



Numbers 18-21

1. The ordained priests/pastors shall: 1) be responsible for any unlawful use of God's house or violations committed in relation to their office(18:1; e.g. fencing the pulpit and table; See Mal 1:6-2:9), 2) (therefore) guard their office and what takes place in God's house (18:5, 7), 3) be fully sustained (financially) from the holy contributions of God's people (18:8-20 – most esp. 19-20; See 1Co 9:13-14 w/Mat 10:10), 4) be given a double portion (i.e. receive more compensation than the Levites/ruling elders)(18:25-28; See 1Ti 5:17 – “double honor” = double portion).

2. The Levites' (or ruling elders') primary ministry is to the ordained priests/pastors through : 1) helping them (18:2), 2) guarding them (18:3-4), 3) being a gift to them rather than a burden (18:6).

3. Levites (or ruling elders) shall also be: 1) fully sustained (financially) from the holy contributions of God's people if they are full-time. If they are not then they should be viewed as “lay-elders” and not compensated (18:21-22,24), 2) responsible for any unlawful use of God's house (18:23).

4. God's people who work/live in environments w/greater levels of spiritual contamination must commit themselves to greater spiritual measures in order to be/remain pure (Num 19:1-22 = Due to all the recent deaths, [See Num 11, 14 and 16 = Over 15k people] the camp had suffered great spiritual contamination. Red heifers were rare and therefore costly [9 in 850 years]; e.g. Working in the financial/investment industry or being wealthy – Mat 19:23-24).

“Nine red heifers were offered from the time that they were commanded to fulfill this mitzvah [command] until the time when the Temple was destroyed a second time. The first was brought by Moses, our teacher. The second was brought by Ezra. Seven others were offered until the destruction of the Second Temple.”– Rabbi Moshe ben Maimon (famous 13th century Jewish historian, Maimonides)

5. Tragedy coupled w/an unpleasant working environment or family problems has been known to create just of enough distraction and personal pressure, to ignite uncharacteristic outbursts of angry rebellion in the best of God's people (20:1 w/2-12).

6. Tragedy can beget further tragedy, if we are not careful to listen and respect the LORD (i.e. treat Him as holy) during those times (20:6-9 w/10-12).

7. God's compassion never negates His holiness (20:1 w/12-13).

8. Though a fine line, there is a distinction between grumbling and insurrection, between claims of incompetency and claims of nefarious activity, between questioning and usurping (20:2-6, 21:4-9 versus 14:4, 10 and 16:1-3, 30).

9. Being a good witness to world around us requires respecting their property and refusing to be a burden to them (14-17, 19; 1Th 4:11-12).

10. Refusing to show pity/mercy to outsiders with legitimate needs is a request for God's judgments against us (18, 20-21; Amo 1:11).

11. God punishes those who are guilty by association (20:10-12 w/22-29).

12. Jesus was lifted up like the bronze serpent so that we could look on Him and be healed from /forgiven for our rebellion (21:4-9; Joh 3:14-15).

13. Those who get in the way of where God is intending to lead His people will be devoted to His destruction (21:1-3, 10-35; Act 5:30-39).

14. God decrees detours and expects us to be patient (21:4-5 w/20:17-21).

15. Public shame and pain can be a required piece in confession and repentance, especially when former confession and repentance failed to deliver (Num 21:6-9 w/20:39-45).