

Behaalotekha Bamidbar-Numbers(8.0-12.16)

Inside the God's Tabernacle Tent, the Ten Commandments are inside a gold Ark and set behind a curtain. Outside the curtain is a seven branched gold lamp, a bread table and an incense altar. Everything has been made holy. God said to Moses, "Tell your brother Aaron, the High Priest, to light the menorah." And Aaron did as God told Moses and kindled the menorah and then sprinkled holy water on the Levites to purify them so that they could be God's helpers in the Sanctuary.

On the day the Tabernacle was set up, a cloud covered it, but at night, it looked like fire. Only when the cloud moved did the Israelites travel. Only when it settled, did they make camp. Thus they moved and stopped at God's Word.

God said to Moses, "Make two silver trumpets for the priests so they can blow messages. Blow both trumpets to call everyone to My Tent. Blow one trumpet to call just the leaders. Blow to show directions. Blow during war so that I, God, will save you. Blow the trumpet for Me in victory, during My festivals and on the first day each month."

Then the Israelite tribes, with their banners, began their journey out of the desert. The Ark of God's Covenant went ahead. Every time the Ark moved, Moses shouted, "Arise God and scatter Your enemies. Let those who hate You flee." Every time the Ark was set down, Moses would "Settle in peace O' God, among the myriad thousands of Israel."

When some Israelites started to complain, God heard their evil talk and a fire killed them. Later, the Israelites cried, "We miss the meat and fruits and vegetables we ate in Egypt." Moses turned to God, "Why have You made me their leader? It is too much of a burden." God said, "Moses, gather 70 of the elders to help you. And tell those complaining that they will get their meat and they will eat it until they become sick, all because they rejected Me by crying that life was better in Egypt." Afterwards, quail came and those who ate greedily died.

Moses sister Miriam and brother Aaron began speaking against him because of the Cushite girl he had married. Then they said. "Does God only speak to Moses? Doesn't God speak to us too.?" God heard it. Moses, however, was very humble, more than anyone else on earth.

God spoke to them from a cloud in front of the Tent of Appointed Meeting, "Moses is My prophet. Why were you not afraid to speak against him?" With that, the cloud disappeared and Miriam had a skin disease. Aaron cried, "Oh God, please forgive our sins." And Moses cried, "O God, please heal her." God answered, "Miriam must live outside the camp as a leper for 7 days before she can return home." And the people waited for Miriam to return healthy before they journeyed again.

Questions: 1) How do you feel about complainers? Are you a complainer? 2) What is humility and how does Moses show it? 3) How does God heal? Illustration ideas: The cloud and fire of God leading the Israelites...the Ark being moved or set down...The Israelites journeying....The silver trumpets...the complainers, Moses and his 'dark-skinned' wife..Miriam and Aaron questioning Moses..Miriam getting leprosy and put out of the camp.