

## HIGHLIGHTS FROM NUMBERS

### "Marching Orders"

Numbers 10:11-28

#### WHERE ARE WE?

1. The name "Numbers" is the English translation of the Greek title of the book. Why? Because of chapters 1-4, 26.
2. The Hebrew title is "In the Wilderness" from the fifth word of 1:1. This more aptly describes its contents. It is wholly concerned with the 40 years of Israel in the wilderness.
3. There are three parts to the book.
  - a. Preparations for departure from Sinai 1:1-10:10; b. Journey from Sinai to Moab 10:11-21:35; c. Events on the plains of Moab 22-36.
4. What a fantastic introduction to the departure from Sinai is given.
  - a. Reminder of Redemption 9:1-14.
  - b. Divine guidance 9:15-10:10.
    - 1) Cloud/fire 9:15-23
    - 2) Trumpets 10:1-10

Note: Some day the ultimate of the trumpets will come.  
For Israel: Feast of trumpets (Lev. 23:23-32; Mt. 24:31).  
For Church: Rapture (1 Thess. 4:16).

5. Now move forward with Israel!

#### 1. THE TIME DESIGNATED vv. 11, 12

##### a. By details v. 11

Scripture teaches that Israel arrived at Sinai three months after leaving Egypt (Ex. 19:1). They stayed there 11 months and 20 days (Num. 10:11). Num. 1:1-10:10 therefore deal with 20 days of Israel's history. How concerned God is with time!

##### b. By directions v. 11

It is the cloud that provides the signal to move. Remember: the cloud is at the "tabernacle of the testimony." There is no guidance sought from counselors, but the Counselor (God)! Read again Leviticus 16:2 and Exodus 25:10-22. Israel knew the meaning of Divine guidance--do we (cf. Acts 16:6-11; John 16:13)?

##### c. By departure v. 12

Here is a summarization of several days' journeyings. Stops were made at Kibroth-Hattaavah and Hazeroth before reaching the wilderness of Paran (cf. 11:35; 12:16).

NOTE: Nothing is left to human speculation. The record is there for anyone to read--written by God's spirit (2 Tim. 3:16, 17; 2 Pet. 1:21).

2. THE MARCH ORGANIZED vv. 13-28

a. By commandment v. 13

The Hebrew makes no room for human error. The word "commandment" (KJV) is actually "mouth" in Hebrew. Make no mistake about it: Israel was told by God to move! Surely this is evidence that God "spoke" in old times (Heb. 1:1; 2 Pet. 1:21).

b. By Moses v. 13

The "hand of Moses" shows that the human instrument is cooperative with the divine direction. Fabulous (cf. Ex. 13:51). It is foolish to expect God to work apart from us (albeit, that may prove to be His prerogative).

c. By tribes vv. 14-27

They are all listed: Judah, Issachar, Zebulun; Reuben, Simeon, Gad; Ephraim, Manasseh, Benjamin; Dan, Asher, Naphtali. A check shows they are all here in the order recorded (2:1-31). The Levitical responsibilities are outlined with details not expressed in chapter 2. Here the Gershonites and the Merarites loaded the tabernacle and its furnishings in wagons and set out behind Judah (10:17 cf. 4:21-45; 7:2-8). The Korathites marched in the middle of the procession after the Reuben group. This order of march allowed time for the tabernacle to be erected at each campsite to await the sacred objects borne by the Kohathites (10:31 cf. 4:5-15).

NOTE: Israel is said to journey "according to their hosts" (v. 28). It was the tribe of Dan which kept "all the camps according to their hosts" (v. 25). This word hosts (or armies) concerns at least two specifics: 1) The warrior armies of Israel (here; 1 Sam. 17:45). 2. The angelic armies (Josh. 5:14; Psa. 148:2). There emerged a title for the Lord which has deep significance for His people: "Lord of Hosts" (cf. Isa. 9:7; Hosea 12:5).

CONSIDER THIS When God's people moved, there was divine direction, order, care for the spiritual items, full protection, and total participation. Get it straight--since God did it for the millions of Israelites in the wilderness, surely He is no less interested to meet your need today. Heb. 13:6 affirms that He is the God Who changes not (Mal. 3:6). Amen.