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trust in God, Levites' call, unique treatment, biblical commandments, Tabernacle service, obedience importance, leadership responsibility, divine provision, wilderness reliance, God's perspective, covenantal relationship, Levites' rotation, divine wrath prevention, Israel's camps, military metaphor

SPEAKERS

Baruch Korman, Intro Voice

Intro Voice 00:03

Shalom and welcome to via hafte yesrael, a Hebrew phrase, which means you shall love Israel. We hope you'll stay with us for the next 30 minutes, as our teacher, Dr Baruch, shares his expository teaching from the Bible. Dr Baruch is the senior lecturer at the Zera Avraham Institute based in Israel. Although all courses are taught in Hebrew at the institute, Dr Baruch is pleased to share this weekly address in English. To find out more about our work in Israel, please visit us on the web@loveisrael.org That's one word, loveisrael.org Now here's Baruch with today's lesson.

Baruch Korman 00:42

Last week, we began a new book, the book of Numbers known in Hebrew as Bahamut bar, which means in the desert or in the wilderness. And the primary thing that this book teaches from its name, because wilderness or desert is not a place of sustenance. We find that it's only through relying upon God, trusting in God, believing in God, that one finds God's provision. And God brought the people into the wilderness to teach them to trust in Him, to depend upon him. So let me just ask you a question before we get started today, and that is this, are you demonstrating trust in God? Are you walking in faith? Do you understand your absolute reliance upon him for all things that he is the author of life, meaning he defines what life is. Not you, not me, not humanity, not this world, but God does. So are you striving to live in dependence upon Him, knowing that it's only through his revelation, meaning his word the scriptures, that you find what life is supposed to be. He is the author of life, but also he is the sustainer of life. And only through him Can we live the life that he wants us and has called us, and that his son has died and able that we can carry out this call, a call from him upon our life. We need to understand that all of what we have, all of our resources, time and talent and financial resources, they need to be brought under submissiveness to him and to his purposes. And that's what God is teaching the children of Israel in this book, and it's still a message for believers today. Take out your Bible and look with me to the book of Numbers, chapter one, and we're going to pick up with the last few verses of chapter one. We're ready now for verse 47 and we're going to see without any doubt that there is an emphasis upon the Levites. And the Levites were treated uniquely. They had a special call upon their life, and they were called to obey this, this proclamation from God through Moses, realizing that they were called to live differently from the rest of people. And we need to realize that we too, have a call

upon our life, and that call is to make us different. We're called to behave and to think differently. And one of the aspects that we learn about the Levites is that everything that amounted to life, all those elements of life, were impacted by this call that they had, and I believe that is a good principle for us to realize every aspect of our life should be impacted by our faith and our covenantal relationship with God. Look at verse 47 Word says and the Levites from the tribe of their forefathers are not to be counted. Now, this word can also relate to the census, so God did not want the Levites to be counted to be part of the general census. Again, look at this verse, and the Levites, the tribe of their forefathers, are not to be counted in the census in their midst, meaning this that they are treated uniquely. They were not part of the census. Where all the other tribes were, and what made them unique, and you're going to hear this many times, what made them unique, what caused them to behave differently and be treated differently, was the call that God had placed upon them. Look now to verse 48 and the Lord spoke to Moses saying. Now this is a frequent verse that we find in the Torah that the Lord spoke to Moses saying, and this is a phrase that introduces both revelation and oftentimes, commandments. What are commandments? They are God's expectations for his people. So if you want to know what God expects, study the commandments. What commandments, all biblical commandments, we find the 613 commandments of the Torah, but throughout the rest of the Old Testament, there are numerous commandments. And likewise, when we get into the British the New Covenant, we also find that there are numerous commandments, and we are called to order our life. Let me say it differently. We are called to live in submissiveness and obedience to these commandments if we want to have a well pleasing life to God, if we want to experience Him, His provision, his help, his assistance. So look again at this next verse, verse 48 and the Lord spoke to Moses saying, now verse 49 The first word is it is a word of emphasis. Sometimes it may be translated only, but what we see here is a word of emphasis to introduce what God is saying is important. So he says. But the tribe of Levi. Now in Hebrew Levy, the tribe of Levi, you do not count nor their heads. You do not lift up in the midst of the children of Israel. Now there's two words here of importance. The first one has to do with counting. It is a word of action. And he's saying here, do not count them, meaning they are not part of the normal census. They are excluded from the census. And then it says as well in this verse, Viet rosham, that is, and their head, lotisah Do not lift up. Now we learn a principle. We find that when the children of Israel were were taken in the census, meaning they were acknowledged in the census. How were they acknowledged? By giving think that's a very interesting biblical truth. When the children of Israel gave a offering, this enabled them to be counted among the people, no offering. They were not acknowledged by God. They were not recognized by God. They were not counted. And then we see the second part, and that is, their heads were lifted up. Now this is a word of acknowledgement. It's also many scholars see this as a word of encouragement that God is recognizing, he's acknowledging, and because God acknowledges, this should give us encouragement. It's literally to lift up the head. We know that in other places, God himself is called the lifter of the head. What does that mean? He encourages, and this encouragement should be taken in a very complete manner. He He encourages, he provides, he gives, in order that we can accomplish what He commands us to do. So we see a relationship between God's command us understanding what he expects from us, and God supplying what we need, and God acknowledging us as His people, where he will supply in order that we can carry out his purposes. Look now to verse 50 in you

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the counting of the Levites according to the the Tabernacle of Testimony. Now what we see here is this counting, this acknowledgement of the Levites is unique. They do not have. To give something in order to be part of the census, but they're counting, and their inclusion within the children of Israel. And this word for counting is also the same Hebrew word for making a deposit, like depositing into a bank account, so then being deposited in that census has a purpose. And what is that purpose? Although they are not counted in that census according to the number, they are included within the tribes of Israel, and it's based upon their calling. And what is that concerning the Tabernacle of Testimony? Now, why is it called the Tabernacle of Testimony? Well, normally, when we speak of that word testimony, you know what we're speaking about, the Ark of the Covenant. What was inside the ark, the commandments of God. And we see that God is testifying to humanity through the obedience of his people. This is a very in very significant and important truth. God testifies He manifests Himself by means of his people's faithfulness, obedience, them executing what God has commanded them to do. Look at Verse 50, and you the counting of the Levites concerning the Tabernacle of Testimony and concerning all of its vessels, and concerning all which is to it, meaning to the tabernacle, they are to lift up the tabernacle, meaning they carry it and they carry all of its vessels. So this is their responsibility. We're going to find out in a moment, very soon, that they have to carry all the elements of the tabernacle, all of its vessels, its furnitures, furniture, its furnishing. Now one translation renders it, and not only do they carry it, bear it, but also they are two, as we'll see in a moment, set it up and take it down. They're the ones that do the work of the tabernacle, and they are the only ones based upon the instructions of God. And we'll see this more clearly in a moment. Look, if you would, to to verse, verse 50 at the end. And they serve it, meaning they serve the tabernacle. And around the tabernacle they dwell. So we see God is talking. And there's a very important word here, the word for camping. Now there's the camp of the children of Israel, and the word camping has to do with dwelling. So they dwell around they are very close in proximity to the tabernacle itself. They dwell around it. They put a buffer between the people and the tabernacle based upon their call, their service, that they do look now to verse 51 it says, Who then soah, that is. And when the tabernacle travels. Now we know something the tabernacle, what with the people? So as the people journeyed, and remember something, what? What dictated the journey, the traveling of the children of Israel in that wilderness for those 40 years? Well, a cloud led them by by day and a pillar of fire by night, God gave the orders. God controlled their journeys, where they went, when they went. Everything was dependent upon God, again, a very good principle for us, that we are called to be absolutely in submissiveness to the leadership of the Lord, meaning the leadership of the Holy Spirit in our life. We need to be sensitive to his instructions. We need to be listening to the Holy Spirit in every decision and everything that we do. So Look again at verse 51 and when the tabernacle travels they would take it down, meaning they would disassemble it. They would would take it down. Who would the Levites and in the camps, and this is literally what it says, and in the camps of the tabernacle. Michael, they would rise it up. So in the camps the tabernacle, they would rise up, they would assemble it so only only the Levites were the ones taking down and putting up the tabernacle. No one else could do that. And we're going to see that in a very clear way once more, the Levites would take it down, and the Levites would set it up. But, and notice how verse 51 ends, but the foreigner? What's the foreigner here? It's not a Gentile. It is anyone not from the tribe of Levites, very important that we see that. And this word for foreigner or stranger simply means one that God does not acknowledge. And there's two primary reasons why God doesn't acknowledge the czar the foreigner. Number one, they don't have a call upon their life. Number two, they have no covenantal relationship with God. So realize these two things are inherently related,

meaning this, when you enter into a covenantal relationship with God, there's also coming with that covenantal relationship, a call upon your life. But here we find that in regard to the work of the tabernacle, the rest of the children of Israel were not called to do anything with the tabernacle. They were not called to dwell around it. Now they had their camps, the rest of the children of Israel, those 11 tribes, but they were not in the closest proximity to the Tabernacle. The Levite Levites were notice what it says, And the foreigner, meaning one not from the tribe of Levites that came near, whether they dwelt close to the tabernacle or they came near to its vessels to help set it up or to take it down, any work, if they would come near to do it, one who was not a Levites, what would happen? They would be put to death. And when we look at this, we find that they just don't die, but they are put to death, they are cause to die. And what is the only conclusion? It is God Himself that is bringing death upon them for disobedience. Here again, we see a very important principle when we disobey God, there can be very serious and very deadly implications to that disobedience, that lack of faithfulness, that lack of listening to God and implementing what he instructs. The instructions or god of God are necessary for us. We should treasure them. We should be wanting to be hearing from him. And what God commands us to do. Keep reading. Look at the next verse, verse 52

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and the children of Israel, they will camp a man concerning his camp, a man concerning his flag. That's literally what it says, according to their armies. Now we see something that that often times people don't understand or they don't apply the significance. We see that the Lord is Adonai, which means the Lord of hosts. And that term, host is a military term. The best way to translate it is what I did, and that is armies. So a host, a heavenly host, is the heavenly armies. And what we find here is that each tribe notice what this verse says, verse 52 the children of Israel, they shall dwell, a man concerning his camp, a man concerning his flag, to or according to their armies, meaning this, every man was was part of the army of his tribe, according to his flag. When they would go out to battle, they would fight under the banner that is, under their flag of the tribe. They kept together there made that distinction, and that's a very important principle. We're called to be distinct. Although the children of Israel were one people, there was a distinctiveness to them according to tribes. Why? Well, how many tribes were. Are there. Obviously we all know 12 tribes. 12 is a kingdom number. Now, why do I say that? Well, if you look for example, at the New Jerusalem, there were 12 gates, 12 foundations. The walls of the New Jerusalem were 144 cubics, 12 times 12. There were 1224, elders, two times 12. And the city itself was 12,000 stadiums by 12,000 stadiums, the width and the length and its height were also 12,000 stadiums. So the number 12 dominates, and therefore we find the number 12 relating to the people of God. So here we read that the people of God were, were deposited, they were, were functioning within their camps according to their armies. So there's no way that you can get from this that the God of Israel is a God of pacifism. He is not as the scripture says in the Book of Exodus, the God of Israel is ish milk, a man of war. He wars against that which is contrary to His will, in in defiance towards his commandments, God goes to war against such such disobedience, such rebelliousness. This is what we're seeing in this passage. Look now to verse 53 and the Levites, they will camp around the Tabernacle of Testimony. Now this is the second time that we see the tabernacle is modified by the term testimony. And again, that testimony relates to the Ark of the Covenant, which which were inside were the commandments of God. So the testimony that that we're called to, to demonstrate, to bear witness to, has to do with the commandments of God. In other words, it's simple that the people of God, both the Old Covenant people and the new covenant people, are supposed to live in a way that they have a testimony that

relates to the commandments of God. We're called to demonstrate what God has commanded us to do, acknowledging that His commandments are good, and only when we fulfill them are we doing the expectations that God has for His people, and when we do the expectations that God has for His people, we can expect that God will respond to his people as he promised, as his word causes us to expect. So. Look again at verse 53 and the Levites, they will camp around the Tabernacle of Testimony. And in doing so, it says, Velo Ye. Katseph, there will not be wrath. Now this word for wrath is a unique one. Normally we have the word wrath zaam in Hebrew. This is a word, katseph, why? Well, katseph is where we get the term concept, which is whipping cream. You go and you get ice cream sometimes, and they, they have that, that container that they push down, and the whipped cream comes up. And what we find here is an animal, when it gets angry, very angry, it will sometime froth at the mouth, and this froth is white, and it's that same term. It speaks about anger or wrath. What God is saying is this, and the Levites, they will camp around the Tabernacle of Testimony, as God has commanded, and in doing so, there will not be wrath concerning the testimony of the children of Israel, meaning they are going to be a catalyst. The Levites, being in their position, doing what they're called to do, they are going to be a source, a catalyst for God not being angry with his people. They are going to be a catalyst to bring about obedience their example. And it says here and the Levites will keep their mish merit, their rotation. This is service, what God has appointed them to do, the Levites will keep their rotation of the Tabernacle of Testimony. Now I believe this is a really important verse, because they are going to keep their testimony, and their testimony is going to produce. Produce faithfulness among the rest of the tribes. That's what they're called to do. And it's only when they are where they are called to be, doing what they're called to do, then, and only then are we going to see the implication of their obedience, their service, Blessing Israel and keeping the anger of God away from the children of Israel. Let's look at our last verse, verse 54 where it says, And the children of Israel, they will do now, literally, it speaks about this will do. When we look at it, there's that vav in front of it which converts it to the past tense. And the past tense is use for one specific purpose, to show entirety. Therefore, what the Word of God is saying is this, that the children of Israel, they will do, they will do according to all which the Lord God commanded. Moses, thus they will do so. What we find is this speaks about obedience among the children of Israel, and what is the catalyst for this obedience seen in God's people, the Levites, those who have that unique call upon their life when the leaders are obedient, that that obedience of the leaders is going to work its way through the rest of the people. And that's why we see something and there's numerous examples of this in the New Covenant,

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we find that when the leadership of the believing community, that congregation, the redeemed, when the leaders are leading properly, they are obeying what they're called to do, they have that testimony. They are obeying what God has called leaders to do this is going to have a good outcome among the rest of the people. But realize in this case, the converse of this statement is true when leaders are disobeying, when they are doing what they want to do, how they want to do it, ignoring the instructions of God, it is going to have an adverse outcome upon the rest of the people. So the leadership is very important among God's people, and that's why leaders need to take their call very seriously and be where they're called to be and to be doing what they're called to do. When that happens, those leaders are going to mediate blessing for the people they're going to produce through their leadership and obedience among the rest of the people of God. This is what leaders are called to do this is how we're called to function, and if we aspire to be a leader, understand this obligation God expects. God

demands much more for from those who are His leaders than he does from the rest. When the leaders are faithful, we are going to see their faithfulness manifesting itself through the faithfulness of the people of God. And this is what we're called to do. Let's conclude with how we began remember the name of this book we're studying, Bahamut bar, the book of Numbers in Hebrew, that term bhamid bar means in the wilderness. And it was in the wilderness that God wanted to teach the people to rely upon Him, to depend upon Him, to trust Him. And when we do so, the way that this is manifested is by listening to God and implementing what we hear, or we could say instead of listening reading scripture and implementing what we read. All of this gives us access to the presence of God, and not just the presence of God, but the power of God. And not just the power and the presence of God, but God's provision. And when we have His power, His presence and His provision, what can we expect God to change our perspective? So we see things from his perspective. We see things from his vantage point. And let me just simply say we are so dependent upon God's perspective we cannot exercise discernment. We cannot understand the will of God. We will not know the will of God for our life as individuals unless we see things from God's perspective. We are dependent upon that, and this scripture is revealing to us how we can have access to. All of these blessings, the presence, the power, the provision and the perspective of God. We are in need of those four things if we are going to follow God, do His will and be found as obedient servants of God. And this is what we're called to be well close with that until next time, may God bless you. Shalom from Israel, amen.

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