

Ensuring God's worship

Israel is camped around the tabernacle (2 v 2). If God is to dwell among them, and go in their midst to battle, the tabernacle must function properly.

Worship requires work. Adoration requires administration.

Aaron and sons

Read Numbers 3 v 1-4

These verses introduce Aaron and his sons, the priests of the tabernacle.

? *What dark note is there in this introduction?*

The deaths of childless sons Nadab and Abihu underline the importance of obeying God in all the commands that follow. Read the warnings regarding unauthorised approaches, on penalty of death, to the tabernacle in 3 v 10, 38; 4 v 17-20. God's holiness demands reverent obedience.

Read Numbers 3 v 5-13 and 3 v 40-51

? *What role are the Levites to play at the tabernacle?*

TIME OUT

Review the events of the Passover.

Read Exodus 12 v 21-32; 13 v 1, 11-16

? *Why and how does God claim special ownership of the Levites?*

Counting Levites

Read Numbers 3 v 14-39

The Levites are numbered at the Lord's

command (v 14-16), just as the other tribes were earlier numbered. This census, however, is of males a month old and upwards (v 22, 39). Why? This census is not of fighting men but of all Levites. God is ensuring that their number matches the number of firstborn Israelites (v 40, 43).

Apply

God's attention to detail is staggering. He cares about curtains, tent pegs, and ropes! No matter escapes his attention. These chapters demonstrate that structure and order are not counter to worship.

Read 1 Corinthians 14 v 26-33

? *What does this mean for your church?*

More Levites

Read Numbers 4 v 1-49

This census is of males between 30 and 50. Why? This is a count of the adult Levites who are able to serve at the tabernacle, and carry the tabernacle while the camp is moving (4 v 46-47). Heavy lifting is required.

Pray

Thank God that he considers every detail of his universe and cares about how he is worshipped. Nothing is too small for him, including your fears and anxieties (Matthew 10 v 29-31), as well as your worship. Pray in light of this great, comforting truth.