

Guidelines for the Exercise of the Lord's day Prophesying
Message Three : The service of the priests and the Levites for God's move

I. Overview:

Numbers 3 and 4 cover the holy service, which is a picture of the church service. The holy service was carried out by the priests and the Levites. The priests were the anointed ones who served God directly, guarding the entrance to the Tent of Meeting and taking responsible for the entire sanctuary. The Levites did their service not according to their way but under the direction of the anointed priests. The principle in God's New Testament economy is that God needs man to match Him in His move. In the Old Testament there was a distinction between the priests and the Levites; in the New Testament there is only the priests. Thus, before any kind of service, we must first serve as priests in the Lord's presence; all service must be priestly. In Hebrew the word service is warfare; while we are preaching, teaching, edifying others, and building up the Body of Christ, we are fighting. The only reward for our priestly and Levitical service is Christ.

II. Truth and Enlightenment:

Day 1 —

A. Explain the basic principle of the holy service.

The basic principle of the holy service is that it is without confusion; it is based on life. Everything in the holy service is in good order and is under the divine ordination. We may use the human body as an illustration. Confusion in the human body is a sign of sickness. Likewise, in the Body of Christ as God's army, which is altogether a matter of life, there must be good coordination.

B. How will we consider the duties of the priests in Numbers?

The priests are the anointed ones who serve God directly. The priests were to camp before the tabernacle, on the east, toward the sunrise. The priests were actually gate guards, guarding the entrance to the tabernacle. Anyone who wanted to serve God had to first pass through the priests. For the priests to keep the charge of the sanctuary meant that they were responsible for the entire sanctuary and everything related to it.

Day 2 —

A. Expound the service of the Levites.

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. 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. Why do we say that the Levites were a gift to Aaron and his sons?

The Levites were a gift to Aaron and his sons. God wanted all the firstborn of Israel to do the service.

Eventually, God used the Levites to replace them. The children of Israel gave their firstborn to God as a gift, and these were replaced by the Levites. God then gave the Levites, who had been given to Him, as a gift to the priests. The Levites were to join Aaron and his sons and minister to them.

Day 3 —

A. What is the basic principle in God's New Testament economy?

In His New Testament economy, God does nothing without man. Man must be one with God, match God, and be bound together with God. This implies that in the New Testament God's economy has bound man together with God. God is willing to be bound to man, for He cannot move without man. Now God moves not only with man but also within man.

B. How do we need to see the Lord's move today?

In order to see how Christ moves on earth, we should look at the move of the tabernacle. The tabernacle moved on the shoulders of the descendants of the three sons of Levi. The Lord moves through our bearing the Ark, the furnishings of the sanctuary, and the Tent of Meeting. If we do not move, He cannot move. Rather, He is bound and even imprisoned within us.

Day 4 —

A. What do God's moves differ in the Old Testament from New Testament?

In the Old Testament, God could move by Himself, without man. For instance, when God created the heavens and the earth, there was no need of man to match Him. But the New Testament begins with the divine incarnation, which is that God needs man to match Him. Without man, God can do nothing. In the New Testament, God must have man to match Him, to be one with Him, to coordinate with Him.

B. Expound that in the New Testament, all Levitical service must be priestly.

We today are both priests and Levites. When we as priests do the Levitical work, we must be under the supervision of our priestly view. For example, arranging chairs in the meeting hall is not a spiritual work but a Levitical service. But this Levitical service should be carried out under the inward, spiritual view of the priesthood.

Day 5 —

A. Why can we say that our service to the Lord must be priestly?

The priests in the Old Testament were not only priests but also the army, so the army was a priestly army. Priests not only stand before God, ministering unto Him, but they also fight the battle. The army of the Lord is a priestly army. This means that if we are not priests, we can never fight the battle for the Lord. We must be a priesthood in order to fight the battle for God.

B. Explain what means the word service in Numbers 4:3.

In Hebrew the word service in Numbers 4:3 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.

Day 6 -

A. Why is it a kind of spiritual warfare to preach the gospel or to edify the saints?

Actually preaching the gospel, bringing salvation to men, and leading them to the Lord is a kind of spiritual warfare. Edifying the saints is to deliver them from the rule of Satan, that is, from sins, the world, the flesh, and everything relating to the old creation. Thus, they will be further delivered from the satanic power of darkness. Hence, it is also a kind of spiritual warfare.

B. How can we talk about the spiritual warfare from 2 Corinthians 10:3-5?

Although a Christian is saved, it is possible that a large portion of his mind and thoughts remains the stronghold of Satan, and many of his ideas and concepts still serve as the base usurped by Satan. Therefore, when the apostles edify the saints, their purpose is to cast down through warfare all the strongholds and bases of Satan in the saints and eventually bring their thoughts into captivity unto the obedience of Christ.

III. Conclusion:

The principle in God's New Testament economy is that God needs man to match Him in His move on earth; the service of the priests and the Levites is much needed. In Hebrew the word service is warfare, indicating military service. In the Old Testament there was a distinction between the priests and the Levites; however, in the New Testament there is only one class, that of the priests, who are fully saturated, filled, and one with the Lord. 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, edifying the saints, and praying are all a kind of warfare. Our service needs to do outward things under the heavenly view of the priesthood. Then whatever we do in the church will become a spiritual activity and will minister life to others. While we are caring for business matters, we should minister life to others.