

In the Wilderness: The Book of Numbers

[#22 in Series] (Numbers 15–25) *Forty Years in the Wilderness: Part 7*

Embracing Your Role in God's Story – Numbers 18

Sermon Outline – September 13, 2015

Children's Sermon: Created to Tell God's Story

- ❖ What is the Purpose of a Mirror?

2 Corinthians 3:18 (NLT)

So *all of us* who have had that veil removed *can see and reflect the glory of the Lord*. And the Lord—who is the Spirit—makes us more and more like him as we are changed *into his glorious image*.

- ❖ What Man Told God's Story Perfectly?

Review

Notes:

Leadership Rebellion (16-17)

- Status (Aaron)
- Power (Moses)

Why was Israel chosen?

God's Instruction about His Priesthood (18-19)

Key Idea:

The priesthood was assigned their role to tell God's story.

Telling God's Story by Embracing God's Order

#3 God Can Turn Our Curse into Blessing (The Levites)

Levi had earned for his descendants... the sentence of being scattered in Israel. Because he slaughtered the inhabitants of Shechem, along with his brother Simeon (Gen. 34:25-29)⁵

Genesis 49:5–7

⁵ “**Simeon and Levi** are brothers; weapons of violence are their swords. ⁶ Let my soul come not into their council; O my glory, be not joined to their company. For in their anger they killed men, and in their willfulness they hamstrung oxen. ⁷ Cursed be their anger, for it is fierce, and their wrath, for it is cruel! **I will divide them in Jacob and scatter them in Israel.** (Cf. Ex. 32:25–29)

The Levites would still be scattered, just as Jacob had prophesied, but their curse was turned into a blessing for the whole people. This transforming grace in the lives of the Levites was a demonstration in sample form of the Lord's plan for his people. Even though the sin of Levi had earned his descendants a just punishment, the Lord's grace was greater than all their sin.ⁱⁱ

#1 The Good News of Jesus Christ (The Priests)

- The Obedient Worshipper Brings His Sin Offering
- The Animal Offering is Killed by the Priest
- Unclean Part Burned Outside the Camp
- Best Part Burned on the Burnt Offering
- The Wave Offering Eaten by the Priest in a Holy Place

#2 Jesus Shares His Inheritance with His Family (Cf.

Mark 3:31-35)

- Through the Peace Offering the Priest Feeds His "Clean" Family
- God is the Priests Inheritance... The Best Part of Israel's Inheritance was to Go to the Priest & His Family
- Through the Priests & the Offerings God has Made a Way for His Family to Remain Clean in this Fallen Word.

Embracing God's Assigned Role

Key Questions:

Why did God choose us? What role have we been assigned?

We are to Reflect Jesus

2 Corinthians 3:18-4:6

¹⁸ And *we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another.*

For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit. ...

² ...We refuse to practice cunning or to tamper with God's word, but by the open statement of the truth we would commend ourselves to everyone's conscience in the sight of God.³ And even if our

gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing.⁴ In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing *the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.*⁵ For *what we proclaim is not ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, with ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake.*⁶ For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," has shone in our hearts to give *the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.*

What is Our Purpose?

If Our Purpose is to Please & Enjoy Ourselves in this Life...

- We will demand unlimited freedom to choose what pleases us
- We will see the weak, poor & sick as obstacles
- How will we see marriage, gender roles, children...?
- How will we view involvement in the local church, evangelism...?

If Our Purpose is Tell God's Story...

- We will submit to God's Word & His providence
- We will see the weak, poor & sick as opportunities to imitate Jesus
- How will we see marriage, gender roles, children...?
- How will we view involvement in the local church, evangelism...?

Key Point:

God created us and re-created us to visibly display his glory with our words and with our lives. Let's fix our eyes on Jesus and rethink everything!

ⁱ Duguid, I. M., & Hughes, R. K. (2006). *Numbers: God's presence in the wilderness* (p. 222). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books.

ⁱⁱ Ibid. (p. 223).