

Numbers 9:1 ¶ And the LORD spake unto Moses in the wilderness of Sinai, in the first month of the second year after they were come out of the land of Egypt, saying,

This chapter opens with a time marker; we are still in the first month of the second year as noted in the first verse of the book. The 15th of the month will mark a full year since they left Egypt. The LORD speaks to Moses to tell him that the time to observe Passover is approaching. The original command is recorded in Exodus 12.

Exodus 12:24–27 “And ye shall observe this thing for an ordinance to thee and to thy sons for ever. And it shall come to pass, when ye be come to the land which the LORD will give you, according as he hath promised, that ye shall keep this service. And it shall come to pass, when your children shall say unto you, What mean ye by this service? That ye shall say, It is the sacrifice of the LORD’S passover, who passed over the houses of the children of Israel in Egypt, when he smote the Egyptians, and delivered our houses.”

Note that it states that the people are to observe it forever, but it then seems to indicate that this only applied once they entered the promised land. This instruction clears up any possible misunderstanding.

Numbers 9:2 Let the children of Israel also keep the passover at his appointed season.

Numbers 9:3 In the fourteenth day of this month, at even, ye shall keep it in his appointed season: according to all the rites of it, and according to all the ceremonies thereof, shall ye keep it.

Numbers 9:4 And Moses spake unto the children of Israel, that they should 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 LORD instructs Moses once again that the people of Israel are to observe the Passover at the same time each year—on the 14th day of the first month as designated in reference to when they were delivered from bondage in Egypt. Moses, in turn, spoke to the people and instructed them accordingly. So, a year after leaving Egypt, the people of Israel kept the Passover on the 14th day of the month in the wilderness of Sinai in obedience to the LORD’s command.

Numbers 9:6 And there were certain men, who were defiled by the dead body of a man, that they could not keep the passover on that day: and they came before Moses and before Aaron on that day:

Numbers 9:7 And those men said unto him, We *are* defiled by the dead body of a man: wherefore are we kept back, that we may not offer an offering of the LORD in his appointed season among the children of Israel?

Numbers 9:8 And Moses said unto them, Stand still, and I will hear what the LORD will command concerning you.

There were some men in the camp who came to Moses on the day of Passover to

explain that they could not keep the feast because they were unclean from association with a dead body (probably from the death of a relative). They didn't feel that it was right for them to be excluded from observing the feast and making their offering before the LORD with the rest of the people during Passover. Moses immediately told them to wait and he would go and find out what the LORD's response would be to their problem.

Numbers 9:9 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Numbers 9:10 Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, If any man of you or of your posterity shall be unclean by reason of a dead body, or *be* in a journey afar off, yet he shall keep the passover unto the LORD.

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

Numbers 9:12 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.

The LORD gave Moses the answer—the implication is immediately. The LORD told Moses to tell the people that one who was unclean from a dead body or away on a far journey at the designated time for Passover should observe it on the 14th day of the second month. The instructions remained the same:

- They were to eat it with unleavened bread and bitter herbs.
- None of it was to be left over for the morning.
- None of the lamb's bones were to be broken.
- Every ordinance of the regular Passover was to be followed.

Unleavened bread speaks of sin and bitter herbs of suffering. This all points toward the fact that Jesus, the Lamb of God, bore our sin and suffered on the cross in payment for our sin. Also, it was foretold that not one of His bones was to be broken, so the Passover lamb was to picture that truth as well.

*John 1:29 "The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, **Behold the Lamb of God**, which taketh away the sin of the world."*

*1 Corinthians 5:7 "Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even **Christ our passover** is sacrificed for us:"*

*John 19:32–36 "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: But one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came there out blood and water. And he that saw it bare record, and his record is true: and he knoweth that he saith true, that ye might believe. For these things were done, that the scripture should be fulfilled, **A bone of him shall not be broken.**"*

Numbers 9:13 But the man that *is* clean, and is not in a journey, and forbearth to keep the passover, even the same soul shall be cut off from among his people: because he brought not the offering of the LORD in his appointed season, that man shall bear his sin.

The LORD also had Moses warn the people against disregarding the feast. The man that is clean and not on a journey is expected to observe the feast. If he does not, he is to be cast out of the camp. That is the consequence one is to suffer for his disobedience.

Numbers 9:14 And if a stranger shall sojourn among you, and will keep the passover unto the LORD; according to the ordinance of the passover, and according to the manner thereof, so shall he do: ye shall have one ordinance, both for the stranger, and for him that was born in the land.

If there is a stranger dwelling among you that wants to keep the Passover before the LORD, he is to be allowed to do so in accordance with the same instructions followed by those who were Israeli by birth. We also know from the record in Exodus that males had to be circumcised to be able to keep the Passover.

Exodus 12:48 "And when a stranger shall sojourn with thee, and will keep the passover to the LORD, let all his males be circumcised, and then let him come near and keep it; and he shall be as one that is born in the land: for no uncircumcised person shall eat thereof."

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.

Numbers 9:16 So it was alway: the cloud covered it *by day*, and the appearance of fire by night.

Numbers 9:17 And when the cloud was taken up from the tabernacle, then after that the children of Israel journeyed: and in the place where the cloud abode, there the children of Israel pitched their tents.

Numbers 9:18 At the commandment of the LORD the children of Israel journeyed, and at the commandment of the LORD they pitched: as long as the cloud abode upon the tabernacle they rested in their tents.

Numbers 9:19 And when the cloud tarried long upon the tabernacle many days, then the children of Israel kept the charge of the LORD, and journeyed not.

Numbers 9:20 And so it was, when the cloud was a few days upon the tabernacle; according to the commandment of the LORD they abode in their tents, and according to the commandment of the LORD they journeyed.

Numbers 9:21 And so it was, when the cloud abode from even unto the morning, and *that* the cloud was taken up in the morning, then they journeyed: whether *it was* by day or by night that the cloud was taken up, they journeyed.

Numbers 9:22 Or *whether it were* two days, or a month, or a year, that the cloud tarried upon the tabernacle, remaining thereon, the children of Israel abode in their tents, and journeyed not: but when it was taken up, they journeyed.

Numbers 9:23 At the commandment of the LORD they rested in the tents, and at the commandment of the LORD they journeyed: they kept the charge of the LORD, at the commandment of the LORD by the hand of Moses.

This whole section is basically stating that the people were to be led by the LORD through the movement of the cloud over the tabernacle that marked His presence

in the camp. When it was stationary, they established camp. When it moved, they packed up and followed where it led. We are reminded that it appeared as a cloud by day and as a cloud of fire by night. Point is made that they were to pay attention to the cloud daily.

I liked this quote from the NIV Commentary concerning the cloud: "This symbolizes God's nearness and remoteness. He is present as a cloud but hovers above; he is near as a fire, but one cannot draw very close."