

Message #11**Numbers 10:1-36**

When we get ready to take a trip, there is planning and excitement. There is great anticipation that you are about to head out to a different location.

Just imagine what that must have been like for Israel. She had been camped at Mt. Sinai for a year. She was longing and looking to go to the Promised Land. This must have been exciting.

As she was about to leave, there were two last minute instructions that she needed. The first we saw last time was the instruction about the glory cloud and the fire by night. When the cloud lifted and moved, the nation moved. When the cloud stayed, they stayed whether it was two days, a month or a year. Now as we come to this section, we get information about the trumpets.

GOD GIVES FINAL INSTRUCTIONS ABOUT SIGNAL TRUMPETS AND THEN STARTS MOVING THE NATION TOWARD THE PROMISED LAND.

Now you may be here tonight and thinking what in the world does this cloud and trumpet business have to do with me? Well, it has a great deal to do with us. You see according to I Thessalonians 4:13-18, the Church Age will end with the cloud and the trumpet (I Thess. 4:16-17). As you and I travel through this wilderness of a world, we are looking for a blast from the trumpet to catch us into the glory clouds to be taken to heaven.

HISTORICAL FACT #1 – God gives instruction concerning the signal trumpets. 10:1-10

It was critical that the leaders have some means of communication as to when the nation was to move and what the nation was supposed to do. Even though one did not move until the cloud moved, once the cloud moved it was necessary that the nation move in a decent, orderly way.

According to **verse 1**, God spoke to Moses and solved the problem. According to **verse 2**, God demanded that they make two trumpets of hammered silver. These two trumpets would enable leaders to communicate with the nation.

Now the trumpets are not as elaborate as the Tabernacle items, but they were very important. They were to be “hammered” out of silver. Two sheets of silver were to be hammered and shaped to form a trumpet.

Now a silver trumpet would be different than a ram’s horn. It would send a louder and more piercing signal. It was straight and would be able of playing more notes. The sound would be clear and could be heard by many.

The dimensions of the trumpet are not given, but there was a trumpet found in King Tut’s tomb that was about two feet long and tapered from about 3 ½ inches at the bell end to about ½ inch at the mouthpiece.

It is similar to the trumpet used at the Kentucky Derby. At the Kentucky Derby, a trumpet can easily be heard by well over 150,000 people.

In **verses 3-10**, instructions are given by God for the use of the trumpets:

Instruction #1 - When both trumpets are blown at the same time, the entire congregation must meet at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting before Moses. **10:3**

Instruction #2 - When one trumpet is blown, only the leaders who are heads of Israelite family groups shall gather before Moses. **10:4**

Instruction #3 - When the trumpet blows the alarm, the tribes on the east side are to set out. **10:5**

Apparently there was a different sound or pitch on the trumpet, a blast that signaled the alarm.

Instruction #4 - When the trumpet blows another alarm, the tribes on the south side are to set out. **10:6**

Now there is no mention of the western or northern tribes, but we may assume that they as well had their own signals.

Instruction #5 - When the assembly was to be convened, there was to be no alarm sounded. **10:7**

What we learn is that these trumpets were able to communicate various types of messages. Some were alarming and others were not.

Instruction #6 - The trumpets were to be blown by the priestly sons of Aaron. **10:8**

These trumpets were not to be blown by just any one who liked music. These trumpets were to be blown by Aaron's sons. There is priestly structure that is to be followed even during times of war.

This was to be done by all future generations.

Instruction #7 - The alarm of the trumpet must be blown when going to war against enemies. **10:9**

There was to be a complete notification via these trumpets that there was war with adversaries.

(Reason #1) - This will move God to remember His promises to you. **10:9a**

(Reason #2) - This will move God to save you from your enemies. **10:9b**

Israel will not have victory over her enemies without God and neither will we. This blowing of trumpets shows that the people were willing to obey God in the midst of the warfare.

Instruction #8 - The trumpets are to be blown in days of gladness at the appointed feasts.

10:10

The priests were also to blow the trumpets at the times of the appointed feasts. This was to be a lasting ordinance. This was something that Israel was to do before God. It would be a reminder that all of the wonderful blessings were given to Israel from God.

What we cannot help but observe is that something with Israel has gone wrong. There has been no blowing of these trumpets since A.D. 70. What happened?

HISTORICAL FACT #2 – God begins the journey of leading Israel to the Promised Land.

10:11-36

God had carefully given Israel the regulations and rules for His blessings and now it was time to move to the Promised Land.

According to **verse 11**, on the 20th day of the second month of the second year the cloud was lifted and it was time to move. If we remember that the number started on the 1st day of the second month of the second year (Num. 1:1), then what we learn is that God was moving His people toward the Promised Land 19 days later. They had been camped a year—this is about a month after the Passover (9:1-14) and less than two months after the Tabernacle was up (Ex. 40:17).

According to **verse 12**, the cloud began to move and Israel started their journey and the cloud stopped in the wilderness of Paran. This wilderness area is located southwest of Palestine. This was the home of Ishmael's family (Gen. 21:21).

According to **verse 13**, Israel moved out for the first time as a nation in accordance with the commandment of God. As the journey begins, all are interested in obeying God and His Word. This point is stressed because this will eventually be the downfall. They will stop obeying the Word of God. Had Israel maintained this, she would be enjoying the blessings of God in her land right now.

The tribe of Judah led the way, which is what God prescribed in Numbers 2:3, under the command of Nahshon the son of Amminadab (1:7). That was followed by Nethanel the son of Zuar of the tribe of Issachar (**v. 15**) and that was followed by Eliab the son of Helon of the tribe of Zebulun (**v. 16**).

According to **verse 17**, the Tabernacle was taken down and the sons of Gershon and Merari were to handle that job. Their job was to take care of the soft material and structure and transport it.

According to **verses 18-20**, next was Reuben, Simon and Gad.

Next in the travel group was the Kohathites who were to carry the holy objects of the Tabernacle. It is interesting that when the Kohathites would actually get to the next camp site, the sons of Gershon and Merari would already have the Tabernacle set up (**verse 21**).

Next in the travel arrangements came Ephraim, Manasseh and Benjamin (**verses 22-24**).

Bringing up the rear of this massive procession were Dan, Asher and Naphtali (**verses 25-27**).

According to verse 28, this was the prescribed order by God that this nation was to travel.

So far it was all good. Everything was working and everything was moving the way God wanted.

Now Moses invited a Midianite son of his father-in-law to go with him and Israel to the Promised Land. This would have been Moses' brother-in-law, Hobab. Moses said if you will come with us, we will do you good and you will share in all the wonderful things God has promised to Israel (**v. 29**). **Now this invitation is being made to an Arab.** In fact, the Islamic tradition stresses this point.

Hobab knew this Sinai territory and terrain. Moses wanted him to stay with him on somewhat of a consultant basis.

But Hobab said in **verse 30** that he would rather go to his own relatives.

In **verses 31-32**, Moses reinforced his proposal to him. He felt he needed a guide through this wilderness and he would know the best places to camp. Again he said if he would do that for Israel, God would bless him. Finally Hobab agreed.

It is not wrong to recognize the skills others have and ask them to use them for the glory of God. Some could have said we don't need him or his skills, after all we have God. Well we certainly need God, but we also need the skills of those who are after the blessings of God.

If you are diagnosed with some disease, you need God, but you also need a skilled doctor. God is a God who uses the skills of others to help His own people.

According to **verses 33-36**, it was time for the "first leg of the journey."

The nation traveled for three days with the Ark of the Covenant. They followed God's Word for three days and the cloud directed them. The Ark of the Covenant led the way. There was a real focus on God and His Word in all of this. God's people need to learn they can always trust in the Word of God.

When the Ark began moving, Moses would cry out to the LORD. He would ask God to scatter enemies and cause those who hate God to flee and He asked God to return to the myriad of Israel.

One thing we certainly see from this text and that is if we are to experience the blessings of God, we must walk in obedience to God and His Word.