Bible Class June 8, 2023. The Passover and the Cloud Numbers 9

Beloved Sisters and Brethren

The beginning of this chapter is the same as the first chapter and we have studied those events presented to us. The setting is thus still at Sinai and it was from here that Israel recommenced their journey away from Egypt and to The Promised Land. In fact, they had been at Sinai two years (Deut. 2v3); in this time the Tabernacle, was constructed and set up as well as the allocation of duties relating to it. The first matter in which they were directed before they set off in their journey to The Promised Land was The Passover-their means of escape from Pharaoh who wanted to keep them as his slaves. Thus this represented a release from bondage and slavery. Even though the king had experienced the plague miracles showing God's power directed against him and his people he still pursued them with his armies. They were all destroyed in the Red Sea and Israel saw their dead bodies on the seashore.

The journey to the Promised Land was to take eleven days. Deuteronomy 1:2 (There are eleven days' journey from Horeb by the way of mount Seir unto Kadeshbarnea.)

But before they commence their journey to the Promised Land they must keep the Passover. Numbers. 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 details of the Passover are shown in Exodus 12 and drew attention to the fact that it was of God's grace and kindness that Israel were allowed to leave this land of bondage. The details of the Passover feast are of great significance and will be so until the end of the Millennium. Its type must be kept by all baptised into Christ and is to be kept every first day of the week in Breaking Bread and drinking of the cup of wine. The Lamb of the Passover symbolizes

Christ and the wine His life outpoured. In particular not a bone of the lamb or goat was to be broken as is emphasised in v12 of our chapter; see also Psalms 34v20 and then the circumstances of Jesus death upon the cross where it was normal for the Roman soldiers to break the leg bones of those crucified-Mark 15 v42-45 and John 19:32,33 Then came the soldiers, and brake the legs of the first, and of the other which was crucified with him. But when they came to Jesus, and saw that he was dead already, they brake not his legs:

Also regarding the Passover we have John Baptist witness -

John 1:26 -28: John answered them, saying, I baptize with water: but there standeth one among you, whom ye know not; He it is, who coming after me is preferred before me, whose shoe's latchet I am not worthy to unloose. These things were done in Bethabara beyond Jordan, where John was baptizing.

Behold, the Lamb of God

John 1:29,30 The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world. This is he of whom I said, After me cometh a man which is preferred before me: for he was before me. John Baptist a man fully prepared for the Kingdom

This memorial Passover feast was to be kept for all time by the Jews unless they are baptised into Christ and devout Jews keep the Passover wherever they are in the world.

The Passover set the calendar for God's people; it is the beginning of months Ex12v2 and is thus the first of the feasts to be kept by the Jews each year

Questions arose Ex 12 concerning who should keep the Passover and where, and God answered through Moses, but one point was that every male doing so must be circumcised; this identifies a Jew.

Regarding circumcision for those in Christ:

Colossians 2:9 -14 For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power: In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ: Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead. And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses; Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross;

Philippians 3:3 For we are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh.

Numbers 9v6 here certain defiled by contact with a dead body are brought to our attention and they sought Moses guidance who in turn enquired of God :-they were to keep the Passover notwithstanding their uncleanness. Here also it is made clear that the feast was to be kept wherever they were in the world and devout Jews do.

-Numbers 9:11 -12 The fourteenth day of the second month at even they shall keep it, and eat it with unleavened bread and bitter herbs. 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.

V13/14 when in a journey they were not required to keep the Passover

The Cloud

Numbers 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. Num 9:16 So it was alway.

What a wonderful thing, evidence of the presence of the Almighty- so helpful in making them aware of God's Law and undoubted guidance in their Journey as the verses following show.

In chapter 12 when Aaron and Miriam spoke against Moses the Lord came down in the pillar of cloud and stood at the door of the Tabernacle (whilst this event went against those two Yahweh used it to show what high esteem Moses was held in His eyes Num 12:6 And he said, Hear now my words: If there be a prophet among you, I the LORD will make myself known unto him in a vision, and will speak unto him in a dream.

Numbers 12:7 My servant Moses is not so, who is faithful in all mine house.

Num 12:8 With him will I speak mouth to mouth, even apparently, and not in dark speeches; and the similitude of the LORD shall he behold: wherefore then were ye not afraid to speak against my servant Moses?

Later, Numbers14 when the people arrived at the Promised Land and the spies returned they chose to listen to those who had given an ill report emphasizing the difficulties they rebelled and were about to stone Joshua Caleb and Moses, God threatened to destroy the whole of the nation and raise up a people through Moses who would be "mightier than they," but Moses rehearsed all that God had done

for them and said that the Egyptians would hear it and say to the inhabitants of the Land and

Num 14:14 And they will tell it to the inhabitants of this land: for they have heard that thou LORD art among this people, that thou LORD art seen face to face, and that thy cloud standeth over them, and that thou goest before them, by day time in a pillar of a cloud, and in a pillar of fire by night.

Num 14:15,16 Now if thou shalt kill all this people as one man, then the nations which have heard the fame of thee will speak, saying, Because the LORD was not able to bring this people into the land which he sware unto them, therefore he hath slain them in the wilderness. And The Lord listened to Moses and pardoned the people at that time but all the dissenters would die in the wilderness.

Then we come to the time when Moses must die Deuteronomy 31v15 And the LORD appeared in the tabernacle in a pillar of a cloud: and the pillar of the cloud stood over the door of the tabernacle.

The pillar of cloud is also mentioned in Nehemiah in prayer when the people returned from captivity to aid in rebuilding the Temple Nehemiah 9:19 Yet thou in thy manifold mercies forsook them not in the wilderness: the pillar of the cloud departed not from them by day, to lead them in the way; neither the pillar of fire by night, to shew them light, and the way wherein they should go.

From this we see how real it was to those who had faith and with the situation of Israel in the wilderness receiving God's merciful kindness when the deserved to be cut off and is used here to plead for God to comfort them as they confess and repent and seek His presence in their returning from captivity for not having kept themselves apart from the Babylonians in marriage.

Brother Ken