

Numbers 17-Are We All To Perish?

Num 17:1-13 ESV The LORD spoke to Moses, saying, 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, 3 and write Aaron's name on the staff of Levi. For there shall be one staff for the head of each fathers' house. 4 Then you shall deposit them in the tent of meeting before the testimony, ***where I meet with you.*** 5 **And the staff of *the man whom I choose shall sprout.*** Thus I will make to cease from me the grumbings of the people of Israel, which they grumble against you." 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. 7 And Moses deposited the staffs before the LORD in the tent of the testimony. 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.** 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. 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.**" 11 Thus did Moses; as the LORD commanded him, so he did. 12 And the people of Israel said to Moses, "**Behold, we perish, we are undone, we are all undone. 13 Everyone who comes near, who comes near to the tabernacle of the LORD, shall die. Are we all to perish?**"

Vs 5 The Man (singular) whom I shall choose

"ARE WE ALL TO PERISH?" - Logical question when we review the last chapter - and now this

- Korah rebelled - 250 died
- The congregation continued to raise up against Moses - 14,700 died

Now this - there is only "ONE MAN" the LORD designated as "The Man Whom I Choose"

- and only ONE STAFF came to life --- Uh-oh "Are we all to perish?"

Vs 8 - Staff sprouted, put forth buds, produced blossoms, bore ripe almonds

- **The staff was dead and came to life**

This is an obvious picture of Jesus

- Aaron was chosen by God - the proof was in his staff which was dead -- but came to life
- Jesus was chosen by God - He was dead and came to life and has become our high priest

Heb 5:1-6 ESV For every high priest chosen from among men is appointed to act on behalf of men in relation to God, to offer gifts and sacrifices for sins. 2 He can deal gently with the ignorant and wayward, since he himself is beset with weakness. 3 Because of this he is obligated to offer sacrifice for his own sins just as he does for those of the people. 4 And **no one takes this honor for himself, but only when called by God, just as Aaron was.** 5 So also Christ did not exalt himself to be made a high priest, but was appointed by him who said to him, "**You are my Son, today I have begotten you**"; 6 as he says also in another place, "You are a priest forever, after the order of Melchizedek."

You are my Son, today I have begotten you

Act 13:28-33 ESV And though they found in him no guilt worthy of death, they asked Pilate to have him executed. 29 And when they had carried out all that was written of him, they took him down from the tree and laid him in a tomb. 30 **But God raised him from the dead**, 31 and for many days he appeared to those who had come up with him from Galilee to Jerusalem, who are now his witnesses to the people. 32 And we bring you the good news that what God promised to the fathers, 33 **this he has fulfilled to us their children by raising Jesus, as also it is written in the second Psalm, "You are my Son, today I have begotten you."**

So How do we come near? (seeing the same event from different perspectives)

Their view - WE SHALL DIE

- **Vs 13 Everyone who comes near**, who comes near to the tabernacle of the LORD, **shall die**.

God's view - LEST THEY DIE

- **Vs 10** "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 grumblings against me, **lest they die.**"
 - **If they came near in their sin they would die** - He chose Aaron to come near and serve as priest - in order to keep them from dying

Role of the high priest is to ACT ON BEHALF OF MEN IN RELATION TO GOD

Heb 5:1 ESV For every high priest chosen from among men is **appointed to act on behalf of men** in relation to God, to offer gifts and sacrifices for sins.

Their 1st mistake was their thinking that ALL the congregation are holy

- Num 16:3-5 ESV They assembled themselves together against Moses and against Aaron and said to them, "You have gone too far! For **all in the congregation are holy**, every one of them, **and the LORD is among them**. Why then do you exalt yourselves above the assembly of the LORD?"

The 2nd mistake was not realizing IT IS THE LORD who chooses the way into his presence

- 4 When Moses heard it, he fell on his face, 5 and he said to Korah and all his company, "In the morning **the LORD will show who is his, and who is holy, and will bring him near to him. The one whom he chooses he will bring near to him.**

We still have these same struggles today

- 1) People somehow believe we are good enough to go to heaven on our own merit
- 2) And people somehow believe all roads lead to heaven - that Jesus is NOT the only way to heaven

The role of Jesus the high priest

Heb 9:11-14 ESV **But when Christ appeared as a high priest** of the good things that have come, then through the greater and more perfect tent (not made with hands, that is, not of this creation) **12 he entered once for all into the holy places**, not by means of the blood of goats and calves but **by means of his own blood**, thus securing an eternal redemption. **13** For if the blood of goats and bulls, and the sprinkling of defiled persons with the ashes of a heifer, sanctify for the purification of the flesh, **14 how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God, purify our conscience from dead works to serve the living God.**

This is the only way we can draw near

Heb 4:14-16 ESV **Since then we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens**, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. **15** For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. **16 Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace,** that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

Are we all to perish? - it is a great question - and there is one answer

TO PERISH IS TO LOSE ETERNAL LIFE -- Joh 3:16 ESV "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him **should not perish** but have eternal life.

UNLESS YOU REPENT YOU WILL PERISH -- Luk 13:1-5 ESV There were some present at that very time who told him about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices. **2** And he answered them, "Do you think that these Galileans were worse sinners than all the other Galileans, because they suffered in this way? **3** No, I tell you; **but unless you repent,** you will all likewise **perish**. **4** Or those eighteen on whom the tower in Siloam fell and killed them: do you think that they were worse offenders than all the others who lived in Jerusalem? **5** No, I tell you; **but unless you repent,** you will all likewise **perish.**"

2Pe 3:9 ESV The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, **not wishing that any should perish,** but that all should reach repentance.

What Does It Mean to Repent?

Repentance is Produced By Godly Sorrow

- 2Co 7:10 ESV For **godly grief produces a repentance that leads to salvation** without regret, whereas worldly grief produces death.

Repentance moves our focus from Dead Work to faith on nothing but the cross of our LORD Jesus Christ

- Act 20:20-21 ESV how I did not shrink from declaring to you anything that was profitable, and teaching you in public and from house to house, **21** testifying both to Jews and to Greeks of **repentance** toward God and of **faith** in our Lord Jesus Christ.

- Heb 6:1 ESV Therefore let us leave the elementary doctrine of Christ and go on to maturity, not laying again a foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God,

Repentance produces a changed life

- Act 26:20 ESV but declared first to those in Damascus, then in Jerusalem and throughout all the region of Judea, and also to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God, **performing deeds in keeping with their repentance.**

Repentance is an obedient surrender to the father's will

- Mat 21:28-31 ESV "What do you think? A man had two sons. And he went to the first and said, 'Son, go and work in the vineyard today.' 29 And he answered, 'I will not,' but afterward he changed his mind ***[kjkv afterward he repented, and went]*** and went. 30 And he went to the other son and said the same. And he answered, 'I go, sir,' but did not go. 31 Which of the two did the will of his father?" They said, "The first." Jesus said to them, "Truly, I say to you, the tax collectors and the prostitutes go into the kingdom of God before you. 30 And he came to the second, and said likewise. And he answered and said, I go, sir: and went not. 31 Whether of them twain did the will of his father? They say unto him, The first..."

Are we all to perish?

It is a question that should sit upon the heart of every person

It depends

1. Do you recognize that in your own goodness you can never draw near
2. You need a high priest (someone of God's choosing) who can bring the blood of a sacrifice in your place
3. You can draw near only on the merits of His blood
4. Are you willing to repent?