God delivered them from bondage and death. For us, it is to remember that Christ died, for us to be delivered from the bondage of sin and eternal death.

In the Old Testament it is a picture of past deliverance and it is a prophetic picture of Christ coming. In the New Testament, it is a picture of the past deliverance by Jesus Christ and a prophetic picture of the 2nd coming of Christ; seen in: ***Mt 26:29 "But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom."*** This is a prophetic picture of the eternal kingdom and our presence there with Christ in the eternal heaven.

6 And there were certain men, who were defiled by the dead body of a man, that they could not keep the passover on that day: and they came before Moses and before Aaron on that day: 7 And those men said unto him, We are defiled by the dead body of a man: wherefore are we kept back, that we may not offer an offering of the LORD in his appointed season among the children of Israel? 8 And Moses said unto them, Stand still, and I will hear what the LORD will command concerning you. 9 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, 10 Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, If any man of you or of your posterity shall be unclean by reason of a dead body, or be in a journey afar off, yet he shall keep the passover unto the LORD. 11 The fourteenth day of the second month at even they shall keep it, and eat it with unleavened bread and bitter herbs.

"If any man of you or of your posterity shall be unclean by reason of a dead body, or be in a journey afar off" Notice that the unclean, or far off traveler, that did not partake in the passover in the 1st month of the year, were given 1 month to get things right, and they were to keep it in the 2nd month of the year.

As a church body; we practice the communion service of the Lord's Supper on a quarterly basis, instead of annually as we used to do. This gives opportunity, for any that may be absent from the annual meeting communion service, to be present at another communion service.

12 They shall leave none of it unto the morning, nor break any bone of it: according to all the ordinances of the passover they shall keep it.

Remember, God gave the ordinance of the Passover supper, and that not a bone of the sacrificial lamb was to be broken, which is the picture of our redemption from sin through Jesus Christ, and the offering of himself as a sacrifice for sins for God's people. We are reminded of this in New Testament scripture in: *Joh 19:31-37; 31 "The Jews therefore, because it was the preparation, that the bodies should not remain upon the cross on the sabbath day, (for that sabbath day was an high day,) besought Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away. 32 Then came the soldiers, and brake the legs of the first, and of the other which was crucified with him. 33 But when they came to Jesus, and saw that he was dead already, they brake not his legs: 34 But one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came there out blood and water. 35 And he that saw it bare record, and his record is true: and he knoweth that he saith true, that ye might believe. 36 For these things were done, that the scripture should be fulfilled, A bone of him shall not be broken. 37 And again another scripture saith, They shall look on him whom they pierced."*

"A bone of him shall not be broken." The significance, of the bones of the sacrifice not being broken, was a prophetic picture that not a bone, of the body of Christ, the one true sacrifice for sin, was broken. God does not command anything without a reason and/or purpose. We see this come to fruition in scripture in: *Joh 19:31-33; 31 "The Jews therefore, because it was the preparation, that the bodies should not remain upon the cross on the sabbath day, (for that sabbath day was an high day,) besought Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away. 32 Then came the soldiers, and brake the legs of the first, and of the other which was crucified with him. 33 But when they came to Jesus, and saw that he was dead already, they brake not his legs:"* Understand; they broke the legs of the others to hasten their death, so they would die before the sabbath began.

13 But the man that is clean, and is not in a journey, and forbeareth to keep the passover, even the same soul shall be cut off from among his people: because he brought not the offering of the LORD in his appointed season, that man shall bear his sin.

We see that not keeping the Passover was a sin. This is a sin of omission. How was this sin? It was sin because they did not follow the commandment of God. They had failed to acknowledge the great work of deliverance that God wrought on their behalf.

Application for us today: not to absent yourself from the communion of God, the ordinance of the Lord's Supper. Why would this be so important that it would be a death sentence to miss it? Remember the scripture: *Pr 14:2 "There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death."* By refusing to participate in the Lord's Supper; you are putting aside God, and doing that which is right in your own eyes. You are refusing to **"remember"** that you are, what you are, because of Christ in your life. You are, by your refusal to participate in the Lord's Supper saying; I am my own god, and I don't need the one true and living God or his Christ.

14 And if a stranger shall sojourn among you, and will keep the passover unto the LORD; according to the ordinance of the passover, and according to the manner thereof, so shall he do: ye shall have one ordinance, both for the stranger, and for him that was born in the land.

God had made provision for the strangers, one not born in the lineage of Israel, in: ***Ex 12:47-49; 47 "All the congregation of Israel shall keep it. 48 And when a stranger shall sojourn with thee, and will keep the passover to the LORD, let all his males be circumcised, and then let him come near and keep it; and he shall be as one that is born in the land: for no uncircumcised person shall eat thereof. 49 One law shall be to him that is homeborn, and unto the stranger that sojourneth among you."***

We remember that the stranger was to concur to, and adopt to himself, all the rules and ordinances of God for Israel. They did not become a part of the family of Israel, or participate with them, unless they completely devoted themselves to the order of living as directed by God. We see here 2 things to be observed:

- As a nation; we should be observing and demanding this of all who are strangers, not born Americans, and all immigrants. It is God ordered, and actually our constitution provides for this, but it has become a forgotten principle today.
- We are reminded; in our communion services; the participants should have come into total obedience to God commandments. This establishes that they should be born again, members of an organized church body in good standing, and baptized by submersion if possible. Living as orderly members of the church body.

15 And on the day that the tabernacle was reared up the cloud covered the tabernacle, namely, the tent of the testimony: and at even there was upon the tabernacle as it were the appearance of fire, until the morning.

We are reminded; the visible presence of God has been leading Israel since they came out of Egypt, seen in scripture in: ***Ex 13:21-22; 21 "And the LORD went before them by day in a pillar of a cloud, to lead them the way; and by night in a pillar of fire, to give them light; to go by day and night: 22 He took not away the pillar of the cloud by day, nor the pillar of fire by night, from before the people."*** It even led them to this place at the foot of Mt. Sinai, and apparently it had remained there all this time; since they have not moved from this place for almost 2 years, 21 months actually.

We can discern this from scriptures as seen in: ***Ex 19:1 "In the third month, when the children of Israel were gone forth out of the land of Egypt, the same day came they into the wilderness of Sinai."*** 3 months after coming out of Egypt they are at Mt. Sinai. ***Nu 9:1 "And the LORD spake unto Moses in the wilderness of Sinai, in the first month of the second year after they were come out of the land of Egypt,"*** Here in Nu 9:1; 2 years after leaving Egypt God commands them to keep the passover. 24 months - 3 months = 21 months.

16 So it was alway: the cloud covered it by day, and the appearance of fire by night.

We see in these verses; the visible presence of God upon the tabernacle. So Israel was always reminded of the presence of God with them.

For us today there is the light of the glorious Gospel of Jesus Christ, and the shining of the good countenance, as the light of Christ is shining forth from our tabernacles, our bodies, that we and others may be reminded of the greatness of our God.

Also, by living each day in the light of obedience to God and Christ, we are letting our light shine as commanded in: **Mt 5:16** *"Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven."*

17 And when the cloud was taken up from the tabernacle, then after that the children of Israel journeyed: and in the place where the cloud abode, there the children of Israel pitched their tents.

As we see Israel following the leading of God, so should we be adhering to the leading of the Holy Spirit in our lives.

18 At the commandment of the LORD the children of Israel journeyed, and at the commandment of the LORD they pitched: as long as the cloud abode upon the tabernacle they rested in their tents. 19 And when the cloud tarried long upon the tabernacle many days, then the children of Israel kept the charge of the LORD, and journeyed not. 20 And so it was, when the cloud was a few days upon the tabernacle; according to the commandment of the LORD they abode in their tents, and according to the commandment of the LORD they journeyed. 21 And so it was, when the cloud abode from even unto the morning, and that the cloud was taken up in the morning, then they journeyed: whether it was by day or by night that the cloud was taken up, they journeyed. 22 Or whether it were two days, or a month, or a year, that the cloud tarried upon the tabernacle, remaining thereon, the children of Israel abode in their tents, and journeyed not: but when it was taken up, they journeyed. 23 At the commandment of the LORD they rested in the tents, and at the commandment of the LORD they journeyed: they kept the charge of the LORD, at the commandment of the LORD by the hand of Moses.

In verses 16-23 we see that Israel always had the visible presence of God to lead them in all their actions on their journey. When God gave them the sign and the cloud moved before them, then Israel followed the presence of God. When the cloud stood still, Israel stood still.

So it is in our lives today. God expects and demands total obedience in following Him. There are times in our life that we are to be doing, and times to be standing still. Christ set this example in: **Lu 2:49** *"And he said unto them, How is it that ye sought me? wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?"* Here we see Jesus was ready, and was starting the work He was to accomplish in the will of the Father. We also know that He was subject to his parents, and waited until the appointed time to come forth and do his public ministry. It was his time to stand still. But when He started his public ministry he never slacked on doing the Father's business. Some other reference examples:

- **Ex 14:13** *"And Moses said unto the people, Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the LORD, which he will shew to you today: for the Egyptians whom ye have seen today, ye shall see them again no more forever."*
- **2Ch 20:17** *"Ye shall not need to fight in this battle: set yourselves, stand ye still, and see the salvation of the LORD with you, O Judah and Jerusalem: fear not, nor be dismayed; tomorrow go out against them: for the LORD will be with you."*

In these 2 references we see the picture of the time to stand still. When we come to understand that we are totally lost, and incapable of saving ourselves, then we can stand still and see the salvation work of Jesus Christ put into action in our lives. Eternal salvation and eternal life, that is.

Once this has happened; we are then to be like Christ and be busy about the Father's business as seen in: ***Php 2:12 "Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling."***

Praise the Lord that we have the Holy Spirit and the scriptures to guide us, as Israel had the visible cloud to guide them. Praise the Lord for the finished work of our Saviour, and Lord, Jesus Christ!