

Numbers Lesson 09

Numbers Chapter 9

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Memory verses for this week: *Jer 6:16 Thus saith the LORD, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls. But they said, We will not walk therein.*

Introduction: We continue our study on Numbers this week as we continue in Chapter 9. Last week we covered the setting apart God did with the Levites. They effectively replaced the first born of each family as being the one chosen of the Lord, and this tribe was used for the care of the tabernacle. The ones chosen for service had to be between the ages of 25 and 50, with those from 25-29 being in a learning position to do full service at the age of 30.

I. Observance of the Passover Feast

Num 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, saying, Num 9:2 Let the children of Israel also keep the passover at his appointed season.

God spoke to Moses in the first month of the second year after they had been delivered from captivity in the land of Egypt, and told him that the Israelites were to keep the passover. Just as you and I have a responsibility in the church to at least annually observe the Lord's Supper, the children of Israel had the duty to observe the passover. This feast commemorated the deliverance of God's children from Egypt after the tenth plague.

The death angel had come across the land of Egypt and had slain the firstborn of every home if the blood had not been applied to the doorposts and lintel. The Israelites who knew to take the blood and put it over the door as commanded were spared the loss of the firstborn child. If the death angel found the blood, then he passed over the home and no harm came to the first born. There is sure and perfect typification when we look to the saved believer today.

When it comes to the judgment, God will look to see if we have had the blood applied and our soul saved. If so, we will enter into heaven. Those who have not accepted Christ as Lord and Savior will pay a horrible price in that day.

Heb 11:24 By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter;
Heb 11:25 Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season;
Heb 11:26 Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward.
Heb 11:27 By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king: for he endured, as seeing him who is invisible.
Heb 11:28 Through faith he kept the passover, and the sprinkling of blood, lest he that destroyed the firstborn should touch them.

Heb 9:22 And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission.

Heb 9:11 But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building;
Heb 9:12 Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us.
Heb 9:13 For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh:
Heb 9:14 How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?
Heb 9:15 And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance.

II. The Date of the Passover

Num 9:3 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.
Num 9:4 And Moses spake unto the children of Israel, that they should keep the passover.
Num 9:5 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.

The children of Israel were given an exact date to observe the passover feast. We in our church observe the Lord's Supper once per year following the example of the passover feast. However, we are not given an exact time as to when we should observe it nor or we given instructions to do it just once per year. Some

churches observe it quarterly, some bi-annually, and some every week. We are just given this instruction about the Lord's Supper.

1 Cor 11:24 And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me.

1 Cor 11:25 After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me.

1 Cor 11:26 For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come.

The passover feast was to be observed annually, and it was to be done on the 14th day of the first month which was called Abib. This was the first month in the Jewish sacred calendar and the 7th month in their legal calendar. Abib was the preexilic name. After the exile, it was called Nisan.

The time of year was approximately March and April of our current calendar. It was the season of the spring equinox when the flax was harvested and the barley harvest began. The other festivals or feasts for the time included the feast of unleavened bread and the feast of the firstfruits..

Exo 12:1 And the LORD spake unto Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, saying,

Exo 12:2 This month shall be unto you the beginning of months: it shall be the first month of the year to you.

Exo 12:3 Speak ye unto all the congregation of Israel, saying, In the tenth day of this month they shall take to them every man a lamb, according to the house of their fathers, a lamb for an house:

Exo 12:4 And if the household be too little for the lamb, let him and his neighbour next unto his house take it according to the number of the souls; every man according to his eating shall make your count for the lamb.

Exo 12:5 Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year: ye shall take it out from the sheep, or from the goats:

Exo 12:6 And ye shall keep it up until the fourteenth day of the same month: and the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it in the evening.

Exo 12:7 And they shall take of the blood, and strike it on the two side posts and on the upper door post of the houses, wherein they shall eat it.

Neh 2:1 And it came to pass in the month Nisan, in the twentieth year of Artaxerxes the king, that wine was before him: and I took up the wine, and gave it unto the king. Now I had not been beforetime sad in his presence.

In verse 5, we find Moses giving the orders from God to the people, and the people obeyed.

III. The Defilement of Certain Men

Num 9:6 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:

Num 9:7 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?

God had instructions in case that a person was defiled by being around a dead body during the time of the passover. Some men were defiled by touching or being close to a dead body. Perhaps a family member died during this time, or perhaps they just come upon a dead body as we discussed in the vow of the Nazarite a few weeks ago.

If this happened, these men could not partake of the passover feast or make an offering to the Lord. Moses interceded for them and we will read below how that God made a special provision for these men who were defiled by a dead body.

Adam Clarke in his Commentary had this to say about a person defiled by a dead body.

We are defiled by the dead body of a man—It is probable that the defilement mentioned here was occasioned by assisting at the burial of some person—a work both of necessity and mercy. This circumstance however gave rise to the ordinance delivered in verses 10-14, so that on particular occasions the passover might be twice celebrated:

1. At its regular time, the 14th of the first month;
2. An extra time, the 14th of the second month.

But the man who had no legal hinderance, and did not celebrate it on one or other of these times, was to be cut off from the people of God; and the reason given for this cutting off is, that he brought not the offering of God in his appointed season—therefore that man shall bear his sin, verse 13.

We have already seen, from the authority of St. Paul, that Christ, our Passover, is sacrificed for us; and that it was his sacrifice that was pointed out by the paschal lamb: on this, therefore, we may observe, that those who do not sooner or later eat the true Passover, and get the salvation procured by the sprinkling of his blood, shall be cut off from among those that shall enter into the rest prepared for the people of God; and for the same reason too; they bring not the offering of God in its appointed season, and therefore they shall bear their sin.

Num 9:8 And Moses said unto them, Stand still, and I will hear what the LORD will command concerning you.

Num 9:9 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

Num 9:10 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.

Num 9:11 The fourteenth day of the second month at even they shall keep it, and eat it with unleavened bread and bitter herbs.

Moses sought guidance from God concerning this situation of defilement, and God gave him an answer. God tells him to speak to the people and if they had been near a dead body or had been off on a journey during the 14th day of the first month, then they would qualify to observe the passover feast on the 14th day of the second month.

The second month of the sacred calendar was Zif. It was the 8th month of the legal or civil calendar, and became known in the postexilic times as Iyyar. It would have been during our time of April and May. It was the beginning of the dry summer season when the barley was harvested. It's only feast was this later passover.

1 Ki 6:1 And it came to pass in the four hundred and eightieth year after the children of Israel were come out of the land of Egypt, in the fourth year of Solomon's reign over Israel, in the month Zif, which is the second month, that he began to build the house of the LORD.

1 Ki 6:37 In the fourth year was the foundation of the house of the LORD laid, in the month Zif:

Matthew Henry spoke of how God allowed for a second chance to those who had been defiled or on a journey to partake of the passover feast.

Instructions given concerning those that were ceremonially unclean when they were to eat the passover. The law of the passover required every Israelite to eat of it. Some subsequent laws had forbidden those that had contracted any ceremonial pollution to eat of the holy things; those whose minds and consciences are defiled by sin are utterly unfit for communion with God, and cannot partake, with any true comfort, of the gospel passover, till they are cleansed by true repentance and faith: and a sad dilemma they are in; if they come not to holy ordinances, they are guilty of a contempt of them; if they do come in their pollution, they are guilty of a

profanation of them. They must therefore wash, and then *compass God's altar.* 1

You notice in verse 11 that they were to eat the passover feast with unleavened bread and bitter herbs. Leaven in the bible typifies sin, and this bread was to be pure. Just as we read about the perfect lamb being set aside from the 10th to the 14th when it was put to death, our Savior was the perfect and pure Lamb of God. Remember when John the Baptist told his followers this when Jesus came upon the scene as he baptized there in the Jordan River.

John 1:29 The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.

John 1:30 This is he of whom I said, After me cometh a man which is preferred before me: for he was before me.

John 1:31 And I knew him not: but that he should be made manifest to Israel, therefore am I come baptizing with water.

John 1:32 And John bare record, saying, I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon him.

John 1:33 And I knew him not: but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost.

John 1:34 And I saw, and bare record that this is the Son of God.

John 1:35 Again the next day after John stood, and two of his disciples;

John 1:36 And looking upon Jesus as he walked, he saith, Behold the Lamb of God!

1 Pet 1:18 Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers;

1 Pet 1:19 But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot:

1 Pet 1:20 Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you,

Perhaps when God commanded the Israelites to observe the Passover feast with unleavened bread and bitter herbs, it was to emphasize these two elements which were part of the regular feast. Perhaps this was to encourage the people to be completely obedient to the Lord and not leave out things which may have seemed unimportant to them.

Today, we have liberal churchmen who have changed baptism for plunging beneath the water to simply sprinkling. It is more convenient they say and easily performed. Perhaps it is, but to be truly baptized and follow the Lord's

1 Henry, Matthew, *Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Bible*, (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers) 1997.

command, we must go under the water. Jesus went down and came out as we read in the book of John. Even the Greek word baptizo means 'to plunge under.'

From Hebrew/Greek dictionary:

907. baptizo, bap-tid'-zo; from a der. of G911; to make whelmed (i.e. fully wet); used only (in the N.T.) of ceremonial ablution, espec. (techn.) of the ordinance of Chr. baptism:--baptist, baptize, wash.

IV. Specific Instruction Regarding the Passover

Num 9:12 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.

With reference to the passover lamb, there were 3 explicit directions.

1. They were to leave none of it unto the morning. Christ who is our passover must be completely received at the point of our salvation. We cannot pick and choose which aspects of His being or part of His doctrine that we like.

*John 1:12 But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:
John 1:13 Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.*

2. No bones were to be broken of the lamb. We understand how this typifies our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ who died for our sins. It was prophesied that no bone would be broken, and none were.

*John 19:32 Then came the soldiers, and brake the legs of the first, and of the other which was crucified with him.
John 19:33 But when they came to Jesus, and saw that he was dead already, they brake not his legs:
John 19:34 But one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came there out blood and water.
John 19:35 And he that saw it bare record, and his record is true: and he knoweth that he saith true, that ye might believe.
John 19:36 For these things were done, that the scripture should be fulfilled, A bone of him shall not be broken.
John 19:37 And again another scripture saith, They shall look on him whom they pierced.*

*Psa 34:19 Many are the afflictions of the righteous: but the LORD delivereth him out of them all.
Psa 34:20 He keepeth all his bones: not one of them is broken.*

3. They were to keep it according to the ordinances. Every one is saved the same way. There is no other way than to come to Christ with repentance and faith. Many want you to believe there are many paths and they all lead to the supreme being. However, it simply is not true. The Jews come to God the same way the Muslims and the Buddhists come to God. And that is through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Jesus has provided the way, and we must come God's way. There are no backdoors to heaven as stated in the lyrics of a song by the Dixie Melody Boy's.

John 14:1 Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me.

John 14:2 In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.

John 14:3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.

John 14:4 And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know.

John 14:5 Thomas saith unto him, Lord, we know not whither thou goest; and how can we know the way?

John 14:6 Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.

Num 9:13 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.

Num 9:14 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.

There were serious consequences for not partaking of the passover feast. It was not an optional feast, but one that God intended for all to observe. There was a dire penalty for not keeping the passover. It says the soul was to be cutoff from the people. Typically, that meant to be put to death. All who refuse our Passover Lamb, Jesus Christ, will suffer eternal death.

John 3:36 He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.

Rom 6:23 For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

1 John 5:9 If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater: for this is the witness of God which he hath testified of his Son.

1 John 5:10 He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself: he that believeth not God hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son.
1 John 5:11 And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son.
1 John 5:12 He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.

God gave instructions in verse 14 for the stranger who came into the camp of the Israelites. They were to be circumcised and the same laws of the Israelites were to be applied to all.

Acts 10:34 Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons:
Acts 10:35 But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him.
Acts 10:36 The word which God sent unto the children of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ: (he is Lord of all:)

V. Israel Led by the Cloud

Num 9:15 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.

The people were led by a cloud which indicated the presence of the Lord in the place where He had established for worship. It was not just any cloud, but it was regarded as THE CLOUD.

Exo 13:21 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:
Exo 13:22 He took not away the pillar of the cloud by day, nor the pillar of fire by night, from before the people.

Num 9:16 So it was alway: the cloud covered it by day, and the appearance of fire by night.

During the day, the cloud rested over the tabernacle and then moved out and guided the people. At night time, it had the appearance of fire. We see this was consistent leadership of the Lord during the wilderness wanderings. Night or day, God's presence was with the people, and they could rely upon the Heavenly Father. While we do not have a cloud to guide us in our daily lives, we have something even greater, and that is the Holy Spirit that dwells within us.

Now if we are not saved, there are many out there who will try to lead you with special directions, visions, and human manifested orders from self proclaimed prophets, preachers, and various religions. But when you check them out, you find they do not have consistency one with the other. With God, we have perfection in the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

1 John 5:6 This is he that came by water and blood, even Jesus Christ; not by water only, but by water and blood. And it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth.

1 John 5:7 For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one.

Only in the Word of God can we find total uniformity and harmony in determining the will and way of God for our lives.

Heb 4:12 For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

Matthew Henry said this about the cloud that led Israel.

I. When the tabernacle was finished this cloud, which before had hung on high over their camp, settled upon the tabernacle, and covered it, to show that God manifests his presence with his people in and by his ordinances; there he makes himself known, and to them we must look if we would *see the beauty of the Lord*, Ps. 27:4; Eze. 37:26, 27. Thus God glorified his own appointments, and signified his acceptance of his people's love and obedience.

II. That which appeared as a cloud by day appeared as a fire all night. Had it been a cloud only, it would not have been visible by night; and, had it been a fire only, it would have been scarcely discernible by day; but God would give them sensible demonstrations of the constancy of his presence with them, and his care of them, and that he *kept them night and day*, Isa. 27:3; Ps. 121:6. And thus we are taught to *set God always before us*, and to see him near us both night and day. Something of the nature of that divine revelation which the Old-Testament tabernacle was governed by might also be signified by these visible signs of God's presence, the cloud denoting the darkness and the fire the terror of that dispensation, in comparison with the more clear and comfortable discoveries God has made of his glory in the face of Jesus Christ.

II. This pillar of cloud and fire directed and determined all the motions, marches, and encampments, of Israel in the wilderness. 1. As long as the cloud rested upon the tabernacle, so long they continued in

the same place, and never stirred; though no doubt they were very desirous to be pressing forward in their journey towards Canaan, where they longed to be and hoped to be quickly, yet as long as the cloud rested, if it was a month or a year, so long they rested, v. 22. Note, He that believeth doth not make haste.

There is no time lost while we are waiting God's time. It is as acceptable a piece of submission to the will of God to sit still contentedly when our lot requires it as to work for him when we are called to it. 2. When the cloud was taken up, they removed, how comfortably soever they were encamped, v. 17. Whether it moved by day or night, they delayed not to attend its motions. 2

VI. Guidance of the Cloud

Num 9:17 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.

Num 9:18 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.

Num 9:19 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.

The children of Israel were obedient to the Lord whether He rested in a certain place for a long time or whether He moved. All their actions expressed obedience to the commandment of the Lord. If the cloud tarried above the tabernacle, then they just stayed at that location and did not journey.

We as Christians need to let the Lord guide our lives. He may want us to go to the farthest sides of the earth as a missionary, or He may want us to stay right here and serve him in our local church. But whatever God would have us to do, we need to be sensitive to His leadership.

Adam Clarke talked about how the people kept the charge of the Lord.

Title: Adam Clarke's Commentary on the Old Testament

Author: Clarke, Adam

Kept the charge of the Lord—When we consider the strong disposition which this people ever testified to follow their own will in all things, we may be well surprised to find them, in these journeyings, so implicitly following the directions of God. There could be no trick or imposture here. Moses, had he been the most cunning of men, never could have imitated the

2Henry, Matthew, *Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Bible*, (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers) 1997.

appearances referred to in this chapter. The cloud, and every thing in its motion, was so evidently supernatural, that the people had no doubt of its being the symbol of the Divine presence. GOD chose to keep this people so dependent upon himself, and so submissive to the decisions of his own will, that he would not even give them regular times of marching or resting; they were to do both when and where God saw best.

Thus they were ever kept ready for their march, though perfectly ignorant of the time when they should commence it. But this was all well; they had the presence of God with them; the cloud by day and the fire by night demonstrated that God was amongst them. Reader, thou art here a tenant at will to God Almighty. How soon, in what place, or in what circumstances, he may call thee to march into the eternal world, thou knowest not.

But this uncertainty cannot perplex thee, if thou be properly subject to the will of God, ever willing to lose thy own in it. But thou canst not be thus subject, unless thou have the testimony of the presence and approbation of God. How awful to be obliged to walk into the valley of the shadow of death without this!

VII. Israel Obeys the Leadership of the Lord

Num 9:20 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.

Num 9:21 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.

Num 9:22 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.

We find in these verses that the people were very obedient to the leadership of the Lord. If the cloud stayed over the tabernacle, then the people stayed in their tents and rested. However, if the cloud moved out, day or night, they followed the cloud. If God directed you to go out and do something in the deadness of night, would you go? The Israelites followed no matter whether it was day or night. Obedience to the Lord was then and still is the key to God's blessings and protection.

We aren't talking about a general obedience to the commandments, but a specific and exact obedience to the God's directions. When we follow Him in all

ways, God will direct our steps here on earth and provide for us, and will take care of us all through eternity.

Rom 8:2 For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.

Rom 8:3 For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh:

Rom 8:4 That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

Rom 8:5 For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit.

Rom 8:6 For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.

Rom 8:7 Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.

Rom 8:8 So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God.

Rom 8:9 But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.

Rom 8:10 And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness.

Num 9:23 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.

We know it is very pleasing to the Lord when His people obey his commands.

John 14:13 And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son.

John 14:14 If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it.

John 14:15 If ye love me, keep my commandments.

When God commanded Saul to utterly destroy the Amalekites, and he brought back many animals to offer as sacrifices for the Lord, Samuel told him that God delights more in our obedience than in sacrifices.

1 Sam 15:18 And the LORD sent thee on a journey, and said, Go and utterly destroy the sinners the Amalekites, and fight against them until they be consumed.

1 Sam 15:19 Wherefore then didst thou not obey the voice of the LORD, but didst fly upon the spoil, and didst evil in the sight of the LORD?

1 Sam 15:20 And Saul said unto Samuel, Yea, I have obeyed the voice of the LORD, and have gone the way which the LORD sent me, and have

brought Agag the king of Amalek, and have utterly destroyed the Amalekites.

1 Sam 15:21 But the people took of the spoil, sheep and oxen, the chief of the things which should have been utterly destroyed, to sacrifice unto the LORD thy God in Gilgal.

1 Sam 15:22 And Samuel said, Hath the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams.

1 Sam 15:23 For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because thou hast rejected the word of the LORD, he hath also rejected thee from being king.

Israel was said to have kept the charge of the Lord. A charge seems to be a commandment with a specific positive challenge. Israel obeyed God's man (Moses) as he followed the Lord.

Heb 13:7 Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation.

Heb 13:8 Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever.

Heb 13:9 Be not carried about with divers and strange doctrines. For it is a good thing that the heart be established with grace; not with meats, which have not profited them that have been occupied therein.

J. Vernon McGee said this about following the Lord's guidance.

Moses was not the only one who decided whether they would march today or tomorrow, or whether they would stay in camp for several days. God decided that.

We need to recognize today that the Lord Jesus Christ is the Head of the church. He is the One who should lead. The problem is that the church is so busy going its own way that oftentimes He isn't even consulted. But Christ is still the Head of His church, and those who are His will follow Him.

You will notice that sometimes they stayed in camp for several days, even months, and they were about a year at Mount Sinai. They were out there in that wilderness for forty years. 3

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3J. Vernon McGee, *Thru the Bible commentary [computer file], electronic ed., Logos Library System*, (Nashville: Thomas Nelson) 1997, c1981 by J. Vernon McGee.

Prov 4:18 But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.

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Practice Random Acts of Kindness. Each act spreads, and many will be blessed.