

Friday, April 13, 2018

**Most holy**

Numbers 4-5

*This is the work of the Kohathites in the Tent of Meeting: the care of the most holy things.*

Numbers 4:4

Kohath was a son of Levi. As such, he would have been the grandfather of Moses, Aaron, and Miriam. The Kohathites were the descendants of Kohath. They were chosen by God to care for the most holy things in the Tent of Meeting. But they could not look at those things or touch them or they would die. This included even a glimpse (4:15, 20)! Now, this is interesting to me. This is just how holy these items are. Even a glimpse would cause death. It reminds me of 2 Samuel 6:7, when Uzzah died as he touched the ark. I don't think I can fully realize the most holy nature of these things. The process of moving the Tabernacle was explained in great detail so that punishment could be avoided and the items could maintain the holiness that they were intended to have. This special assignment by God—entrusting the most holy things to the Kohathites—reminds me that I too have been given an assignment to care for something most holy. I have been entrusted with the name of God. In a way, it is the same thing that was entrusted to them. Awe of God. Even in the joy of the unhindered access into the presence of God, I must never lose the awe of His most holy name.

*Dear LORD, as I consider Your awesomeness and Your holiness, please remind me of Your great name and the honor that Your name deserves. Help me to care for Your reputation as entrusted to me. Amen.*

April 9 - 14, 2018

Saturday, April 14, 2018

**Abstain**

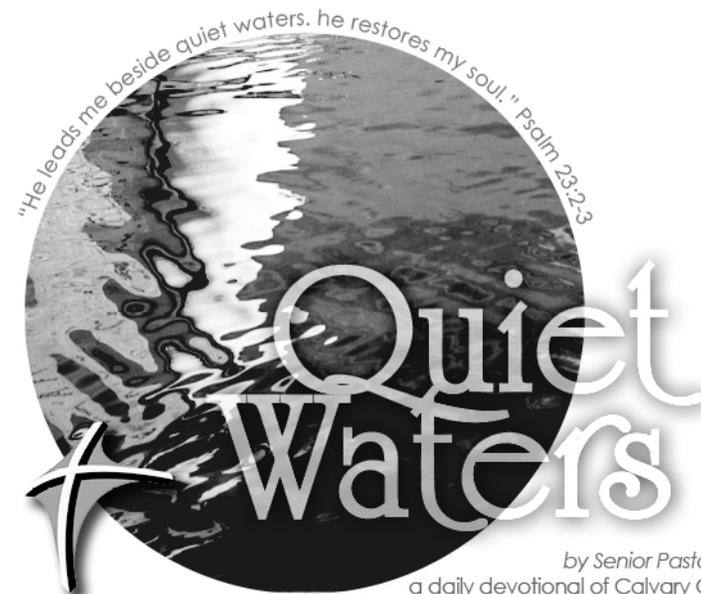
Numbers 6-7

*... 'If a man or woman wants to make a special vow, a vow of separation to the LORD as a Nazirite, he must abstain...'*

Numbers 6:2-3a

This vow that would be taken was a vow of separation. It was a voluntary vow and was to be for a period of time. Of course, Samson was appointed by God before his birth to be a Nazirite all his life (Judges 13:5). But here he speaks of that being a voluntary vow that would require a person to abstain from three things: fruit of the vine in any form, trimming of the hair, and contact with dead animals. While that does not seem like all that great a sacrifice for someone to make in my life, it would be for them. It was a significant statement that a person was voluntarily setting themselves aside for the LORD. This is a strict self-dedication for personal reasons like the birth of a child, the passing of an illness, or other points of thanksgiving. It lasted at least 30 days but could also be for years! It was a time to stop and recognize that God had blessed you. It would remind the Nazirite to be thankful. What if I could bring that into my life in some form? How quickly do I say, "Thanks!" and move on, not pausing to really consider that God has just stepped into my life and provided me with something that I can be thankful for? What are some things that I can be ready to abstain from as I live out my gratitude to my amazing heavenly Father?

*Dear Lord, I love thinking about all the people who have ever set themselves aside like this out of gratitude to You. Help me think of new ways to show my gratitude! Forgive me, please, for the times I take Your amazing provisions for granted. Amen.*



by Senior Pastor Chuck Cervenka  
a daily devotional of Calvary Community Church

Monday, April 9, 2018

## Sabbath

Leviticus 23-24

*There are six days when you may work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath of rest, a day of sacred assembly. You are not to do any work; wherever you live, it is a Sabbath to the LORD.*

Leviticus 23:3

Leviticus 23 is a very special chapter, as it summarizes the feasts that God appointed. Many Jews see the Sabbath as the Queen of Feasts. It is thought to be the nearest and dearest to the heart of God. It is a weekly observance. It recognizes the provision of God. It reminds people of the principle of the Sabbath that finds its roots in Genesis chapter two as God ceased creating on the seventh day and He rested—setting for His people a sanctuary in time—a place in time where His people can go to worship Him in a special way each week. He calls it a gift when He first introduces it to His people in the desert, when He provides the daily bread. He calls it rest. He commands that His people observe it so that they can reflect on all that He has done for them. He calls them to set the day apart and consider the fact that He has made it holy. It is a sacred day. It is the same for me. The principle of the Sabbath remains for me. I must learn to unwrap the special gift of ceasing and resting in the holiness of this sanctuary in time. I must take hold of that which God has set apart for me, so that I can know Him more and reflect on all that He is and all that He has done.

*Dear Lord, please bring me into this amazing sanctuary of worship. Help me see that pausing in Your presence is pleasing to You. Amen.*

Tuesday, April 10, 2018

## If

Leviticus 25-26

*If you follow my decrees and are careful to obey my commands...  
But if you will not listen to me and carry out all these commands... Leviticus 26:3, 14*

This is a conditional covenant. It is different than some of the covenants God makes. This one includes blessings based upon obedience. Obedience is an indicator of love for God. All that has been given to His people in these laws has allowed them to know the heart of God. The conditional covenant that we are reading lets them determine how they will handle the heart of God that has been displayed for them. He has redeemed them from their bondage in Egypt and has set them apart for His service. He has clearly laid out what is required and now lets them know that they can choose—blessings or curses. Moses will restate this in an abbreviated form in Deuteronomy 30:19. The difference is staggering. Consider the difference between what comes from obedience and what comes when they will not obey. The rest of the Old Testament, unfortunately, unfolds much more of the latter. Obedience, as an indicator of love, is stated in an “if” clause in John 14:23. If I long for the presence of the Lord in my life in an overwhelming way, it comes from obedience that is motivated by my love for God! I get to obey. I am not forced. It is not an obligation. It is a joy. The benefits for being willing to obey because of love far outweigh the pain that comes from disobedience.

*Dear God, please stir in my heart a love for You that radiates out in obedience. Please let my actions show my love for You. Flood me with joy in Your presence so that I may experience Your blessings in my life as You alone are glorified. Amen.*

Wednesday, April 11, 2018

## Most holy

Leviticus 27– Numbers 1

*But nothing that a man owns and devotes to the LORD—whether man or animal or family land—may be sold or redeemed; everything so devoted is most holy to the LORD.*

Leviticus 27:28

These final words of God in this book are words that relate to that which is His and how it should be viewed. It was possible to redeem some of the items that were dedicated to the LORD. Instead of offering that which was dedicated, that which was dedicated could be bought back for the value plus twenty percent. In this way, the person or item that was dedicated by a special vow could be redeemed and the money would take the place of that which was dedicated. But there were some things that were not dedicated, rather they were devoted to the LORD. This was given in a more solemn act than a dedication. At this point, it became the LORD’s completely, without the option of redemption. This causes me to consider yet again all that I have. Do I carefully and prayerfully consider what I can dedicate to the Lord in a solemn vow? Do I ever devote things to Him? What does that look like? I devoted my life to Him as I asked for His forgiveness and salvation. Do I see that as most holy to the LORD? My life is no longer my own. I have been bought with a price and I now belong to Jesus. Are there ways in which I try to buy back that which is most devoted to the LORD? How about the things I have dedicated? Am I tithing and keeping my vow?

*Dear God, Please help me stay totally devoted and dedicated to You. Amen.*

Thursday, April 12, 2018

## Worship

Numbers 2-3

*The LORD said to Moses and Aaron: “The Israelites are to camp around the Tent of Meeting some distance from it, each man under his standard with the banners of his family.”*

Numbers 2:1-2

As I begin to read Numbers, I see that God is a God of order. It tells me that each man was not only counted, but that they were listed by name. 603,550 names. No computers. I think about the process and the time that it must have taken to accomplish just that part of this account. And then came the organization of the camp. Each tribe was to have a special place that they would camp and a special order in which they would go out. God was the One who determined this. It shows to me His loving care in every detail of the lives of those who were so very special to Him. It was this arrangement that would allow them to all look toward the Tent of Meeting. It would be in the middle of them all. They would be able to look to Him as the center of their camp. Corporate worship for me is the same. It is coming together in an orderly fashion and keeping God at the very center of all that we do so that we can all have the opportunity to look to Him and focus on Him alone.

*O Lord, prepare my heart when I go to worship with my brothers and sisters. Please help us all to keep our eyes fixed on You as the center of all we are! Amen.*