

#3 The Service of the Priests and the Levites for God's Move

Crystallization-Study of Numbers (1) 2019/3/11-17

I . Numbers is a book of service, and chapters 3 and 4 cover the holy service: Num. 3:6-7 Bring the tribe of Levi near and set them before Aaron the priest, that they may minister to him. And they shall keep his charge and the charge of the whole assembly before the Tent of Meeting to do the service of the tabernacle. A. In Numbers we have a full type of the church service; the service in Numbers is a picture of the church service. B. The service is holy because it takes care of the Tabernacle of the Testimony of God. C. The basic principle of the holy service is that it is without confusion because it is based on life; everything in the holy service is under the divine administration, and thus it is in good order.

II . The holy service was carried out by the priests and the Levites: A. The priests were the anointed ones who served God directly: 1. The priests were to camp before the tabernacle, on the east, toward the sunrise; they guarded the entrance to the Tent of Meeting, and anyone who wanted to serve God had to pass through the priests. 2. The priests were to keep the charge of the sanctuary, the tabernacle with the Holy Place and the Holy of Holies: a. The word charge refers to responsibility. b. For the priests to keep the charge of the sanctuary meant that they were responsible for the entire sanctuary and everything related to it. [Mon]

B. The Levites were not priests directly but were the serving ones of the priesthood: 1. In the priesthood, the ministry of the priests, there were many business affairs that required the service of the Levites. 2. The service of the Levites was to take care of the Tent of Meeting—the Tabernacle of the Testimony—which is a type of Christ and the church: a. In taking care of the tabernacle and its contents, the Levites did not serve God directly; rather, they served the priesthood and the priests, who served God directly. b. The priests were to keep the charge of the sanctuary and the altar, and the Levites served under the priests in caring for the sanctuary and the altar. C. The Tabernacle of the Testimony with all its furnishings and the altar, to which the priests ministered, are types of Christ in all His rich aspects, whom the New Testament believers minister to others: Eph. 3:8 To me, less than the least of all saints, was this grace given to announce to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ as the gospel. 1. The altar, signifying the cross, refers to Christ's redemption, and the tabernacle refers to Christ as the embodiment of God, through whom God dwells among men and through whom men can enter into God to enjoy all that He is. 2. The ministry of the priests and the Levites always supplies people with the riches of Christ: a. To minister is to serve, and to serve is to supply people by ministering to them. 2

Cor. 3:6 Who has also made us sufficient as ministers of a new covenant, ministers not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.

b. The New Testament believers serve others the cross of Christ for redemption and the riches of Christ for the life supply. [Tue]

III . The holy service portrayed in Numbers is not for a Christ who is inactive but for a Christ who is very active; in His activity, in His move, we must match Him: A. The priests and the Levites had certain duties in the tabernacle's setting out, in its going forward: 1. The priests appointed the Levites to do their service: a. The Levites did their service

according to their way but under the direction of the anointed priests. b. This indicates that we, the New Testament priests serving God, should not act according to our own ideas but under the direction of the anointed view, that is, under the direction of the Spirit who anoints us. 2. The priests took care of the primary things, the important things, and the Kohathites (Levites) took care of some of the secondary things: a. To take care of the furnishings of the sanctuary is to take care of the primary things. b. The priests took care of the Ark; this is to take care of Christ directly and to minister Christ. C. The Kohathites carried the furnishings of the sanctuary; to do this today is to speak concerning the church as the expansion of Christ. B. In order to see how Christ moves on earth, we should look at the move of the tabernacle: 1. The tabernacle moved on the shoulders of the descendants of the three sons of Levi. 2. The Lord moves through our bearing the Ark, the furnishings of the sanctuary, and the Tent of Meeting. C. The principle in God's New Testament economy is that God needs man to match Him in His move on earth: 1. Without man, God can do nothing; in His New Testament economy, God does nothing without man. 2. God must have man to match Him, to be one with Him, to coordinate with Him; this is the basic principle of God's New Testament economy. 3. Christ is moving today throughout the earth, and He is moving with those who are one with Him: John 15:16 You did not choose Me, but I chose you, and I set you that you should go forth and bear fruit and that your fruit should remain, that whatever you ask the Father in My name, He may give you. Acts 1:8 But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you, and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and unto the uttermost part of the earth.

a. We are today's sons of Gershon, Kohath, and Merari. b. Christ, the embodiment of God for His expansion, moves through those who love Him. [Wed]

IV . In the Old Testament there was a distinction between the priests and the Levites; in the New Testament there is only one class, that of the priests: 1 Pet. 2:5 You yourselves also, as living stones, are being built up as a spiritual house into a holy priesthood to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. 9 But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people acquired for a possession, so that you may tell out the virtues of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; A. In addition to carrying out their own duties in the setting out of the tabernacle, the priests appointed the Levites to do their service. B. What the Levites did in the Old Testament in type, the believers as the New Testament priests should also do in reality: 1. The fact that the service of the Levites was under the supervision of the priests indicates that when the New Testament priests do the outward Levitical work, they must do it under the supervision of the inward, spiritual view of the New Testament priesthood. 2. The Levitical service should never be separated from the priestly view; the outward service must become a spiritual that ministers life to others. 3. We need to learn to do outward things under the inward view of the priesthood. 4. While we are taking care of outward, practical matters, we should be ministering life to others; if we do this, our Levitical service is under the view and supervision of the priesthood. C. When a person serves God, there needs to be both the priestly work and the Levitical work: 1. On the one hand, we partake of the spiritual service; on the other hand, we should also take care of the practical affairs. [Thu]

2. Before any kind of service, we must first serve as priests in the Lord's presence; all service must be

priestly.

V. In Hebrew the word service in Numbers 4:3, 23, 30, 35, 39, and 43 is warfare, indicating military service: A. The holy service of the priests and the Levites involved warfare. B. As priests of the gospel of God, we should consider ourselves warriors: 1. While we are preaching, teaching, edifying others, and building up the Body of Christ, we are fighting. 2. The New Testament priests are warriors, and our priestly service is a fighting. C. All the spiritual work that we are doing for God, whatever form it may take, as long as it touches the things of the spiritual realm, is in nature a warfare: **2 Cor. 10:4-5 For the weapons of our warfare are not fleshly but powerful before God for the overthrowing of strongholds, As we overthrow reasonings and every high thing rising up against the knowledge of God, and take captive every thought unto the obedience of Christ.** [Fri]

1. Preaching the gospel, edifying the saints, administrating the church, and praying are all a kind of warfare. 2. If our eyes have been opened by the Lord, we will see that the nature of our work in serving the Lord is that of warfare.

VI. A reward, or compensation, was given to Aaron and his sons as the priests and to the serving Levites: A. The priests and the Levites had no portion other than Christ; Christ was their house, inheritance, land, clothing, food, and everything. B. Today, in the New Testament, the Levitical service is combined with the priesthood: 1. There is no difference between the priests and the servants of the priests; the believers in Christ are both the priests and the serving Levites. 2. The only reward, the only compensation, for our priestly and Levitical service is Christ. **2 Tim. 4:7-8 I have fought the good fight; I have finished the course; I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, with which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will recompense me in that day, and not only me but also all those who have loved His appearing.** [Sat]

Explanation of the terms:

(Since the content is much this week, there is no "high gospel" section.)

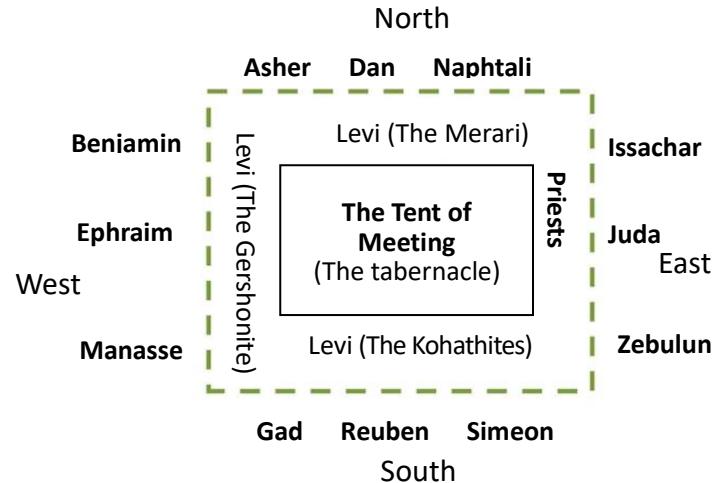
A. Priestly service: (1) The priests were the anointed ones who served God directly. We need to pray first to be anointed by the Holy Spirit in every service in the church. (2) For the priests to keep the charge of the sanctuary meant that they were responsible for the entire sanctuary and everything related to it. We have responsibility in all the service needed for the building up of the church and we need to serve diligently. (3) Priestly service is to serve God in the holy place and holy of holies in the tabernacle. The significance of the service of the priests is to open themselves to God, let God to come into us, to be built up with others in the flow of life, contacting God, being filled with God and supply God to others.

B. Levitical service: (1) In taking care of the tabernacle and its contents, the Levites did not serve God directly; rather, they served the priesthood and the priests, who served God directly. (2) The Kohathites carried the furnishings of the sanctuary. (The Gershonite and the Merari carried each part of the tabernacle and the altar.) To do this today is to speak concerning the church as the expansion of Christ.

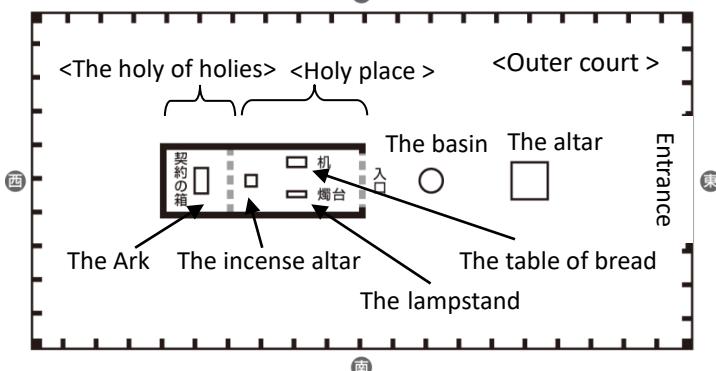
C. New Testament priesthood: (1) In the new testament, we all are priests. The new testament priests include both the

priestly service and the Levitical service of the old testament. **Rom. 15:16 That I might be a minister of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles, a laboring priest of the gospel of God, in order that the offering of the Gentiles might be acceptable, having been sanctified in the Holy Spirit.** (2) The fact that the service of the Levites (the practical service) was under the supervision of the priests indicates that when the New Testament priests do the outward Levitical work, they must do it under the supervision of the inward, spiritual view of the New Testament priesthood.

D. The relationship between the camping of the twelve tribes of Israel and the array of the Levites:



E. The constitution of the tabernacle:



The tabernacle is consisted of the outer court, the holy place and the holy of holies. (1) The altar is the experience of the cross of Christ. First we should confess our sins, applying the blood of Jesus on the cross, consecrating ourselves and enter into the rich enjoyment of the following aspects of Christ. (2) The washing at the basin signifies the washing in the water of the Word and when we pray-read the Word, the water in the Word washes away the natural scar and the oldness. (3) Then after that we enter into the holy place and eat the bread on the table and get nourished. Because the Word of the Lord is our bread of life, we need to eat the Word every day. (4) The lampstand shines your inside. Although we experienced the cross at the outer court, our inner darkness is shined upon in a more fine way by experiencing Christ. Such light of life makes us the children of light. (5) Then we come to the incense altar before the holy of holies, and pray to God Christ's attainments (that He dealt with sin on the cross and released life and destroyed the Devil, that He became the firstborn of God in resurrection, regenerating many sons of God and became the life giving Spirit etc.) as incense. The prayer here is the prayer which advances God's economy. (6) Finally when you get to the holy of holies, there is the Ark which is Christ as God's testimony. The holy of holies is

the most holy place and the dwelling place of God. In the old testament age, the high priest entered in to the holy of holies once a year and met God. But in the new testament age, we can turn to our spirit as the holy of holies everyday and meet God, contact God and hear the Word of God. The fact that the priest served in these six points at the tabernacle indicates that they experience the riches of Christ and build up the new Jerusalem.

Crucial Point(1): Laboring priest of the gospel in the New Testament

OL1 : In the new testament, we are all priests. The new testament priest includes both the priestly service and the Levitical service of the old testament. We need to be diligent and sober in our service. **Rom. 15:16 To be a laboring priest of the gospel of God, ... 12:11 Do not be slothful in zeal, but be burning in spirit, serving the Lord.**

OL2 : The priesthood is to serve God in the holy place and the holy of holies in the tabernacle. The priests are those who open themselves to God and let God come into them and be built together with others in the flow of life, contacting God, being filled with God and supply God to other people.

OL3 : The Kohathites carried the furnishings of the sanctuary (The Gershonites and the Merari carried the parts of the tabernacle and the Alter). To do this today is to speak concerning the church as the expansion of Christ.

In Numbers we have a full type of the church service. I hope that the Lord would open our eyes to see that, comparatively speaking, in the church service we have been somewhat loose. With respect to spiritual principles, we have not been so serious, strict, and right. Our making mistakes unconsciously could be the reason that we have missed much of God's blessing. In serving God, we should not be loose but should be serious. We all, especially the young ones, need to learn the spiritual regulations and spiritual laws regarding the service of God.

The Levites served under the priests in caring for the sanctuary and the altar. For instance, when the children of Israel were commanded to move, the Levites packed and carried the tabernacle and all its furnishings. When the people arrived at a particular place, the Levites set up the tabernacle and everything related to it.

The Tabernacle of the Testimony with all its furnishings and the altar, to which the priests minister, are types of Christ in all His rich aspects, whom the New Testament believers minister. The tabernacle is the tent, and the altar, located in the outer court, is where the sacrifices were offered to God. The altar refers to Christ's redemption, and the tabernacle refers to Christ as the embodiment of God, through whom God dwells among men and through whom men can enter into God to enjoy all that He is.

Christ is moving today throughout the earth. "You shall receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you, and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and unto the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts 1:8). All gospel preachers are actually witnesses of Christ

Christ, the embodiment of God for His expansion, moves through those who love Him. If we do not move, He cannot move. Rather, He is bound and even imprisoned within us. If we do not move, we become a prison to the Lord.

For Junior High and High School Students/College Students

Serve the Lord enthusiastically: You should serve the Lord enthusiastically as a saved one (including fifth grade primary school before being saved). The service includes the service of the priests who supply people with Christ and administrative service like the service of the Levites. Please do both as the priest of the gospel in the New Testament. Do not say that "I am young, so I do not need to serve." Learn to serve the Lord enthusiastically when you are still young.

The service of the priests: You should preach Christ as a gospel to your friends by experiencing Christ as wisdom, perseverance, behavior, comprehension, concentration, etc. in studying at school. Before doing this, it is important that you pray for friends in a group of prayers such as LINE and be anointed.

The service of the Levites: You are encouraged to actively participate in the service of the Levites who arrive early in the meeting, arrange the chairs, clean them, create prints, distribute them on the chair, and prepare meals. When you do the service of the Levites, you should pray, "O Lord Jesus, I am distributing today's prints on the chair. When distributing, I carefully do properly. May the people who sit here richly experience the Lord. As for service of the Levites, I will do it as a spiritual activity to supply people with life."

The church must move with the moving Christ: You should be a Laboring priest of the gospel in the New Testament and must do both the service of the priest and the Levites of the Old Testament and keep up with the movements of Christ. For example, you need to pray a lot for the gospel. But after praying, you need to go out and preach the gospel. The Lord is busy in the whole land, but if you are not filled with the Holy Spirit, not be one with the Lord, and do not go out to preach the gospel, the Lord cannot move. The people of Israel moved with the mobile building called the Tabernacle, and moved frequently, so the Levites would have been very busy. The church in Kobe tells the gospel every month for a week. Please take these opportunities and join in the gospel activities.

Prayer: "O Lord Jesus, I thank you that you made me a laboring priest in the New Testament. Christ is moving actively throughout the earth. In order to struggle, act and fight according to Christ, we need the priesthood and the diligent service of the Levites. For this, I will spend time and fellowship with you in the presence of you. Preach our gospel in church life, bless the 1 to 1 nourishing and the building of New Jerusalem. Amen!"

Crucial Point(2): Gospel is the spiritual warfare. For the battle, we should spend time in the Lord's presence and have the private and affectionate fellowship with the Lord and hear the Lord's voice and be filled with the Lord

OL1 : The fact that the service of the Levites (the practical service) was under the supervision of the priests indicates that when the New Testament priests do the outward Levitical work, they must do it under the supervision of the inward, spiritual view of the New Testament priesthood.

OL2 : The holy service of the priests and the Levites involved warfare. As priests of the gospel of God, we

should consider ourselves warriors.

OL3 : While we are preaching, teaching, edifying others, and building up the Body of Christ, we are fighting. The New Testament priests are warriors, and our priestly service is a fighting.

The army must be priestly; the apostle must be priestly; the evangelist must be priestly; the minister of the word must be priestly; the elder and deacon must be priestly; the brothers and sisters must be priestly; and the husbands, wives, parents, and children must be priestly. This simply means that in the Lord's service we must first open ourselves to the Lord and spend time in His presence. This will enable Him to fill, saturate, and even swallow us up so that we may be one with Him. Then He will be our content, and we will be His expression. He will be able to say something through us and to express something from within us, whether we are fighting the battle, preaching the gospel, teaching the word, or serving as elders or deacons. Whatever we are will be a channel for the Lord to flow out. This must be our way of living, our way of work, and our way of service.

In Hebrew the word service in Numbers 4:3, 35, 39, 43 is warfare, indicating the military service. Hence, even the holy service of the priests and the Levites was in the warfare. Today as priests of the gospel of God, we should consider ourselves warriors. While we are preaching, teaching, edifying others, and building up the Body of Christ, we are fighting. The New Testament priests are warriors, and our priestly service is a fighting.

Since warfare exists between the kingdoms of God and Satan, all the spiritual work that we are doing for God, whatever form it may take, as long as it touches the things of the spiritual realm, is in nature a warfare. For example, preaching the gospel, according to **Acts 26:18**, is “to open their eyes, to turn them from darkness to light and from the authority of Satan to God.” This shows us that preaching the gospel is not only to open men’s eyes and turn them from darkness to light but also to deliver them from the authority of Satan. Again, **Colossians 1:13** says, “Who delivered us out of the authority of darkness and transferred us into the kingdom of the Son of His love.” To be delivered from the authority of darkness is to be delivered from the power of Satan or the kingdom of Satan. And to be transferred into the kingdom of the Son of God’s love is to be transferred into the kingdom of God. Therefore, preaching the gospel is wholly a spiritual warfare to drive out the power of Satan in men and bring in the kingdom of God.... When a person is saved, he first believes in the name of the Lord; second, he calls on the Lord’s name; and third, he is in the name of the Lord; he belongs to the Lord’s name. Hence, he is delivered from the power of Satan and belongs to the name of the Lord.

For Young Working/Graduate Student Saints

Before the warfare of the gospel, we need to strengthen the personal, affectionate and cintimate fellowship with the Lord : During one month from March 28 to April 28, we'll have the gospel propagation on campuses (Kobe/Shoin/Konan/Kobe International Univ. etc.). During the preparation of the gospel propagation in March, please have the personal, affectionate and

intimate fellowship with the Lord in His presence to open to the Lord, touch Him and be filled with him. Priests are those who open to the Lord, be filled with Him and flow Him out. So you need to get into His presence and fellowship with Him closely. **For the one-month propagation in April, we set “three-week strengthening period of the close fellowship with the Lord” from March 4 to 24.**

Prayer : “Oh Lord Jesus, You are my beloved fiance. I love You. In my spirit I look at Your face. I have the intimate and affectionate fellowship with You. I open my heart and enjoy the intimate conversation with You. Please speak to me the Rhema Word. Infuse Yourself into me. Such a fellowship with You is the proper preparation for the warfare of the gospel. Amen!”

1159 Experience of Christ - Loving Him(Jap s305)

1. Jesus Lord, I'm captured by Thy beauty.
All my heart to Thee I open wide;
Now set free from all religious duty,
Only let me in Thyself abide.
As I'm gazing here upon Thy glory,
Fill my heart with radiancy divine;
Saturate me, Lord, I now implore Thee,
Mingle now Thy Spirit, Lord, with mine.
2. Shining One — how clear the sky above me!
Son of Man, I see Thee on the throne!
Holy One, the flames of God consume me,
Till my being glows with Thee alone.
Lord, when first I saw Thee in Thy splendor,
All self-love and glory sank in shame;
Now my heart its love and praises render,
Tasting all the sweetness of Thy name.
3. Precious Lord, my flask of alabaster
Gladly now I break in love for Thee;
I anoint Thy head, Beloved Master;
Lord, behold, I've saved the best for Thee.
Dearest Lord, I waste myself upon Thee;
Loving Thee, I'm deeply satisfied.
Love outpoured from hidden depths within me,
Costly oil, dear Lord, I would provide.
4. My Beloved, come on spices' mountain;
How I yearn to see Thee face to face.
Drink, dear Lord, from my heart's flowing fountain,
Till I rest fore'er in Thine embrace.
Not alone, O Lord, do I adore Thee,
But with all the saints as Thy dear Bride;
Quickly come, our love is waiting for Thee;
Jesus Lord, Thou wilt be satisfied.

208 Praise of the Lord - Satisfaction with Him (Jap 169)

1. Jesus, Jesus, dearest Lord! Forgive me if I say,
For very love, Thy sacred name A thousand times a day.
(C) O Jesus, Lord, with me abide; I rest in Thee, whate'er betide;
Thy gracious smile is my reward; I love, I love Thee, Lord!
2. I love Thee so I know not how My transports to control;
Thy love is like a burning fire Within my very soul.
3. For Thou to me art all in all; My honor and my wealth;
My heart's desire, my body's strength, My soul's eternal health.
4. Burn, burn, O love, within my heart, Burn fiercely night and day,
Till all the dross of earthly loves Is burned, and burned away.
5. O light in darkness, joy in grief, O heaven's life on earth;

Jesus, my love, my treasure, who Can tell what Thou art worth?

6. What limit is there to this love? Thy flight, where wilt Thou stay?

On, on! Our Lord is sweeter far Today than yesterday.

643 Encouragement - For Fellowship with the Lord (Jap 477)

1. Take time to behold Him, Speak oft with Thy Lord,
Abide in Him always, And feed on His Word.
Wait thou in His presence, Submissive and meek,
Forgetting in nothing His blessing to seek.
2. Take time to behold Him, The world rushes on;
Spend much time in secret With Jesus alone.
By looking to Jesus Like Him thou shalt be;
Thy friends, in thy conduct, His likeness shall see.
3. Take time to behold Him, Let Him be thy guide;
And run not before Him Whatever betide;
In joy or in sorrow Still follow thy Lord,
And, looking to Jesus, Still trust in His Word.
4. Take time to behold Him, Be calm in thy soul,
Each thought and each temper Beneath His control.
Thus led by His Spirit To fountains of love,
Thou then shalt be fitted His mercy to prove.

A Noble Deed

Throughout the past twenty centuries

Tens of thousands of precious lives,

Heart treasures, high positions,

And golden futures have been "wasted"

Upon the Lord Jesus.

To the ones who love Him in such a way

He is altogether lovely and worthy of their offering.

What they have poured upon the Lord is not a waste

But a fragrant testimony of His sweetness.

What they have poured upon the Lord is not a waste

But a fragrant testimony of His sweetness.

Mat. 26:12 For in pouring out this ointment on My body, she has done it for My burial. **13** Truly I say to you, Wherever this gospel is proclaimed in the whole world, what this woman has done shall also be told as a memorial of her.

26:8 But when the disciples saw it, they were indignant, saying, Why this waste?

FN "waste": The disciples considered Mary's love offering to the Lord a waste. Throughout the past twenty centuries thousands of precious lives, heart treasures, high positions, and golden futures have been "wasted" upon the Lord Jesus. To those who love Him in such a way He is altogether lovely and worthy of their offering. What they have poured upon Him is not a waste but a fragrant testimony of His sweetness.