

Numbers 10:11–36

God Gives Order, Leadership, Expertise, but Most of All, Himself!

Friday, May 17, 2024 • Read Numbers 10:11–36

Questions from the Scripture text: On what day was the cloud taken up (v11)? From where did the children of Israel go (v12)? To where? What was unique about this specific journey (v13)? Who led the first camp (v14)? Under whom? Who went with them (v15)? Under whom? Who else went with them (v16)? Under whom? What was taken down next (v17)? Who set out with it? Who led the next camp (v18)? Under whom? Who went with them (v19)? Under whom? Who else went with them (v20)? Under whom? Then who went, carrying what (v21)? Why were they behind the actual tabernacle? Who led the third camp (v22)? Under whom? Who went with them (v23)? Under whom? Who else went with them (v24)? Under whom? Who led the last camp (v25)? Under whom? Who went with them (v26)? Under whom? Who else went with them (v27)? Under whom? How does v28 summarize the section thus far (cf. ch2)? Whom did Moses invite to go with them (v29)? What did he promise, on what basis? How did Hobab answer in v30? But what new request did Moses make in v31? And what did he promise him in return (v32)? How long did they journey (v33)? Who (what?) is said to have done the searching for a resting place? What was leading them (v34)? What would set out (v35a)? And what would Moses pray that YHWH would do (v35b)? To accomplish what (v35c–d)? And what would rest (v36a)? And what would Moses pray that YHWH would do (v36b)? Unto whom (v36c)?

What does the Lord provide His church for her task in this world? Numbers 10:11–36 prepares us for the evening sermon on the Lord's Day. In these twenty-six verses of Holy Scripture, the Holy Spirit teaches us that, **among other things, the Lord provides His church with order and leadership, expertise, and His own power and presence.**

According to v11–13, this passage is covering the first three-days' worth of journeying (cf. v33) from the Wilderness of Sinai to the Wilderness of Paran. By the time we get to Paran (12:16), we will be shocked by how long Israel's wickedness could make a three-days' journey actually take!

But in this passage, there is no hint of this trouble. The focus is upon the Lord's provision to His people.

The Lord had provided order and leadership, v11–28. The order matches up with what was commanded in ch2. Now, we learn the added details of the Gershonite and Merarite position (v17), carrying the tabernacle structure on wagons (cf. 4:21–32, 7:7–8), and the Kohathite position (v21a), carrying the holy things on poles (cf. 4:1–20, 7:9). This was wisely timed so that the structure could be set up beforehand, to receive the holy things. The wisdom of the entire order is emphasized with the naming of the camp standards and the leader of each tribe/army.

The Lord provided expertise, v29–32. YHWH Himself is leading His people where to go, and now He adds a local expert in wilderness-living. Moses himself is a bit of an expert, and the Lord adds his brother-in-law to help. Moses tries to convince Hobab (v29) to come. This is a difficult thing to do, since Hobab has land and people already (v30). But, twice, Moses urges him that YHWH is doing good to Israel, and that there will be an abundance of good for him to share in (end of v29; v32b). The text seems to assume that v32 has settled the matter, and indeed we find Hobab still with them in the land (cf. Jdg 4:11). The Lord Himself, Who leads us, continues to send and use human servants whom He equips for usefulness to His people.

The Lord provided His power and presence, v33–35. The ark itself may have been physically out in front (v33). Or, it may be that v33 is a way of saying that the cloud's resting place determined the location of the ark, and thus the location of the entire camp by relation to it. Either way, the point is that YHWH Himself was leading them (v34). Indeed, when the ark itself moved, Moses prayed to YHWH Himself to arise and scatter His enemies (v35, cf. Ps 68:1–2, 7). And, when the ark itself rested, Moses prayed to YHWH Himself to return to the multitudes of His people (v36, cf. Ps 68:3–6). It is not as if YHWH can "move." But these visual tokens that He had given His people reminded them that He Himself would assure them success, and that He Himself is the One Who is with them. We, too, continue to need that assurance, but we have something better than the ark. We have our Kinsman Redeemer, sitting on the throne of glory, having His enemies being made a footstool for His feet. The fact that we do not have all of these externals now, and that the only sacraments and holy days are the ones that Jesus has instituted, announces to us that our Prophet, Priest, and King has passed through the heavens for us and brought us into the true Holy of Holies by union with Him!

What sort of order and leadership has the Lord provided His church generally? What has He provided your congregation, specifically? What sort of expertise has He provided those who lead His church? How does He communicate to us His own power and presence in the church?

Sample prayer: Lord, thank You for so wisely, carefully, and powerfully providing for Your church. Forgive us our sins, and grant unto us that we would not complain or doubt, but trust You and do our part cheerfully, through Christ—in Whose Name we ask it, AMEN!

Suggested songs: ARP46 "God Is Our Refuge and Our Strength" or TPH68A "God Shall Arise, and by His Might"

(The following is a machine-generated transcription. PLEASE BE AWARE of—and patient with—transcribing errors. If there is something confusing or obviously erroneous, you are invited to listen to the audio recording via hopewellarp.org)

Numbers chapter 10 verse 11 through 36. These are God's words. Now, it came to pass on the 20th day of the second month in the second year. That the cloud was taken up from above the Tabernacle of the testimony. And the children of Israel set out from the Wilderness of Sinai on their Journeys.

Then the cloud settled in the wilderness of Qaran. So, they started out for the first time according to the command of Yahweh. By the hand of Moses. The standard of the camp are the children of Judas set out first, according to their armies. Over there Army was Nash on son of a minute.

Over the army of the tribe of the children visakar was nothing else, the son of zuar. And over the tribe, over the army of the tribe of the children of zebulun was eliab, the son of helon Then the Tabernacle was taken down and the sons of Gershon and the sons of morari, set out carrying the Tabernacle.

And the standard of the camp of Reuben set out according to their armies. Over their army was elizur the son of shere. Over the army of the tribe of the children of Simeon, was shalumio the son of zaritadai. And over the army of the tribe of the children of Gad was eliasaf.

The son of dewell Then the color tights, set out carrying the holy things. The Tabernacle would be prepared for their arrival. And the standard of the camp are the children of Ephraim, set out, according to their armies. Over. Their army was elishama the son of amihood? Over the army of the tribe of the children of Manasseh was gamalielur.

And over the army of the tribe of the children of Benjamin was avidan the son of giriani. Then the standard of the camp are the children of Dan the rear guard of all the camps. Set out according to their armies, over their army, was ahiezer, the son of Amishadai.

Over the army of the tribe of the children of Asher, was pagiel, the son of akran. And over the army of the tribe of the children of naphtali was ahira, the son of Anan. Thus was the order of March of the children of Israel according to their armies, when they began their Journey.

Now, Moses said to how bab the son of Raywell. The midianite Moses's, father-in-law. We are setting out for the place of which Yahweh said I will give it to you. Come with us and we will treat you. Well, For y'all has promised good things to Israel. And he said to him, I will not go, but I will depart to my own land and to my relatives So Moses said, please do not leave and as much as you know, how we are to camp in the wilderness and you can be our eyes.

And it shall be, if you go with us, indeed, it shall be that, whatever good Yahweh will do to us the same. We will do to you. So they departed from the mountain of Yahweh on a journey of three days. And the Ark of the Covenant of Yahweh went before them for the three days journey.

To search out a resting place for them. And the cloud of Yahweh was above them by day. When they went out from the camp, So, it was Whenever the arc set out that Moses said rise up of Yahweh. Let your enemies be scattered. Those who hate you? Flee before you And when it rested, he said return o, Yahweh To the many thousands.

Of Israel. Amen, this ends this reading of Gods inspired and And,

Well, verses 11 through 13, tell us that this was the first setting out and That describes this setting out as a journey to the Wilderness of Quran, where the clouds settled down. According to verse 12, And it is identified as a three days. Journey. Verse 33. And yet this three days.

That is going to end up, taking them much more than that. They're going to have to spend a week while Miriam recovers from being disciplined, but if you were to peek ahead, chapter 12 verse 16 and afterward the people moved from Azeroth and camped in the wilderness of Paran.

You discover that, this three days journey. has these Different legs to it, belonging to each day's worth of journeying. But it's actually going to take a lot longer. For them to get there. This is a reminder or A harbinger of foreshadowing of the fact that Although it's just a couple weeks worth.

Of travel from The mountain of Sinai to where they enter the promised land, and it's going to end up taking them 40 years. As a punishment upon. Their Rebellion in the wilderness. So we'll be shocked by how long it takes for them to make a 3ds three days Journey.

But in this particular passage there is no hint. Of this trouble because the focus is especially upon the Lord, the Lord provided an order in which they are to March. The Lord has designated specific leaders. Making provision for his church of those whom he has ordained set apart to their varying offices.

That's going to be one of the things that is rebelled against. In chapters. 11 and 12. But the Lord has made this. Provision. And we already begin to hear about this provision. The order of the March that is described here. verse 28, thus was the order of the March.

Etc. Had been prescribed by the Lord in Chapter 2. Not only was there. Order of the 12 tribes and their different standards. And military Arrangement for security and Protection. But he also gives special attention into his order. in his order for the place of the Tabernacle, that the Tabernacles holy things would go right at the very Center of the people perhaps, except for the ark.

35. Indicate that the arc is going out and in front of them verse 33. Also I may indicate that the arc Going out in front of them. Or it may be referring. To the travel of. The cloud in those places as the cloud ordinarily. was the indicator of where the arc should go.

Where the testimony would go, where the tent of the testimony would be situated with respect to the Arc of the testimony itself. But the holy things carried on polls by the coatites would go in the middle. That was one of the reasons why the gershmites and the marites would go not in the front.

Judah and the camp. Due to escar Zebulon. That went out in the front would protect the gershmites and the merites. But remember, they had the wagons for carrying the structure of the Tabernacle. And the passage tells us that The Tabernacle would thus be prepared. All ready for the coatites when it refers to them in verse 21.

So there's this order for the nation as a whole, not only in sequence But also in Authority structure and The nature of the single column travel. with Military arrangement for security and the order, especially of the worship of God and the presence of God, being the great thing.

in Israel. so the Lord provided order and Leadership the Lord also In his Providence here provides. Expertise. God is going to take them through the Wilderness. But just as we saw in the relationship between the movement of the cloud, and the blowing of the trumpets, there are particular details in order to follow the Lord.

That are necessary. To be determined. And here, the Lord permits of those details being ordered by the light in nature. And especially by the expertise of how bad the son of rewell, this would be Moses's. Brother-in-law since ruelle is another name for Jethro Moses's, father-in-law And you remember Moses himself was an expert in the wilderness.

He had been a shepherd in the wilderness for 40 years. but ruelle. Also. And perhaps more than Moses having grown up there and having the family Heritage. And adding a second one who as Moses says, in verse 31, can be our eyes. Since it was through the Wilderness that they had to go.

The Lord has. Provided providentially, the expertise of Mez's brother-in-law. Hobab. And he enables Moses to convince him. habab has his own land and his own family as he says in verse 30. But Moses is at work. Convinces him. To convert and to join Israel. To throw his lot in with Israel and have.

God's blessing God's dealing with Israel? Applied to him. At first Moses says, we'll be unable to treat you well. Come with us and we'll treat you well for you. Always promise good things to Israel verse 29. but then in his second, go at it. He identifies the good that Yahweh does to Israel.

As the good that will be done. to how bad. And so, the Lord provides ruelle. A covenant status membership in his church, as it were. Not ruelle habab. And the Lord provides his people with. Expertise in the wilderness. The Lord himself leads us still, he tells us in his word.

how his church is to be ordered and how our weeks are to be ordered. Now, his worship is to be ordered that. And even to some extent, our days are to be Ordered. And yet, the Lord also. Sets over us leaders that he has appointed. It's a little bit more obvious in the family.

naked, Providence, determines who the father and the husband is. but also with a proper doctrine, of proper biblical doctrine of ordination, we see it in the church. And then in addition to that, the Lord does providentially provide expertise in various things. If you know where you are going to be living and the sorts of things that are going to be needed, perhaps for leading your family or schooling your children.

Or if you're going to be having to earn a wage. To lead your household. There, is that providential provision of expertise along the way? Such as Moses appealed to Habab for. but it is the Lord who provides that. And so trusting him, we pursue Education and Training and preparation, and those things that is not inconsistent with or contradictory to Being led by the Lord in our lives, but the two things.

Go together. But in the last place. we're reminded that the Lord doesn't just provide these these things for us and in Order leadership expertise Etc. But the Lord's greatest provision is himself. His power and his presence. In his person. And that is what is emphasized it? In verses 33 through 36.

Where the arc goes before them. And it's not just the arc that is going before them. It's not just a box. That is going before them. But God has given them the Ark of the

testimony, the Ark and the Covenant. As a reminder that it is, he himself. Who is with them to lead them.

And to guide them. And in fact, it is not so much he who is with them as they Who are with him. when the ark sets out, Moses does not say rise up. O Israel. He says rise up Yahweh And when the ark rests, he says, return, o Yahweh To the many thousands of Israel.

Moses prays to the Lord himself. And this is the Forerunner of Psalm 68. Rise up, O Lord, and let your enemies be scattered. One of the favorite Psalms. Of God's people. and the first seven verses of that Psalm, especially And then the Lord's Gathering his people to himself.

Is also in verses three through six. Of that Psalm. The Lord himself of course is not moving. He is everywhere all the time. but he gives visual tokens to his people. To remind them that it is his presence with them. That ensures their power, their success. Their Vindication.

they're being accepted with him. for worship. Now, we don't have these visual tokens now, the only visual token that we have been given as the church itself and the Lord's supper and the water of baptism. Those are the only visual things. That are commanded or used in the New Testament Church.

And it is Jesus himself then Who has instituted? those visual things so that even The Lord's. Supper draws our attention to Where sits the man, the mediator, the god-man, who instituted the Lord's Supper. And even the pouring of the water of baptism, which was commanded by the Lord, Jesus instituted to him instituted by him on Earth, draws our attention to heaven.

Where sits, he who instituted the sacrament of baptism in the very moment that he was about to ascend into heaven. And who from his seat in glory. Pours out upon us, his holy spirit. And so, even those things that he has given us visually instituted directly by him.

But we don't really have those visual things. We have Christ himself, the knowledge, Of him and of his finished work and of his ongoing Ministry of intercession. And Lori. So that we will relate to realities. When Moses says at the end of numbers, 10 rise up o, Yahweh and let your enemies be scattered.

He is not referring to the Box. That is being carried on the polls. Which incidentally would have been covered with a cloth at the time that he that he says it as as the ark is setting out. But he is referring to the Lord himself. And so, the life of God's people with the Lord has ever been, A life of Faith.

In the infancy of the church before the coming of Christ before. his accomplishing our Redemption and completing The revelation of God to In himself, and in his word, The lord gave his people more props. For their faith. And now he has given us the Lord Jesus himself. As the prop as it were.

To our faith. But in your life, it is God's Own power. And God's Own presence. That goes with you. This is one of the reasons he has us start. And our days in worship together. This is one of the reasons that he has us begin the week with an entire day.

Of turning our attention away from the creature to the Creator. Away. Even from that which is being redeemed to the Redeemer himself. So that we will know that it is, he himself in his presence and by his power, Who leads us and helps us. Does he give us directions for things to do?

Yes. Give an order and a structure and ordained leaders in the church and in the home. But yes, does he Providentially provide expertise that is used and helpful along the way. Yes. But it is, he himself. By his presence and by his power, That ultimately, was not just using all of these but rules and overrules.

all of these for his glory and for our good. And now he has given us not. And Arc. But Jesus Christ, Our Prophet priest, and King, Who has passed through the heavens. And sits there. And we in Union with him. Have been brought even into the holy of holies.

Of which the ark and the Tabernacle and the holy of holies in it. Was just a copy. So the Lord help us to receive His design and his structure as a blessing of Mercy and not resistant rebel against it. the way Israel is going to do in the next couple of chapters.

But the Lord give us not. To embrace. The. Structure. For itself, but trust in him. And know him. Depend on him. Let's pray. Our Father in Heaven.

We do pray that you would arise and Scatter all of your enemies.

Those who hate you would flee from before you?

Let me think of The churches in our day and Even the condition of the nation. And the condition of our own family Lord. Much, we need you to lead. How much we need to know your presence and to live by your power? The times in between these worship times.

And so, we thank you. We thank you for. Your mercy to Israel. Giving them. The structure that you did and even the furniture, the Furnishings of the Tabernacle, That you And we pray that you'd help us. Be thankful and see. How much greater is what you have given us?

Knowing your son. Our Lord Jesus. That's sitting on the throne of glory. And Inhabiting. The true holy of holies. Help us Lord by your spirit. To know that you are the one who leads us, even The logistical details, the nitty-gritty, Of our everyday life and our every week life Very particularly for this day as we go to the things that we are doing.

That we would not just forget. What we have heard of you and thought about you and known of you from your word. Bet that your spirit now would make us live with your word. Frontlets between our eyes and is attached to our hands. So help us, we ask in Jesus name.

Amen.