### Numbers

## Chapter 18

1Then the Lord spoke to Aaron and told him:  
  
 ‘You, your sons, and your [tribe] will be guilty of any sins against the holy things, and you and your sons [are responsible for] your Priesthood.  
  
 2‘So now, take the rest of your brothers from the Tribe of Levi (the family line of your forefather) and accept them as yours. Have them serve you and your sons there in front of the Tent of Proofs.  
  
 3‘They must obey you and follow your instructions regarding everything that has to do with the Tent. However, they must not go near the holy furnishings or the Altar, so that they – and you – don’t die!  
  
 4‘They must be joined to you and follow your instructions regarding the Tent of Proofs and serve as guards in watches at the Tent… But no outsiders may even approach you. 5You alone are to give instructions when it comes to the holy things and the Altar… And there must be no more anger [about this] among the children of IsraEl.  
  
 6‘For I have also chosen your brothers the Levites from among the children of IsraEl as a gift to Jehovah, to officiate at the Tent of Proofs.  
  
 7‘Now, you and your descendants must maintain your assigned positions as Priests, serving at the Altar and inside the veil, doing the things that are required. You must serve in the position of your Priesthood, and any [unauthorized] person who approaches it must die!’  
  
  
8Then the Lord told Aaron:  
  
 ‘Look, I have given you all the instructions regarding the first fruitage of everything that’s to be made perfect for Me by the children of IsraEl. This is an honor for you and for your descendants, and it’s a law throughout the ages 9that all the perfect holy things from among the burnt offerings, gifts, sacrifices, and all the error and sin offerings – whatever holy things that they bring to Me – will belong to you and to your sons.  
  
 10‘These things must be considered holy by you, and all the males (you and your sons) must eat them inside this very holy place.  
  
 11‘I’m also giving all the first fruitage among the gifts – the wave-offerings of the children of IsraEl – to you and to your sons and daughters. It’s a law throughout the ages that all those in your homes that are clean may eat them.  
  
 12‘All the first offerings of oil, wine, grain, and whatever else they may offer to Jehovah, is yours. 13All the first fruitage of the land – whatever is offered to Jehovah – must belong to you, and everyone in your home who is clean may eat them.  
  
 14‘And anything that the children of IsraEl may choose to dedicate is also yours. 15Whatever they bring to Jehovah, whether a man or an animal – everything that opens a womb – is yours.  
  
 ‘However, the first-born of men and the first-born of unclean animals must be ransomed. 16The value of anything a month old and upwards is 5 silver coins (20 copper coins per holy silver coin).  
  
 17‘They can’t buy back their first-born calves, sheep, or goats, because these things are holy. You must pour their blood on the Altar, and offer the fat as a burnt offering and a sweet odor to Jehovah. 18Then their flesh – the breast and the right shoulder of the wave-offerings – is to be yours.  
  
 19‘Also, I’ve given all the special offerings of holy things – whatever the children of IsraEl offer as special to Jehovah – to you and to your sons and daughters who live with you. This is to be a rule throughout the ages. It’s a Sacred Agreement of Salt throughout the ages between Me and you, and with your offspring that descends from you.’  
  
  
20Then the Lord told Aaron:  
  
 ‘You aren’t going to receive an inheritance in that land, nor may you own any part of it, for I am your portion and your inheritance in the midst of the children of IsraEl!  
  
 21‘Look! I’ve also given the sons of Levi 1/10th part of everything in IsraEl as their inheritance for the services that they are to perform at the Tent of Proofs.  
  
 22‘Now, the children of IsraEl must not approach the Tent of Proofs again, or they’ll [be found] guilty and die. 23Just the Levites may work and serve at the Tent of Proofs, and they are to be responsible for any errors against it!  
  
 ‘This is a law throughout the ages and throughout all your generations!  
  
 ‘They’re not to receive an inheritance among the children of IsraEl, 24because I’ve given the Levites the 1/10th part that the children of IsraEl must bring to Jehovah as theirs… And that’s why I’m telling them that they are to receive no inheritance among the children of IsraEl!’  
  
  
25Then the Lord spoke to Moses and said:  
  
 26‘Speak to the Levites and tell them that when they receive the 1/10th part from the children of IsraEl that I’m giving to them as their inheritance, they must then set aside [a further] 1/10th of that 1/10th as a wave offering to Jehovah.  
  
 27‘These wave offerings must be treated as their own grain offerings from the [threshing] floor and wine press. 28They must set this portion aside from all 1/10th part offerings to Jehovah – along with everything else that they receive from the children of IsraEl – and give My offerings to Aaron the Priest.  
  
 29‘This includes a [1/10th part] of all the gifts that are given as offerings to Jehovah and all the first fruitage.  
  
 30‘Tell them that whenever they offer the first fruitage, the Levites must think of it as the produce from their own threshing floors or wine presses. 31Then, they and their families may eat it wherever they wish, because this is their reward for serving at the Tent of Proofs.  
  
 32‘They won’t sin by doing this, as long as they [set aside] a portion of the first-fruitage [for Aaron], and as long as they don’t dirty the holy things of the children of IsraEl...  
  
 ‘Otherwise, they must be put to death.’