

Numbers 9:19

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

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.

Analysis

When the cloud tarried long upon the tabernacle many days (וַבְּהֶאָרִיךְ הָעֶנָן עַל־) *uv'ha'arich he'anan al-hamishkan yamim rabbim*)— Arich (to lengthen, prolong) tests patience differently than constant movement. Extended waiting (*yamim rabbim*, many days) requires endurance, faith that God hasn't forgotten. The temptation to move ahead of God's timing is universal (Abraham and Hagar, Genesis 16).

Then the children of Israel kept the charge of the LORD, and journeyed not (וְשָׁמְרוּ בְנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת־מִשְׁמֶרֶת יְהוָה וְלֹא יָסְעוּ) *veshameru veney-yisra'el et-mishmeret YHWH velo yisa'u*)—Shamar (to keep, guard, observe) plus *mishmeret* (charge, duty, watch) emphasizes vigilant obedience. *Lo yisa'u* (and not they journeyed)—active obedience in staying put. Waiting is obedience.

Historical Context

Some encampments lasted months or even years. Kadesh-Barnea, for instance, became an extended dwelling after the rebellion of Numbers 13-14. Learning to wait on God's timing—neither running ahead nor lagging behind—was essential training for a people entering Canaan, where battles required precise divine timing (e.g., Joshua 6).

Related Passages

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Study Questions

1. Why is waiting on God's timing often harder than active service, and how does this test faith differently?
2. What does Israel's patient waiting despite prolonged delay teach about trusting God's purposes even when His reasons remain hidden?

Interlinear Text

וּבְהָאֵר יוֹרֵךְ	וּבְהָאֵר יוֹרֵךְ	וּבְהָאֵר יוֹרֵךְ	וּבְהָאֵר יוֹרֵךְ	וּבְהָאֵר יוֹרֵךְ	וּבְהָאֵר יוֹרֵךְ	וּבְהָאֵר יוֹרֵךְ
tarried long	And when the cloud	upon the tabernacle	days	many		
H748	H6051	H5921	H4908	H3117	H7227	
וּשְׁמֵר וְ	וּשְׁמֵר וְ	וּשְׁמֵר וְ	וּשְׁמֵר וְ	וּשְׁמֵר וְ	וּשְׁמֵר וְ	וּשְׁמֵר וְ
kept	then the children	of Israel	the charge	of the LORD		
H8104	H1121	H3478	H853	H4931	H3068	H3808
וּשְׁמֵר וְ	וּשְׁמֵר וְ	וּשְׁמֵר וְ	וּשְׁמֵר וְ	וּשְׁמֵר וְ	וּשְׁמֵר וְ	וּשְׁמֵר וְ
and journeyed						
H5265						

Additional Cross-References

Zechariah 3:7 (References Lord): Thus saith the LORD of hosts; If thou wilt walk in my ways, and if thou wilt keep my charge, then thou shalt also judge my house, and shalt also keep my courts, and I will give thee places to walk among these that stand by.