HIGHLIGHTS FROM NUMBERS

Invitation and Supplication

Survey the Book Numbers 10:29-36

1. "Numbers" is the English translation of the Greek title of the Book. Check chapters 1-4, 26 and you will see why "Numbers." The Hebrew title is "In the wilderness" from the fifth word of 1:1. This is very apt because the book describes Israel's wanderings in the wilderness for 40 years.


3. There are four essentials to the departure from Sinai
   a. Redemption 9:1-14
   b. Cloud 9:15-23 God is in full control
   c. Fire (:15-23) of Israel's movements!
   d. Trumpets 10:1-10

   NOTE: Israel's future "Feast of Trumpets" signals their regathering to the Lord and the land (Lev. 23:23-32; Mt. 24:31).

   Church's last trump relates to the "Rapture" when the Church is taken up (1 Cor. 15:52; 1 Thess. 4:16).

4. It is incontrovertibly true that God sought by every means to get Israel from Sinai to Moab His way. After all, God's way is perfect (Ps. 18:30). Therefore, so long as Israel took their journey a. "according to the commandment of the Lord" and b. "by the hand of Moses," all went well (cf. v. 13).

5. Now consider:-

   1. INVITATION

      a. To whom v. 29

      The name of Moses' father-in-law is variously provided in the O.T. He is called Jethro (Ex. 31:1-18:1), Jether (Ex. 4:18), Ruel (Ex. 2:18), Hobab (Judges 4:11), a Midianite (Num. 10:29; Ex. 2:16), and a Kenite (Judges 1:16; 4:11). Some see him as "brother-in-law" rather than "father-in-law." These variants do not alter the fact this man was involved and he was a close relation to Moses by marriage.

      b. For what vv. 39, 31, 32

      1) Goodness of God. Moses offered Hobab the opportunity to participate in the Lord's goodness to Israel (vv. 29, 32). Note: "we will do thee good" i.e. come with us!

      2) Guidance of nation. Moses wanted Hobab to assist Israel in their journey through the wilderness.
He was to serve as "eyes" for Israel (v. 31). That's what Job was (Job 29:15). Note: Now Moses is expecting Hobab to do them (Israel) good (cf. vv. 29, 32).

Wow, what a change of ideas!

c. How responded v. 30

Clearly Hobab does not accept the invitation. He may have been among Israel at Sinai (cf. 9:18) and it was "logical" to make this invitation. He may have accepted (Judges 1:16). It is a moot question.

BUT WAIT--God had already provided redemption, cloud, fire, and trumpets. The people were to move at God's direction. He knows every crook and cranny. Moses dabbles in human ingenuity and expertise. He failed to depend utterly upon God's guidance. What about us (Ps. 32)?

2. SUPPLICATION vv. 33-36

a. To Whom

It is remarkable that five times the "Lord" is mentioned in these verses. Moses appeals to God for help (v. 35). What Hobab could not do, God could. Glory to His Name.

b. For what?

1) Guidance Ah, that's the key. Israel was in the wilderness and only God knew the terrain. He was Israel's "eyes," hence He searched out "a resting place for them" (v. 33). It was the cloud that was upon them when they went out (v. 34).

2) Defence The ark indicated the very presence of God (v. 35). The enemies were to be scattered and those who hated Israel would flee before "Thee" (i.e. God) (v. 35).

3) Protection The ark prevented the enemy in battle (v. 35), but it also provided comfort and rest in the camp (v. 36). The ark was the meeting place between God and Israel (Ex. 25:10-22).

So what conclusion

1. When we set forward (v. 28), as Israel did, it must be by God's direction, not man's (Hobab).

2. God's guidance includes: 1) Something "before" (v. 33). 2) Something along the way (vv. 34, 35).

3) Something at the end (vv. 33, 36). Israel's experience can be ours if we live "according to the commandment of the Lord (i.e. obedience).

3. Submission to God will produce experience of His purpose and plan. If unsaved, He will save you. If saved, He will bring you to rest (Heb. 3, 4).

Col: When Christ, who is my life, shall appear.