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## **Numbers Chapters 16b, 17 And 18 The Deadly Disease of Narcissism And Vanity!**

Last week as we journeyed into Numbers chapter 16, we spoke in some detail about Korah's rebellion once again, against Moses and Aaron. And once again, what we find here Numbers chapter 16 is rather striking considering what we have already seen from the house of Israel in Numbers chapter 11 when they rebelled against Moses because of their craving of meat. And even Aaron the brother of Moses and Miriam the sister of Moses back in chapter 12 of the book of Numbers had rebelled against Moses which resulted in Miriam sitting outside of the camp for seven days with full blown leprosy not to mention when the house of Israel rebelled against Moses in Numbers chapter 14 because house of Israel decided that the giants in the land of Canaan made it impossible for them to keep God's instruction to overtake the land.

And so, after all of this and after all of Yehovah's rebuking of the house of Israel because of their rebellion against Moses who had been chosen by Yehovah personally... here we now have the sons of Levi and the Levitical priesthood now challenging the authority of Moses.

As we read through the book of Numbers, we can obviously see that there seems to be a failure to communicate here. How many times does a child need to receive a good spanking before that child learns not to run out into the road?

It seems ironic that the house of Israel continuously seems to trip and stumble over the exact same stumbling stone time and time again. And you would think just out of good God-given common sense, that the house of Israel would have learned by now not to challenge the authority of Moses. Yet... here we are again in the 16<sup>th</sup> chapter of the book of Numbers dealing with more rebellion. This time not from the

house of Israel directly, and not from Aaron and Miriam, but now... from the Levitical priesthood comes this very same rebellion that had already been struck down several times by our Father in heaven.

What's important for us today to take from these last few chapters of the book of Numbers is the very powerful weapon that our adversary had used against the house of Israel back in the days of Moses is the exact same powerful weapon that he is using against humanity today in our time. And that very powerful weapon is once again... simply "human vanity".

Today we call it narcissism. If you are "narcissistic" then it is said that you are full of "vanity". People love to use big fancy words that make themselves look more intelligent, but it all boils down to simple vanity.

The dangers of narcissism and vanity should shake us to the core as modern-day Christians. There are few sins that are as misunderstood as narcissism and vanity. And there are few sins that are overlooked as much as narcissism and vanity.

Often times when someone has the deadly disease of narcissism and vanity, they don't even know that they have it. And this is why it's extremely important for us to always check ourselves and to make sure that we are not coming down with this deadly disease because it is indeed a spiritual disease and this deadly disease just like any other can and will kill the spirit as well as our hope for salvation if we allow it to go unchecked.

When we examine the Scriptures closely it should be clear to us that the devil was simply moving through the house of Israel from one group of people to another. We first heard from the rabble-rousers who were craving meat. And because they had no meat to eat and all they had was the God-given manna that was falling to the ground by the hand of God every morning... they decided because of their own vanity and narcissism that they wanted to return to Egypt and to worship the Pharaoh of Egypt because the Pharaoh of Egypt had given them meat to eat. And when those people were wiped out and done away with, the devil moved on to Aaron and Miriam who were also filled with narcissism and vanity and had decided that they didn't care for the authority that God had given to Moses. And once that situation was corrected, and Miriam was forced to sit outside of the camp for seven days with full-blown leprosy... the devil then moved on to the house of Israel as a whole who were upset because they could not enter the promised land that they

thought that they deserved... because they had allowed the giants of Canaan to strike fear into their hearts. So much so that they were afraid to enter into the land that Yehovah God was giving to them.

At which time the devil then moved on to the Levitical priesthood and this exact same deadly disease of narcissism and vanity was exactly what the devil had used in order to perpetuate Korah's rebellion. And we see who that wound up.

Once again, Yehovah God swiftly eradicates the vanity field backbiters and rabble rousers and continues to lead his people into his righteousness... and I want to emphasize "his righteousness".

Today in our time there are all kinds of different brands and versions of righteousness. One person's righteousness may not be the definition of another person's righteousness. What one of us sees as "good" and "right and just" may not be what someone else sees as "good" and "right and just". And this is often times the problem that we as humans have. In fact... I would go so far as to say, that this deadly disease of narcissism and vanity is exactly what creates a false and deceptive version of righteousness. It is this deadly disease of narcissism and vanity that causes us to have a different version of what is "good" and "right and just" than what God sees as "good" and "right and just".

It is indeed the deadly disease of narcissism and vanity that has created a first day of the week Sunday Sabbath by the pope of Rome not commanded by anyone anywhere in the Bible. It is indeed this same deadly disease of narcissism and vanity that has created the pope of Rome's "Good Friday" that is not found or commanded by anyone anywhere within the confines of our Bibles. It is indeed this same deadly disease of narcissism and vanity that has created a Roman Catholic created Easter morning that is not found anywhere within the confines of our God breathed Scripture. It is indeed this exact same deadly disease of narcissism and vanity that has created the Roman Catholic created Christmas which is a day that we all lie to our children about December 25 being the birthday of our Messiah once again... found nowhere within the confines of our God breathed Scripture. And all of these man made traditions that come directly from Rome... are all celebrated and lifted up on high while the feast days and Sabbaths and appointments of the one true Elohim of Israel are all regularly profaned month after month, and year after year.

All of today's modern day Roman Catholic created Christian festivals and traditions and feast days have done absolutely nothing to honor our Father in heaven or his only begotten Son who died on Passover Day. And all of these Roman Catholic created traditions and celebrations have all been derived from the disease of Roman narcissism and vanity.

When we choose to make void the word of God in order to hold onto our own tradition... because of our own narcissism and vanity... when we willfully and intentionally choose to re-create what is "good" and "right and just" in our own eyes... when we willfully and intentionally trade the truth for a lie and a lie for the truth, and trade what is sweet for what is bitter and what is bitter for what is sweet... we then can know full well that we have been stricken with the deadly disease of narcissism and vanity.

The house of Israel not only here in Numbers chapter 16, but all throughout the book of Numbers was plagued with this deadly disease of narcissism and vanity and it was this deadly disease of narcissism and vanity that went so far as to even cause the house of Israel to whore after other gods.

If we take nothing away from the book of Numbers... let us be absolutely sure to take away the understanding of just how dangerous narcissism and vanity is to our very salvation.

When we think that we can just simply do as we please... when we think that we can rewrite the Bible that is the spoken word of God... when we think we can re-create what is righteous and good and just in our own minds and in our own hearts... when we think that we can re-create our own modern day Christian festivals and feast days... when we think that we can turn God's spoken word of God into a do as thou wilt is the whole of the law religion... we can know that we have become... desperately sick.

There is only one definition of "righteousness". There is only one definition of "good". There is only one definition of what is "just". And it is not we as human beings that define what righteousness is or what is good or what is just. There is only one who defines what is righteous and what is good and what is just and that is Yehovah God our Father in heaven. In other words... God is God, and we are not. And this is a pill that most denominational empires of men simply cannot swallow.

The problem that the house of Israel had (along with the Levitical priesthood), was that they had their own version, and their own ideas of what righteousness was and what righteousness looked like. The house of Israel had their own idea of what good was. They had their own idea of what was “just” and what was not “just”. The problem was that narcissism and vanity had blinded the house of Israel to the point that they had forgotten that it was God and God alone who defines what is righteous and what is good and what is just.

The very reason that we are right now hearing rumors of wars and nations rising against nations and kingdoms rising against kingdom is because all of the leaders of these different kingdoms and nations around the world have their own individual ideas about what is righteous and what is good and what is just. No one can agree on what righteousness is and what is just and what is good because everyone’s idea is derived from their own personal ideas of what is righteous, and good and just.

Who is it that should have authority but the one who has received authority from Yehovah? You see, it is righteous and good and just to trust and believe Moses according to Yehvoah. And Yehvoah God had already established this clear back and **Exodus chapter 19 (scrn 1)**

## So That We Would Believe Moses... FOREVER!

Exo 19:9 And the LORD said to Moses, “Behold, I am coming to you in a thick cloud, that the people may hear when I speak with you, and may also believe you forever.” When Moses told the words of the people to the LORD,

Exo 19:10 the LORD said to Moses, “Go to the people and consecrate them today and tomorrow, and let them wash their garments

Exo 19:11 and be ready for the third day. For on the third day the LORD will come down on Mount Sinai in the sight of all the people.



Yehovah God himself had come down personally to speak to the house of Israel in person back in Exodus chapter 19 so that.... and I quote, “they would believe Moses forever”. And just so that we are not deceived... the English word “forever in Exodus chapter 19 verse nine is the Hebrew word “olam” which does indeed mean “futuraity, forever, everlasting, evermore, perpetual”. And therefore, according to our Father in heaven we are to believe Moses forever. Not says I... but says our God breathed Scripture.

And this once again was established from the very beginning.

Why was it that the house of Israel kept tripping and stumbling over this exact same stumbling stone? Why was it that the house of Israel just simply could not and would not understand that Yehovah God had given Moses authority over them?

I would submit to you that the reason that the house of Israel could not accept the authority that Yehovah God had given to Moses... is the exact same reason that the rabbinical Pharisees of our Messiahs time could not accept the authority that Yehovah God had given to Yeshua. It's the exact same reason. It's the exact same disease. It is once again... the human disease of narcissism and vanity. And what is extremely important for us to also notice is what happened to the people who had this deadly disease. What did Yehovah God do with the people that had this deadly disease of narcissism and vanity? Simply put, he eradicated them. He put them to death. He took their hope of salvation from them and he removed them from the equation. And in a moment just as Yehovah had told Moses and Aaron to stand back... they were no more.

My hope and my prayer is that by reading through our Father's Torah here in the book of Numbers, that we will have the eyes to see and the ears to hear exactly what is taking place here because what is taking place here in the book of Numbers in our Father's Torah not only effected the house of Israel back in Moses day... but it also affects us in our time today.

There is absolutely nothing that the house of Israel has done here in Torah that today's modern-day version of Christianity has not done today in our time. It is because of the deadly disease that Roman Catholicism has become the poster child of... (which is narcissism and vanity) that we have all of these man-made, man created, man concocted festivals and traditions that are nothing short of a mixing and mingling of God's word with man's narcissism and vanity.

The very reason that our Messiah called the rabbinical Pharisees of his day children of the devil was because of their narcissism and vanity. You see the rabbinical Pharisees wanted to usurp the power of God for themselves. They wanted to be seen as little earthly gods. And they were seen as little earthly gods because of their mixing and mingling of God's word with their own narcissism and vanity.

Make no mistake about it my friends, this deadly disease of narcissism and vanity is not a new trick of the devil. It's not a new weapon that the devil has just created or come up with. It's the same old weapon that he used against mankind in the garden of Eden when he promised both Adam and Eve that they both would become as "God". And because Adam and Eve wanted to become as gods themselves... they took of the forbidden fruit of God and they ate of it. It was because of the deadly disease of narcissism and vanity that Adam and Eve had thought that if they believed the serpent... that they themselves would become... as god's. And this appealed to them... and so they ate.

And once again after all of this had taken place... as we read through Numbers chapter 16 verse 45, I want us to grasp what is happening at the end of Numbers chapter 16. And so, let us go back and read the last few verses of **Numbers chapter 16 starting with verse 41 E1**

**Num 16:41** But on the next day all the congregation of the people of Israel grumbled against Moses and against Aaron, saying, "You have killed the people of the LORD."

**Num 16:42** And when the congregation had assembled against Moses and against Aaron, they turned toward the tent of meeting. And behold, the cloud covered it, and the glory of the LORD appeared.

**Num 16:43** And Moses and Aaron came to the front of the tent of meeting,

**Num 16:44** and the LORD spoke to Moses, saying,

**Num 16:45** "Get away from the midst of this congregation, that I may consume them in a moment." And they fell on their faces.

**Num 16:46** And Moses said to Aaron, "Take your censer, and put fire on it from off the altar and lay incense on it and carry it quickly to the congregation and make atonement for them, for wrath has gone out from the LORD; the plague has begun."

**Num 16:47** So Aaron took it as Moses said and ran into the midst of the assembly. And behold, the plague had already begun among the people. And he put on the incense and made atonement for the people.

**Num 16:48** And he stood between the dead and the living, and the plague was stopped.

**Num 16:49** Now those who died in the plague were 14,700, besides those who died in

## the affair of Korah.

Num 16:50 And Aaron returned to Moses at the entrance of the tent of meeting, when the plague was stopped.

Here in the final verses of Numbers chapter 16 verse 41 through 50 we once again see those stricken with the deadly disease of narcissism and vanity once again rising up against Moses saying, “You have killed the people of Yehovah”. And upon hearing this wickedness Yehovah himself once again makes a personal appearance telling Moses to get away from the midst of the congregation that he may consume them in a moment. And this was right after he just opened the earth to swallow the rebellion of Korah! And what does Moses and Aaron do? Do they laugh and mock the people and say “that’s what you get for opposing us?” No.

Moses immediately commands Aaron to take his censer and to put fire on it from the altar and to lay incense on it and to quickly carry it to the congregation so that he can make atonement for them in order to save them from the wrath of Yehovah God.

And so, Aaron runs into the midst of the assembly, but the plague had already begun. And there Aaron stood between the dead and the living and the plague was stopped. And it is written that over 14,000 people had died that day besides those who died in the affair of Korah which means that those who were swallowed up by the earth during Korah’s rebellion were not counted in this number of 14,000.

Once again it was because of Moses and Aaron that this plague was stopped because they once again understood the proper definition of what was righteous and what was good according to God... and this is exactly why Yehvoah God struck this narcissistic vanity filled people with a deadly plague so that the people could see that the only thing that could or would save them was... Moses and Aaron whom he had given authority to. Once again making an example out of the narcissistic and vanity filled.

My friends we simply cannot preach this enough. We cannot cement this in our hearts and in our minds enough. We cannot teach this to our children and to our children’s children enough. There is only one truth, there is only one righteousness, there is only one version of good. And what is righteous and what is good and what is just is what is righteous and good and just in the eyes of Yehovah and not... and I repeat not... in our eyes.

We don't get to pick and choose what righteous is or what good is or what is just. We don't have the right to say what is righteous or what is good or what is just. What is righteous and good and just was invented by Yehovah God in the beginning and what is righteous and good and just is his spoken word. And if we follow his spoken word that defines what righteousness is and what good is and what is just... then these things will indeed be written in our hearts and in our minds. Keeping his commandments and his commandments not being a burden to us is what is righteous and good and just. Doing his will is what is righteous and good and just. Keeping his commandments and his feast days and his appointments and his Sabbaths is what is righteous and good and just. Abstaining from idols and sexual immorality and what has been strangled and from blood is what is righteous and just and good. Touching no unclean thing and teaching our children the difference between the clean and the unclean is what is righteous and just and good in they eyes of Yehvoah God. And picking up our crosses and following his only begotten Son back to him... is what is righteous and just and good in his eyes.

And just to make this perfectly clear, our Father in heaven once again shows us beyond the shadow of a doubt who it is that he has chosen to be the High Priest of Israel in Numbers chapter 17. In Numbers chapter 17 Yehovah God shows the house of Israel beyond the shadow of a doubt who it is that he has chosen to be his High Priest so that the house of Israel will no longer have any excuses.

Let's see exactly how it is that Yehovah makes it abundantly clear that he has chosen Aaron to be his High Priest by reading Numbers chapter 17 so that we can know exactly what it says and just as importantly what it does not say. **Numbers chapter 17 E2**

### **Aaron's Staff Buds**

**Num 17:1** The LORD spoke to Moses, saying,

**Num 17:2** "Speak to the people of Israel, and get from them staffs, one for each fathers' house, from all their chiefs according to their fathers' houses, twelve staffs. Write each man's name on his staff,

**Num 17:3** and write Aaron's name on the staff of Levi. For there shall be one staff for the head of each fathers' house.

**Num 17:4** Then you shall deposit them in the tent of meeting before the testimony, where I meet with you.

**Num 17:5** And the staff of the man whom I choose shall sprout. Thus I will make to cease from me the grumblings of the people of Israel, which they grumble against you."

Num 17:6 Moses spoke to the people of Israel. And all their chiefs gave him staffs, one for each chief, according to their fathers' houses, twelve staffs. And the staff of Aaron was among their staffs.

Num 17:7 And Moses deposited the staffs before the LORD in the tent of the testimony.

Num 17:8 On the next day Moses went into the tent of the testimony, and behold, the staff of Aaron for the house of Levi had sprouted and put forth buds and produced blossoms, and it bore ripe almonds.

Num 17:9 Then Moses brought out all the staffs from before the LORD to all the people of Israel. And they looked, and each man took his staff.

Num 17:10 And the LORD said to Moses, "Put back the staff of Aaron before the testimony, to be kept as a sign for the rebels, that you may make an end of their grumbings against me, lest they die."

Num 17:11 Thus did Moses; as the LORD commanded him, so he did.

Num 17:12 And the people of Israel said to Moses, "Behold, we perish, we are undone, we are all undone.

Num 17:13 Everyone who comes near, who comes near to the tabernacle of the LORD, shall die. Are we all to perish?"

Once again, Yehovah makes the clear and concise distinction between all of the tribes of the house of Israel and Aaron. By causing the staff of Aaron to not only sprout, but to bear ripe almonds would surely put an end to this deadly disease of narcissism and vanity that the house of Israel was plagued with.... wouldn't you think? We shall see...

And now, as we get into Numbers chapter 18, after we have seen the absolute and definitive choosing of Aaron by Yehvoah... we clearly see how abundantly Yehovah God blesses Aaron and the Levitical priesthood.

As we read through Numbers chapter 18, we will see once again Yehovah giving everything that is offered at the tabernacle to Aaron and the Levitical priesthood.

God gives the tribe of the Levites to Aaron in order to be helpers to him and to guard over Aaron and the tabernacle and to do service in the tabernacle and to minister to him. Yehovah God gives Aaron and his son all of the contributions that were made to Yehovah. All of the consecrated things of the people of Israel God turned right around and gave to Aaron and his son. Every offering, every grain offering, every sin offering, every guilt offering was given to Yehvoah... Yehvoah turned around and gave to Aaron and his sons. Even the wave offering Yehovah gave to Aaron and his sons. The best of the oil and the best of the wine and the best of the grain the best of the first fruits of what the house of Israel gave to Yehovah...

Yehovah turned right around and gave to Aaron and his sons. If you think the house of Israel was jealous before... if you think that the house of Israel was plagued with narcissism and vanity before... wait till they get a load of this! Let's read through Numbers chapter 18 once again so that we can know exactly what it says and just as importantly what it does not say. **Numbers chapter 18 E3**

### **Duties of Priests and Levites**

**Num 18:1** So 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."

**Num 18:2** And 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.

**Num 18:3** They 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.

**Num 18:4** They 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.

**Num 18:5** And you shall keep guard over the sanctuary and over the altar, that there may never again be wrath on the people of Israel.

**Num 18:6** And 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.

**Num 18:7** And 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."

**Num 18:8** Then 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.

**Num 18:9** This 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.

**Num 18:10** In a most holy place shall you eat it. Every male may eat it; it is holy to you.

**Num 18:11** This 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.

**Num 18:12** All 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.

**Num 18:13** The 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.

**Num 18:14** Every devoted thing in Israel shall be yours.

Num 18:15 Everything that opens the womb of all flesh, whether man or beast, which they offer to the LORD, shall be yours. Nevertheless, the firstborn of man you shall redeem, and the firstborn of unclean animals you shall redeem.

Num 18:16 And their redemption price (at a month old you shall redeem them) you shall fix at five shekels in silver, according to the shekel of the sanctuary, which is twenty gerahs.

Num 18:17 But the firstborn of a cow, or the firstborn of a sheep, or the firstborn of a goat, you shall not redeem; they are holy. You shall sprinkle their blood on the altar and shall burn their fat as a food offering, with a pleasing aroma to the LORD.

Num 18:18 But their flesh shall be yours, as the breast that is waved and as the right thigh are yours.

Num 18:19 All the holy contributions that the people of Israel present to the LORD I give to you, and to your sons and daughters with you, as a perpetual due. It is a covenant of salt forever before the LORD for you and for your offspring with you."

Num 18:20 And the LORD said to Aaron, "You shall have no inheritance in their land, neither shall you have any portion among them. I am your portion and your inheritance among the people of Israel.

Num 18:21 "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,

Num 18:22 so that the people of Israel do not come near the tent of meeting, lest they bear sin and die.

Num 18:23 But 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.

Num 18:24 For 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."

Num 18:25 And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying,

Num 18:26 "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.

Num 18:27 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.

Num 18:28 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.

Num 18:29 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.'

Num 18:30 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.

Num 18:31 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.

Num 18:32 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.'"

What's important to notice here in Numbers chapter 18 verse one is that Yehvoah is now speaking directly not to Moses but to Aaron. And Yehovah once again tells Aaron that he and his sons and his father's household shall bear iniquity connected with the sanctuary and that he and his sons with him shall bear iniquity connected with his priesthood. And Yehovah tells Aaron to also bring his brothers with him who were the tribe of Levi the tribe of his father so that... they might join him and minister to him while Aaron and his sons are before the tent of the testimony. And once again Yehovah makes the declaration that he has taken Aaron's brothers the Levites from among the people of Israel and that the tribe of the Levites are a gift to Aaron to do the service of the tent of meeting. At which point in time Yehovah once again goes on to tell Aaron that he has given him charge of the contributions that have been made to Yehovah God.

Everything reserved from the fire, every offering, every grain offering every sin offering every guilt offering every wave offering that is given to Yehovah... Yehovah is now giving to Aaron and his sons and these things are to be holy to him because once again they are being given to Aaron by God himself. But I want us to notice what is also mentioned here in Numbers chapter 18 verse 26; where Yehovah tells Aaron to tell the Levites that they also shall present a contribution to Yehovah from their tithes which they receive from the people of Israel. This is called "a tithe of the tithe". And so, even Aaron and the Levitical priesthood were commanded to present a contribution to Yehovah.

Aaron and everyone who was involved in working at the temple and preaching the gospel message of Yehovah were to be taken care of by the house of Israel. And once again, we can see a direct reflection of this in the New Testament as well. I'd like us to turn to a couple of different Scriptures in the New Testament here this evening so that we can clearly see what is written about those who preach the gospel message today in our time. **(scrn 2)**

## Those Who Proclaim The Gospel... Should Get Their Living By The Gospel

1Co 9:11 If we have sown spiritual things among you, is it too much if we reap material things from you?

1Co 9:12 If others share this rightful claim on you, do not we even more?

Nevertheless, we have not made use of this right, but we endure anything rather than put an obstacle in the way of the gospel of Christ.

1Co 9:13 Do you not know that those who are employed in the temple service get their food from the temple, and those who serve at the altar share in the sacrificial offerings?

1Co 9:14 In the same way, the Lord commanded that those who proclaim the gospel should get their living by the gospel.



Today because we no longer have an earthly High Priest or a Levitical priesthood to properly preach and to teach the gospel message of our Father in heaven it is written in Ephesians chapter 4 that he has given apostles and prophets and evangelists and pastors and teachers to equip the saints for the work of ministry and for the building up of the body of our Messiah. And he has given us these people so that... we might all attain to the unity of faith in the knowledge of the Son of God and to mature manhood and to the measure of the stature of the fullness of our Messiah so that.. we may no longer be tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine and by human cunning and by human craftiness and deceitful schemes.

And therefore, just like Aaron and the Levitical priesthood was taken care of essentially by the house of Israel who made sacrifices to Yehovah... so too are those today who preach the gospel to make their living from the gospel.

You see once again, nothing has changed. When you support those who are preaching the truthful gospel message of Yehovah you are actually giving to Yehovah and Yehovah is blessing those who preach his gospel message and are serving him just like he blessed the Levitical priesthood who also preached his gospel message and were serving him.

From time to time, we hear ignorant and unstudied Christians proclaiming that the apostle Paul did not take money from the churches or from Christians because he was a tent maker. But this once again comes from the ignorant and the unstudied who love to cherry pick Scripture out of the Bible without reading the whole of the Bible. Let's take a look at a few Scriptures here this evening so that we might better understand that the apostle Paul himself did indeed make his living by the gospel. Again... Peter warns us that the writings of the Apostle Paul are difficult to understand in 2<sup>nd</sup> Peter 3. (scrn 3)

### Paul Makes His Living By The Gospel...

2Co 11:8 I robbed other churches by accepting support from them in order to serve you.

2Co 11:9 And when I was with you and was in need, I did not burden anyone, for the brothers who came from Macedonia supplied my need. So I refrained and will refrain from burdening you in any way.

Php 4:15 And you Philippians yourselves know that in the beginning of the gospel, when I left Macedonia, no church entered into partnership with me in giving and receiving, except you only.

Php 4:16 Even in Thessalonica you sent me help for my needs once and again.

Php 4:17 Not that I seek the gift, but I seek the fruit that increases to your credit.



You see the apostle Paul did not take from the assembly at Corinth because the assembly at Corinth was poor. And Paul did not want to trouble them by asking them for what they truly owed him according to the Torah. And so, he refrained from burdening that particular assembly. But... by the same token Paul did receive his living from the assemblies of the Philippians and in Thessalonica and Macedonia who... just as Paul tells us here in Philippians chapter 4 verse 16 helped him with his needs once and again.

As Paul was traveling, he did exactly what he tells us that he did in second Corinthians chapter 11 verse eight. Paul robbed other churches by and I quote,

“accepting support from them”... get that my friends... by accepting support from them... in order that he could serve the assembly at Corinth. My friends without proper funding no-one could preach and teach the gospel message. If you are burdened with another job that you must do in order to feed yourself and your family... you’re not going to have the time to fully commit yourself to the job that God has given you. And this is exactly why so many fall away from the job that God has given them.

And so, I do not want us to be ignorant about the fact that Paul did indeed certainly make his living by the gospel. What we need to understand about the apostle Paul is that the apostle Paul simply did not trouble assemblies that were too poor to help support him. He actually robbed other churches so that he could serve the poorer and more destitute assemblies. But... there should be no doubt in our minds that the apostle Paul could not have preached the gospel message on a full-time basis without support from the body. The only place that we hear of Paul working as a tent maker was in Corinth because the assembly could not help him. And even then... he was taking money from other assemblies in order to properly serve them without burdening them.

And so, as we are reading through Numbers chapter 18, we clearly see that what the house of Israel was contributing to Yehovah, what they were devoting to Yehvoah... Yehovah himself was always turning around and blessing Aaron and the Levitical priesthood who were once again preaching the gospel message and serving within his tabernacle. And absolutely nothing has changed today in our time. You see even Yehvoah God pays his tithes to his people. Not because he has to... but because he wants to, which is exactly why we keep his law. Not because we have to... not to earn anything from him... but because we want to, and we understand the biblical definition of the love of God written in 1<sup>st</sup> John chapter 5 verse 3 that tells us that the love of God is that we keep his commandments and that his commandments are not a burden to us. This my friends... is the what love is... in the eyes of Yehvoah.

There are those of us who have been called to preach and to teach the true gospel message no matter what the cost. I myself worked tirelessly studying and praying and fasting and teaching and preaching the truth of the gospel message according to our God breathed Scripture in every way that I can. And I... just like Paul do not demand that those who are poor give anything in return at all.

Make no mistake about it... there are many more people who take these teachings

and take these downloadable PDF files and take these downloadable videos and take these documentaries and take all of the work and all of the study that has been done and give absolutely nothing in return. There are many more people who take than there are who give back. But we know that not everyone can give back. There are only two reasons why someone would not support those who preach the gospel. Number one, they are poor and destitute. And no one wants to take food off of someone's table. And so we simply ask those who are poor and destitute to pray that Yehovah would touch the heart of someone who can support his word going forth so that we can continue in our work and continue to further his gospel message and to expand his soon coming kingdom.

And the second reason for someone not supporting a ministry is because they are not mature in the faith. They simply don't believe that they have to. Again, that age old disease of narcissism and vanity has not left them as of yet and they foolishly think that they can do it all on their own. But... they are still growing. And so, we love them just the same, and we serve them just the same.

Many of us who teach the truth of the gospel live a very humble life. My wife and I rent a small house we do not own a big house. We both drive used vehicles that are at least 10 years old. We buy most of our clothes at the goodwill. There are days that we are blessed and able to have meat and potatoes... and there are days that we have a can of beans for dinner. But just like the apostle Paul... what we are most concerned with is indeed the gospel message and expanding his soon coming kingdom. We are not worried about owning a big home or having a new vehicle to drive or wearing brand-new close all the time. We are concerned with expanding our Messiah as soon coming kingdom and this often times means sacrifice. And we always have faith that God will send us what we need and he always does send us what we need when we need it, and for that we know that we can trust in.

We are not worried about building mega-churches. Because we know that the gospel message was not spread around the world by a mega-church or a pastor with a private jet. The gospel message is spread across the land by those who teach others who then also go and teach others. This is the way that the apostles did it, and this is the way that it has always been meant to be done. I'm wise enough to know that if I can teach you what God has given me... so can you then go teach others! And if you can teach them... so can they teach others. We are in this together.

But I will say this. If you are at home eating a steak dinner and your pastor is at home eating a can of beans... we should be wise enough to know that there's something wrong with this picture. This is something that Yehovah would never have allowed to happen during the days of Moses.

But the point that needs to be made in all of this... is that this is exactly how Yehovah takes care of his children. We are to bless as we have been blessed. If you have been abundantly blessed... then you are expected to abundantly bless Yehovah. And the way that we bless Yehovah is to continually work to fuel the furtherance of his gospel message to those who have never heard it, and to take care of those around us who are not as fortunate as we are. And I would submit to you my friends that there are many professing Christians around the world today who claim to be Christians... who have not yet heard the truth of the gospel message of our Father in heaven. And this... is the spiritual warfare that we are engaged in.

In Moses day it was imperative for the tabernacle to be funded so that it could be maintained and so that it could thrive so that others might come to the tabernacle. Today in our time is imperative for the gospel message to be funded so that it can be maintained and so that it can thrive so that others might come to it. God did not give Apostles and prophets and evangelists and pastors and teachers to equip the saints for the work of ministry so that they could be abused by those that they are ministering to. And this is something that we must always remember.

And just as we said in our earlier studies into the book of Numbers... whatever we ever give to God he always quadruples and sends right back down upon us. Whenever we help the widow or the poor or the destitute or his Gospel message to go forth we are indeed giving to him. And what ever the widow or the poor and destitute or those who preach the Gospel receive from their brothers and sisters should always be seen as a gift that comes directly from Yehovah himself. Once again... whatever we bestow upon him he sends back upon us tenfold sometimes even a thousandfold sometimes even more. His mercy and his grace cannot be measured in gold or silver or human trinkets. The breath of life that fills our lungs... the ground that we stand... the earth and all that is in it... none of it can be purchased. And the gifts and the calling of God are indeed as the apostle Paul tells us is irrevocable. And yet... every time we offer up a prayer of praise, every time we take a minute to worship him, every time we give thanks to him, he turns right around and heaps even more blessings upon us.

Every time I drive down the road and see his handiwork... I'm blessed. Every time I put my key in the ignition and my old truck and it starts... I'm blessed. Every time it's cold outside and I'm warm inside... I'm blessed. Every time I can go to my cupboard and make a simple cup of coffee... I know that I'm blessed. Every time I'm able to hug a loved one... I'm blessed. Every time I wake up in the morning and the ceiling is still there... I'm blessed. Every time we gain a new brother or a new sister within our assembly... we are all blessed. Every time we have the opportunity to pray together... we are all blessed. And every time we have the breath of life in our lungs and his name leaves our lips with praise... we are massively blessed. A simple glass of water, a simple walk to the bathroom, the ability to get up when we sit down, the ability to pass on a few dollars to someone who's worse off than we are all let us know... that we have been abundantly blessed. And even more than that... the promise that has been given to us by our Father in heaven through Abraham and his only begotten Son is more blessing than we will ever be able to repay. And yet... he continues... to bless. Where sin abounds... grace abounds more. We bless because we have been blessed. He loved us while we were still sinners. And that... is what true love is all about.

My hope and my prayer is that we are able to make a distinction between the deadly disease of narcissism and vanity and the blessing of discernment and the knowledge of true righteousness and what is good and what is just in the eyes of our Father in heaven and not in our own eyes. Let the Scripture that we find here in the Torah, in the law, in the spoken word of Yehovah God lead us and guide us as we lead and guide others by following our Messiah and King back to our Father in heaven where we belong.

And with those blessings under our belts... I will do as I always do, and I will once again ask that everyone within the sound of my voice would please take what you have heard here this evening to your own prayer closet. Bow your head and bend your knee and face the holy promised land of Jerusalem and ask in the name of Yeshua Hamashiach if what you have heard here this evening be true or not.

Ask, seek, and knock on his door and on his door alone, and the proper door will be opened to you. And if you will do that... and if you will stay the course to the end... you and I will surely walk through the gates of his soon coming kingdom together.