



A Worship Study Guide for Individuals, Groups and Families: For the week of March 11, 2018

Note to Discussion Leaders: Have members read the Bible passage in the group meeting. This is a “worship discussion” guide, and our reflections and applications are grounded in Scripture. Read through this guide before meeting with the group. You do not need to work through the whole guide. Decide which points would be most helpful for the time of meeting together, and use them as a starting point for your time together.

Numbers 18:1-14, 21-32 *“We Do Not Belong To Ourselves”*

- **Today we will remember that Israel feared and trembled before God in worship. What does God think of you? How do you know this?**
- **Today we will see that we are not simply God’s individuals, but He sovereignly places us in relationships, communities and the church. Think about one of those places where God has placed you. What are some of the responsibilities and privileges that come with participating in that community?**
- **We just saw in Numbers 17:12-13 that the people were terrified to approach the Lord, doubting that there was any way to stand before God. So, God answers in Numbers 18 that He absolutely has made a way to approach Him...**

¹So the LORD said to Aaron, “You and your sons and your father’s house with you shall bear iniquity connected with the sanctuary, and you and your sons with you shall bear iniquity connected with your priesthood. ²And with you bring your brothers also, the tribe of Levi, the tribe of your father, that they may join you and minister to you while you and your sons with you are before the tent of the testimony. ³They shall keep guard over you and over the whole tent, but shall not come near to the vessels of the sanctuary or to the altar lest they, and you, die. ⁴They shall join you and keep guard over the tent of meeting for all the service of the tent, and no outsider shall come near you. ⁵And you shall keep guard over the sanctuary and over the altar, that there may never again be wrath on the people of Israel. ⁶And behold, I have taken your brothers the Levites from among the people of Israel. They are a gift to you, given to the LORD, to do the service of the tent of meeting. ⁷And you and your sons with you shall guard your priesthood for all that concerns the altar and that is within the veil; and you shall serve. I give your priesthood as a gift, and any outsider who comes near shall be put to death.”

- **What did the Lord say to Aaron about the responsibilities of priests & who was to assist them (1-2)?**
- **All priests were Levites, but not all the Levites were priests. Both served in worship. What role & restrictions did the Levites have (3-7)?**

⁸Then the LORD spoke to Aaron, “Behold, I have given you charge of the contributions made to me, all the consecrated things of the people of Israel. I have given them to you as a portion and to your sons as a perpetual due. ⁹This shall be yours of the most holy things, reserved from the fire: every offering of theirs, every grain offering of theirs and every sin offering of theirs and every guilt offering of theirs, which they render to me, shall be most holy to you and to your sons. ¹⁰In a most holy place shall you eat it. Every male may eat it; it is holy to you. ¹¹This also is yours: the contribution of their gift, all the wave offerings of the people of Israel. I have given them to you, and to your sons and daughters with you, as a perpetual due. Everyone who is clean in your house may eat it. ¹²All the best of the oil and all the best of the wine and of the grain, the firstfruits of what they give to the LORD, I give to you. ¹³The first ripe fruits of all that is in their land, which they bring to the LORD, shall be yours. Everyone who is clean in your house may eat it. ¹⁴Every devoted thing in Israel shall be yours...

- **All of the best of the oil, wine, grain, fruit (12-13) was offered to the Lord and given to the priests (14). God tells Israel what to do with the fruit of their labor. What does He require of His people today?**

²¹“To the Levites I have given every tithe in Israel for an inheritance, in return for their service that they do, their service in the tent of meeting,²² so that the people of Israel do not come near the tent of meeting, lest they bear sin and die. ²³But the Levites shall do the service of the tent of meeting, and they shall bear their iniquity. It shall be a perpetual statute throughout your generations, and among the people of Israel they shall have no inheritance. ²⁴For the tithe of the people of Israel, which they present as a contribution to the LORD, I have given to the Levites for an inheritance. Therefore I have said of them that they shall have no inheritance among the people of Israel.”

²⁵And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, ²⁶“Moreover, you shall speak and say to the Levites, ‘When you take from the people of Israel the tithe that I have given you from them for your inheritance, then you shall present a contribution from it to the LORD, a tithe of the tithe.²⁷ And your contribution shall be counted to you as though it were the grain of the threshing floor, and as the fullness of the

winepress. ²⁸ So you shall also present a contribution to the LORD from all your tithes, which you receive from the people of Israel. And from it you shall give the LORD's contribution to Aaron the priest. ²⁹ Out of all the gifts to you, you shall present every contribution due to the LORD; from each its best part is to be dedicated.' ³⁰ Therefore you shall say to them, 'When you have offered from it the best of it, then the rest shall be counted to the Levites as produce of the threshing floor, and as produce of the winepress. ³¹ And you may eat it in any place, you and your households, for it is your reward in return for your service in the tent of meeting. ³² And you shall bear no sin by reason of it, when you have contributed the best of it. But you shall not profane the holy things of the people of Israel, lest you die.'"

- **Approaching the tabernacle was restricted to the Levites alone. What would happen if a non-Levite came near to the tabernacle (22)?**
- **Why do Christians believe that we can only approach God through Christ alone, and that attempting to come any other way will ultimately have terrible consequences?**

- **The Levites also offered a tithe from their provision (26). What did their tithe consist of (27)?**
- **A resource we have to mark that we do not belong to ourselves is church membership. Are you a member of the church? Why or why not? What benefits and responsibilities accompany formally identifying as a member of the church?**
- **The Lord sovereignly appoints gifts and ministries to each of us for the good of the church and for His glory. What is your role in the body of Christ? Ask others in your group to tell you how God uses you.**
- **The Lord has sovereignly appointed Jesus to be our access to Him. Spend time in prayer, thanking the Lord for the free access you have to Him in Christ, and praying for the Body and the glory of God.**

Sermon Notes

This week, Steve Shelby preached on [Numbers 18:1-32](#).

- At the end of Chapter 17 the people are overwhelmed with fear about approaching God.
- "Twas grace that taught my heart to fear and grace my fears relieved." (*John Newton, [Amazing Grace](#)*)
- In chapter 18, the Lord reiterates the means of approach and means of support of that means of approach.
- This chapter illustrates a hard truth for us. We are not autonomous beings simply going through life seeking what will make me the most fulfilled. God tells us how to approach and He tells us how to live and He tells us what to do with the fruit of our labor.
- God always sets the terms of our relationship. We still cannot approach without a Priest and a Sacrifice.
- Our relationship with God is always rooted in a community of people. We experience the work of God through a community. I belong to "a body".
- All that I am and all that I have is His. I have been purchased.
- Why is it so hard for us believe that true freedom and joy is found in recognizing my dependence upon the work of Christ and my interdependence with the community He is redeeming and building?

Questions about this week's study guide? Contact Kevin Greene, kevin@wepc.org
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