

THE TABERNACLE OF MOSES

"The Camp of the Lord"

When Balaak, the Moabite king, saw the children of Israel come into his land, he was distressed. Knowing that his phisicall resources were not sufficient to repel them, he hired a well known sorcerer named Balaam. After a little incident with a donkey and the Angel of the Lord, Balaam arrived to curse Israel for Balak. Both men got more than they bargained for.

Num 23:20-24

- 20 I have received a command to bless; he has blessed, and I cannot change it.
21 "No misfortune is seen in Jacob, no misery observed in Israel. The LORD their God is with them; the shout of the King is among them.
22 God brought them out of Egypt; they have the strength of a wild ox.
23 There is no sorcery against Jacob, no divination against Israel. It will now be said of Jacob and of Israel, 'See what God has done!'
24 The people rise like a lioness; they rouse themselves like a lion that does not rest till he devours his prey and drinks the blood of his victims." (NIV)

Num 24:1-9

- 1 Now when Balaam saw that it pleased the LORD to bless Israel, he did not resort to sorcery as at other times, but turned his face toward the desert.
2 When Balaam looked out and saw Israel encamped tribe by tribe, the Spirit of God came upon him
3 and he uttered his oracle: "The oracle of Balaam son of Beor, the oracle of one whose eye sees clearly,
4 the oracle of one who hears the words of God, who sees a vision from the Almighty, who falls prostrate, and whose eyes are opened:
5 "How beautiful are your tents, O Jacob, your dwelling places, O Israel!
6 "Like valleys they spread out, like gardens beside a river, like aloes planted by the LORD, like cedars beside the waters.
7 Water will flow from their buckets; their seed will have abundant water. "Their king will be greater than Agag; their kingdom will be exalted.
8 "God brought them out of Egypt; they have the strength of a wild ox. They devour hostile nations and break their bones in pieces; with their arrows they pierce them.
9 Like a lion they crouch and lie down, like a lioness-- who dares to rouse them? "May those who bless you be blessed and those who curse you be cursed!" (NIV)

This was Balaam's testimony when he saw the camp by the spirit of God. What sight met his eyes as he looked down from the high places to curse Israel?

The Cloud-

Neh 9:19-20

- 19 "Because of your great compassion you did not abandon them in the desert. By day the pillar of cloud did not cease to guide them on their path, nor the pillar of fire by night to shine on the way they were to take.
20 You gave your good Spirit to instruct them. You did not withhold your (NIV)

Ps 105:39

He spread out a cloud as a covering, and a fire to give light at night. (NIV)

Ps 121:5-6

5 The LORD watches over you-- the LORD is your shade at your right hand;
6 the sun will not harm you by day, nor the moon by night. (NIV)

Isa 4:5-6

5 Then the LORD will create over all of Mount Zion and over those who assemble there a cloud of smoke by day and a glow of flaming fire by night; over all the glory will be a canopy.
6 It will be a shelter and shade from the heat of the day, and a refuge and hiding place from the storm and rain. (NIV)

This was not just a straight up pillar of smoke that could be taken as the smoke of a fire in the Tabernacle. This was the visible presence of God through his Holy Spirit that rose in a pillar and spread out as a canopy over the camp. This camp was 2 to 3 miles square encompassing 1.5 to 2 million people. Even as they worshipped at a physical tabernacle that was a sign and a shadow of things to come, they were dwelling under the shadow of a truer reality.

The Camp-

The order of the camp comes to us out of Numbers 2-3:

| | | | | |
|-------|---|-----------------------|---|--------------------------|
| EAST | - | Moses, Aaron, Priests | - | Judah, Issachar, Zebulun |
| SOUTH | - | Kohathites (2750) | - | Reuben, Simeon, Gad |
| WEST | - | Gershonites (2630) | - | Ephraim, Manasseh, Benj. |
| NORTH | - | Merarites (3200) | - | Dan, Asher, Naphtali |

One of the first things to note is that the Tabernacle is the center of the camp. As we have seen throughout this series, the Tabernacle is a shadow of the Lord Jesus Christ. He, the word that became flesh and tabernacled among us, is to have a central part in our lives.

2 Sam 7:5-6

5 "Go and tell My servant David, "Thus says the LORD: "Would you build a house for Me to dwell in?
6 "For I have not dwelt in a house since the time that I brought the children of Israel up from Egypt, even to this day, but have moved about in a tent and in a tabernacle. (NKJ)

The word of the Lord to David was, "I live in tents." Notice the plurality, tent and tabernacle. At this time the Ark of the Covenant was in the tent that David had pitched in Zion. Prior to that, it had been in the Tabernacle (until it was lost by Israel to the Philistines). But before the building of the Tabernacle, Moses and the children of Israel lived with a different understanding of their relationship with God.

Exod 33:7-11

7 Now Moses used to take a tent and pitch it outside the camp some distance away, calling it

the "tent of meeting." Anyone inquiring of the LORD would go to the tent of meeting outside the camp.

- 8 And whenever Moses went out to the tent, all the people rose and stood at the entrances to their tents, watching Moses until he entered the tent.
- 9 As Moses went into the tent, the pillar of cloud would come down and stay at the entrance, while the LORD spoke with Moses.
- 10 Whenever the people saw the pillar of cloud standing at the entrance to the tent, they all stood and worshiped, each at the entrance to his tent.
- 11 The LORD would speak to Moses face to face, as a man speaks with his friend. Then Moses would return to the camp, but his young aide Joshua son of Nun did not leave the tent. (NIV)

Moses would meet God "outside of the camp." After the building of the sanctuary, it was understood that the LORD was to be the center of all that they did.

The Call to March-

Num 9:15-23

- 15 On the day the tabernacle, the Tent of the Testimony, was set up, the cloud covered it. From evening till morning the cloud above the tabernacle looked like fire.
- 16 That is how it continued to be; the cloud covered it, and at night it looked like fire.
- 17 Whenever the cloud lifted from above the Tent, the Israelites set out; wherever the cloud settled, the Israelites encamped.
- 18 At the LORD's command the Israelites set out, and at his command they encamped. As long as the cloud stayed over the tabernacle, they remained in camp.
- 19 When the cloud remained over the tabernacle a long time, the Israelites obeyed the LORD's order and did not set out.
- 20 Sometimes the cloud was over the tabernacle only a few days; at the LORD's command they would encamp, and then at his command they would set out.
- 21 Sometimes the cloud stayed only from evening till morning, and when it lifted in the morning, they set out. Whether by day or by night, whenever the cloud lifted, they set out.
- 22 Whether the cloud stayed over the tabernacle for two days or a month or a year, the Israelites would remain in camp and not set out; but when it lifted, they would set out.
- 23 At the LORD's command they encamped, and at the LORD's command they set out. They obeyed the LORD's order, in accordance with his command through Moses. (NIV)

Make no mistake, it was the Lord leading Israel. They camped at his command and marched on his command. When the cloud lifted, it was the signal to begin the march. The cloud was the visible presence of the Holy Spirit. They were able to see it and follow after it. But we have Him living in us and are to heed his direction.

John 3:7-8

- 7 You should not be surprised at my saying, 'You must be born again.'
- 8 The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit." (NIV)

Rom 8:14

because those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. (NIV)

Gal 5:16-18

16 I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh.

17 For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish.

18 But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law. (NKJ)

The first thing that would occur would be the covering of the sacred articles of furniture [describe from chart] accomplished by the priests under Aaron's supervision. With the exception of the ark, the outer covering of all the furnishings was the hide of sea cows. Blue or scarlet would be underneath, but someone observing their march would have no idea of the beauty of the shining brass or gold furnishings and vessels. To the naked eye, unaided by the Holy Spirit, Jesus had no apparent attraction (Is. 53:1-3). But to those who receive him, he is the beauty of holiness.

Num 10:34-36 (NIV)

34 The cloud of the LORD was over them by day when they set out from the camp.

35 Whenever the ark set out, Moses said, "Rise up, O LORD! May your enemies be scattered; may your foes flee before you."

36 Whenever it came to rest, he said, "Return, O LORD, to the countless thousands of Israel."

The ark led the procession behind the cloud. The ark contained the law of God (the Word), the manna from heaven, and had the atonement cover. Jesus is the living word, the bread from heaven, who came to pay the atonement price. God's presence resided on the ark and Jesus is the fullness of the godhead bodily (Col. 2:9). As the ark was the head of the column, so the Lord is the head of the body (Eph. 1:22-23).

Josh 3:3-4

3 and they commanded the people, saying, "When you see the ark of the covenant of the LORD your God, and the priests, the Levites, bearing it, then you shall set out from your place and go after it.

4 "Yet there shall be a space between you and it, about two thousand cubits by measure. Do not come near it, that you may know the way by which you must go, for you have not passed this way before." (NKJ)

*The ark traveled 2000 cubits ahead of the army. It entered the Jordan River ahead of the tribes and kept it open for the tribes to enter the Promised Land. Our Lord has gone into the heavens 2000 years ahead of his church and has kept the way open until all have come into **the** promise land. (The church age is the 5th and 6th day!).*

Num 10:1-10

1 The LORD said to Moses:

2 "Make two trumpets of hammered silver, and use them for calling the community together and for having the camps set out.

3 When both are sounded, the whole community is to assemble before you at the entrance to the Tent of Meeting.

4 If only one is sounded, the leaders-- the heads of the clans of Israel-- are to assemble before

you.

- 5 When a **trumpet blast¹** is **sounded²**, the tribes camping on the east are to set out.
- 6 At the sounding of a second blast, the camps on the south are to set out. The blast will be the signal for setting out.
- 7 To gather the assembly, blow the trumpets, but not with the same signal.
- 8 "The sons of Aaron, the priests, are to blow the trumpets. This is to be a lasting ordinance for you and the generations to come.
- 9 When you go into battle in your own land against an enemy who is oppressing you, sound a blast on the trumpets. Then you will be remembered by the LORD your God and rescued from your enemies.
- 10 Also at your times of rejoicing-- your appointed feasts and New Moon festivals-- you are to sound the trumpets over your burnt offerings and fellowship offerings, and they will be a memorial for you before your God. I am the LORD your God." (NIV)

Brown-Driver-Briggs' definition-

8628 **taqa¹**- to blow, to clap, to strike, to sound, to thrust, to give a blow, to blast

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|---------------------------------|------------------------------|
| -to drive a tent peg | [Judg. 4:21] |
| -drive the locusts away | [Ex. 10:19] |
| -blast a trumpet | [Josh. 6:4, 8-9, 13, 16, 20] |
| -to strike hands in praise | [Ps. 47:1] |
| -to shake hands on an agreement | [Pr. 6:1; 17:18; 22:26] |

Strong's definition-

8643 **teruw² ah²** (ter-oo-aw'); from 7321; clamor, i.e. acclamation of joy or a battle-cry; especially clangor of trumpets, as an alarm: KJV-- alarm, blow (-ing) (of, the) (trumpets), joy, jubile, loud noise, rejoicing, shout (-ing), (high, joyful) sound (-ing).

Silver is the redemption metal. When we proclaim the Lord's redemption (blow the trumpet), we strike a peg in the enemy's head, drive away the plague of Egypt, sound the battle-cry, make the noise of praise and reconfirm in our hearts the covenant God has made with us. We need to sound the trumpet when we go to war (Num. 10:9) and in the day of celebration (Num. 10:10).

The Order of March for the Army-

East-

The first division would set out under Judah's standard at the sound of the first advance. This division consisted of the tribes of Judah, Issachar, and Zebulun (Num 10:5, 14-16).

Once the 1st division was under way, the Tabernacle was dismantled and loaded on the appropriate wagons (Num 7:6-8; 10:17). The Gershonites carried the Tabernacle coverings and cords on two wagons pulled by four oxen (Num 4:21-27). The Merarites carried the Tabernacle framework (posts, pillars, and bases) on four wagons pulled by 8 oxen (Num 4:29-33).

South-

The 2nd division, comprised of the tribes of Reuben, Simeon, and Gad, set out at the sound of the second advance (Num 10:6, 18-20). Behind them would come the Kohathites carrying the rest of the sacred furniture (incense altar, lampstand, table of shewbread, laver, and brazen altar) and

the articles of ministry on their shoulders (Num 10:21; 4:7-13; 7:9). By the time they arrived at the next campsite, the Tabernacle would have been set up (Num 10:21b).

West-

The army of Ephraim (Ephraim, Manasseh, and Benjamin) set out [Num 10:22-24].

South-

The army of Dan (Dan, Asher, Naphtali) set out last as the rearguard (Num 10:25-28).

Conclusion-

New Testament Correlation:

- ❑ The cloud is the Holy Spirit. We are to be led by the Spirit of God (John 3:7-8; Rom 8:14; Gal 5:16-18).
- ❑ The Ark is the Lord Jesus Christ. God's presence resided on the Ark and Jesus is the fullness of the Godhead bodily (Col 2:9). As the Ark was the head of the column, so the Lord is the head of the body (Eph 1:22-23). As the Ark traveled 2000 cubits ahead of the Army, so the Lord has entered the true Tabernacle 2000 years ahead of the church (Josh 3:4 KJV). The Church Age is the 5th and 6th day of the week of millennium.
- ❑ The Army of Judah was the first army to march. In Judges 20:18, the Lord declared that Judah (*Hebrew yadah*) was to go first into battle. Judah means praise. Our praises are to go out in warfare (Ps.149) and celebration (Heb 13:15).
- ❑ The structure and coverings of the Tabernacle were carried in wagons by teams of yoked oxen. We are to be yoked to the Lord (Matt 11:29-30).
- ❑ The Army of Reuben guarded the Tabernacle habitation and court. Reuben was the firstborn. The elders of the church are to stand guard lest grievous wolves come in (Acts 20:28-31; John 10:1-18).
- ❑ The Kohathites carried the sacred furniture and articles of ministry on their shoulders. We are to bear one another's burdens (Gal 6:2) as well as shouldering our own load (Gal 6:5).
- ❑ The Army of Ephraim guarded the Tabernacle furniture and vessels. The furniture and vessels represent the salient truths of the Gospel as well as active service. We are to guard the doctrine of the faith (1 Tim 6:20-21; 2 Tim 1:12-14) and keep ourselves as vessels of honor (2 Tim 2:20-21).
- ❑ The Army of Dan formed the rearguard. The Hebrew word is '*acap* (Strong's #622) and is used in reference to the gathering of food at harvest time and of standing still to receive money for the building of the Temple (2 Kings 22:4). The Lord is our rearguard (Is 52:12; 58:6-8).