

Numbers Chapter 15

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[0 : 00] So we're looking at Numbers 15, page 151 in your Bibles. And we'll read the first 23 verses.

The Lord said to Moses, speak to the Israelites and say to them, after you enter the land I'm giving you as a home, and you present to the Lord food offerings from the herd of the flock as an aroma pleasing to the Lord, whether burnt offerings or sacrifices, special vows or freewill offerings or festival offerings, then the person who brings an offering shall present to the Lord a grain offering of a tenth of an ephah of the finest flour mixed with a quarter of a hin of olive oil.

With each lamb for the burnt offering or the sacrifice, prepare a quarter of a hin of wine as a drink offering. With a ram, prepare a grain offering of one-fifth of an ephah of the finest flour mixed with a third of a hin of olive oil and a third of a hin of wine as a drink offering.

Offer it as an aroma pleasing to the Lord. When you prepare a young bull as a burnt offering or sacrifice for special vow or fellowship offering to the Lord, bring with a bull a grain offering of three-tenths of an ephah of the finest flour mixed with half a hin of olive oil and also bring half a hin of wine as a drink offering.

This will be a food offering, an aroma pleasing to the Lord. Each bull or ram, each lamb or young goat is to be prepared in this manner. Do this for each one, for as many as you prepare.

[1 : 39] Everyone who is a native born must do these things in this way when they present a food offering as an aroma pleasing to the Lord. For the generations to come, whenever a foreigner or anyone else living among you presents a food offering as an aroma pleasing to the Lord, they must do exactly as you do.

The community is to have the same rules for you and for the foreigner residing among you. This is a lasting ordinance for the generations to come. You and the foreigner shall be the same before the Lord.

The same laws and regulations will apply both to you and to the foreigner residing among you. The Lord said to Moses, speak to the Israelites and say to them, when you enter the land to which I am taking you and you eat the food of the land, present a portion as an offering to the Lord.

Present a loaf from the first of your ground meal and present it as an offering from the threshing floor. Throughout the generations to come, you are to give this offering to the Lord from the first of your ground meal.

Well, we'll continue the reading later. So in Numbers 15, verse 22. Now, if you as a community unintentionally fail to keep any of these commands the Lord gave Moses, any of the Lord's commands to you through him from the day the Lord gave them and continuing throughout the generations to come.

[3 : 13] And if this is done unintentionally without the community being aware of it, then the whole community is to offer a young bull for a burnt offering as an aroma pleasing to the Lord, along with its prescribed grain offering and drink offering and a male goat for a sin offering.

The priest is to make atonement for the whole Israelite community and they will be forgiven, for it was not intentional and they have presented to the Lord for their wrong a food offering and a sin offering.

The whole Israelite community and the foreigners residing among them will be forgiven because all the people were involved in the unintentional wrong. But if just one person sins unintentionally, that person must bring a year old female goat for a sin offering.

The priest is to make atonement before the Lord for the one who erred by sinning unintentionally and when atonement has been made, that person will be forgiven. One and the same law applies to everyone who sins unintentionally, whether a native-born Israelite or a foreigner residing among you.

But to anyone who sins defiantly, whether native-born or foreigner, utters blasphemy against the Lord and must be cut off from the people of Israel. Because they have despised the Lord's word and broken his commands, they must surely be cut off.

[4 : 30] Their guilt remains on them. While the Israelites were in the wilderness, a man was found gathering wood on the Sabbath day. Those who found him gathering wood brought him to Moses and Aaron and the whole assembly and they kept him in custody because it was not clear what should be done to him.

Then the Lord said to Moses, The man must die. The whole assembly must stone him outside the camp. So the assembly took him outside the camp and stoned him to death as the Lord commanded Moses.

The Lord said to Moses, Speak to the Israelites and say to them, Throughout the generations to come, you are to make tassels on the corners of your garments with a blue cord on each tassel.

You will have these tassels to look at and so you will remember all the commands of the Lord that you must obey them and not prostitute yourselves by chasing after the lusts of your own hearts and eyes.

Then you will remember to obey all my commands and will be consecrated to your God. I am the Lord your God who brought you out of Egypt to be your God. I am the Lord your God.

[5 : 36] In verse in chapter 15. Thank you, Joel, for reading that whole chapter to us. And hopefully you'll understand why I asked him to read the whole chapter.

There is very much a sense of unity in this chapter. Following on from what we looked at last week and the previous weeks. As God continues to deal graciously with his people.

Let's pray briefly together. Oh Lord, your word is truth. And we need you to speak your word of truth into our lives.

With power and effect. Lord, we cannot and are unable to find our way. Through this world in our own wisdom or understanding.

But we thank you for your Holy Spirit who is the spirit of truth. We pray that he would reveal and speak to us your way. And equip us to walk in it now. For Christ's sake we ask.

[6 : 37] Amen. Amen. Everything in life is measured. And usually there is an official agreed measurement or scale.

Of course in the UK we are in that sort of split situation. Where many people would still prefer feet and inches.

But young people would grow up with metres and millimetres. When it comes to weighing out the spuds. Then many of us would like a hundred weight. Pounds and ounces.

But the reality is that kilograms and grams are the currency in one sense of the day. Temperature. Centigrade or Fahrenheit. There's a few things that are pretty universally accepted.

Time thankfully. There may be a few people who still use an hourglass. Sunglass to tell the time. But most of us have got to the point where we recognise. Hours.

[7 : 41] Minutes. Seconds. And so on. The question is how do you measure sin? You measure everything else.

Intellectual ability. You measure height and length. And weight and time. And so on and so forth. How do we measure sin? Or how do we quantify sin? If I can put it that way as well.

I think many of us. And certainly many of those around about us. Would have their own measurement of sin. In one sense it's one of those things which we measure ourselves. We judge ourselves.

And we say well those sins. Those particular sins. They're the weightiest sins. The heaviest sins. The worst sins. But when it comes to my sins. Of course then ours are the lightest sins.

The smallest sins. The least significant sins. The least serious sins. Now God's people in Numbers chapters 13 and 14.

[8 : 41] Had committed a terribly serious sin. And we looked at that over these last two weeks previously. Such a serious sin.

That the consequences of their sin was devastating. Severe. Truncated. Long. It was going to affect them as a people.

As a nation for at least 40 years. Every person. Who had committed this sin. Over the age of 20.

Was going to die in the wilderness. In the next 40 years. Not one of them would enter into the promised land. Not one of them. Would enter into the fullness of the promises that God had given.

All the way back in Abraham. Through Isaac and Jacob and Joseph. And Moses. God had forgiven their sin.

[9 : 39] Wonderfully. Graciously. But there's still a price to be paid. For their disobedience. When we get to chapter 15. This sin.

If I can put it that way. Is still on the mind of God. This sin of God's people is still there. It's still in one sense. Under the surface.

It's not gone away. It's not forgotten. It's not just sort of. Well that's. That's a clean break. Now we can move on. No. The sin of God's people is still uppermost. I would say. In the mind of the Lord.

And God does not want it to be forgotten by his people. But. Wonderfully. When we get to chapter 15. We see. Some great encouragements and help.

In living a life. Free of sin. Or rather. Living a life. In fellowship with God. And. We've not seen that. When we read it.

[10 : 36] But I think that. I hope you'll see. That this. Chapter is all about. How we can live. The way God wants us to live. How we can live that life. Which is not only a blessing to us. But pleasing to him.

There are several things. That I want us to draw out. And that stand out. I think. When we look at this chapter. The very first thing. Which isn't maybe immediately obvious.

But hopefully you picked it up. As. As. Joel was reading. Is. God. Encourages his people. In spite of all that's gone on.

In spite of the punishment. And the consequences of their sin. God speaks to them. Words of great encouragement. If we read there in verse 2. Speak to the Israelites. And say to them.

After you enter the land. I'm giving you as a home. Now remember the situation. They had sinned and refused. To go into the land. Because they believed that God would neglect them.

[11 : 32] And leave them to die. And fail them. And in one sense. A large majority of them. Were not going in. To enter the land. But here. God reminds them. You will enter the land.

All that's gone on. They'll not prevent me. From keeping my promises. He says it again. Later on. In verse 17. The Lord said to Moses. Speak to these lights.

And say to them. When you enter the land. To which I am taking you. Yes. Many of them will die. Yes.

It will be another 40 years. Before anyone enters the land again. Yet God speaks with absolute assurance. And confidence to them. That his promise will be fulfilled. So the very first thing.

That we need to remind ourselves of. In walking with God. Is this. He keeps his promises. Just as he is just. If I'm that way.

[12 : 27] In dealing with sin. So he is just. And faithful. In his promises. Just as he is faithful. In keeping his word of judgment. He is faithful.

In keeping his promise of blessing. No inconsistency with God. No unfaithfulness with God. That's why we need to study the word of God.

That's why we need to read the word of God. That's why we need to know the promises of God. The land I am giving you. The land I will take you to. Nothing can prevent God.

From keeping his promises to his people. Even our failures. Even your mistakes. Even can I say it. And I hope that you'll agree with me. Even our sins.

Cannot stop God. From keeping his promises of grace. And faithfulness to us. To you. And we know that we're sinners.

[13 : 26] And we know that we make mistakes. And we know we foul up. But God will never renege upon his word. Whatever we do.

Or the world. Or Satan does against us. Now such an assurance. Of course. That God is gracious. And that God in spite of our sins and failings.

Will keep his promises. Is not an excuse in one sense. Not a cover for us to act evilly. Or sinfully. We cannot say well. Doesn't matter what I do.

Doesn't matter how I live. Doesn't matter. Doesn't matter what sins I carry out. I know that God will forgive me. And I'll be okay. That sort of attitude of heart. We know is not a regenerate heart.

It's not a heart that's been changed by the spirit of God. Do you remember how Paul argues that in Romans 6 particularly. Where he tells us that where sin abounded.

[14 : 21] Grace does much more abound. And he says. So then. Should we sin more? So that grace will abound more? Absolutely not. People have misused the grace of God.

To say that God doesn't care about sin. But he surely does. That sin doesn't bother God. It surely does. And this promise.

This assurance. That God gives his people. That they will be in the land. Has in one sense an added promise as well. An added blessing as well.

There is the promise as well. That God will continue to fellowship with his people. He assures them of his nearness. He assures them of his fellowship. Do you notice these offerings?

These offerings which all had to include. This extra bit of flour and oil and wine. Do you notice that none of them are sin offerings? None of them are to atone for their sins.

[15 : 20] All of them are offerings which come freely. As an expression of worship to God. So we have the fellowship offering. And the food offering. And the grain offering. The free will offering.

So these offerings. These acts of worship. This giving to God. Comes from a heart of thankfulness. And love. And appreciation for who God is. And what he'll do.

And God is saying. When you get into the land. You're going to continue to know me. And enjoy me. And you're going to continue to worship me. They're not.

As it were. To deal with their sin. They're simply. The natural and normal relationship. Between God and his people. And the wonderful thing is this.

And again. God repeats it. And I hope again. Perhaps you picked it up. I'd encourage you. When you read the scriptures. Look for repetition. Look for things that are said more than once.

[16 : 19] Because God is speaking to us. We are dim. At least I am. And we miss out on things. But you notice how again and again. We get this phrase. Pleasing to the Lord.

Did you see that? It's there first of all. In verse 3. An offering. An aroma. Pleasing to the Lord. Again in verse 7. Offer it as an aroma.

Pleasing to the Lord. Again in verse 10. This will be a food offering. An aroma. Pleasing to the Lord. Verse 14. Anyone who presents a food offering.

As an aroma. Pleasing to the Lord. What is God saying to his people? He's saying. I am pleased. With your worship. There's something that you can do.

Which gives pleasure to God. Which is to worship him. Freely. Gladly. To bring offerings to him. Not because we must.

[17 : 19] You know how people get that. Into their heads. Don't they? About God. Oh. I've got to do something. To please him. I've got to do something. To earn his favor. I've got to do something. To make him like me.

I've got to do something. So he'll answer my prayer. That is not the God of the Bible. That is the God of every religion. Apart from evangelical. Biblical Christianity. Bible Christianity.

Is always this. We give. Because God has given. We love. Because he's first loved us. We don't give to earn. Or to buy. Or to barter.

Or to twist his arm. It comes from a heart. That says. Lord Jesus. I thank you so much. That you gave yourself for me. Everything I have is yours. And I give it gladly. That's why when we get to.

The question of. Giving. And tithing. And all those other things. And service. And so on. In the New Testament. We find again and again. These things come from the heart. We cannot do anything for God.

[18 : 18] Which is out of. If I put it this way. A sense of. I must. Because I'm under constraint. Or law. Everything that we do for the Lord. Must come from.

I love him. And I want to show my love to him. And I want to express my. Thankfulness to him. Yes dear friends.

We too. Are to bring offerings to God. As part of our normal. Worship. No. We don't bring offerings. To atone for our sin. When we put something in the collection.

We're not saying. That will pay off a bit of that sin. That I did the other week. When I. Went and did something. I shouldn't have done. No. We never do that. There is no sacrifice. There is no offering. That we can make.

Or should make. Because Christ has made that full. And final offering. For sin. For all his people. Here's what. The writer of the Hebrew says.

- [19 : 12] We. That's the believer. And every believer. We have been made. Holy. That is. We have been. Declared holy. Acceptable. Righteous. Cleansed from sin.
- We have been made holy. Through the sacrifice. Of the body of Jesus Christ. Once. For all. For all. And he goes on to say. Just a few verses later. In Hebrews 10.
- Sacrifice for sin. Is no longer necessary. There's nothing that you can do. Or bring. Or say. Or give. That will make you. More forgiven. Than you already are. Because Jesus has paid. Fully. Completely.
- And forever. The price. For your. Sin. However. We are to bring offerings to God. We're to bring worship to God. Here's what.
- [20 : 06] Again. Hebrews 13. Tells us. Through Jesus. Therefore. In other words. Through our faith in Jesus. And what he's done for us. We have this access to God. Through Jesus. Therefore.
- Let us continually. Offer to God. A sacrifice. Of praise. The fruit of lips. That openly. Profess his name. And don't forget.
- To do good. And share with others. For with such. Sacrifices. God. Is. Pleased. So as we live. The Christian life.
- As we worship God. And I'm not just talking about. On a Sunday morning. Or evening. As we sing a hymn. Or sing a praise. Our praise is from the heart. It is thankfulness.
- And adoration. And worship. Which is to be continual. Through the week. Monday to Friday. And the weekend as well. And as we love one another.
- [20 : 58] As we pray for one another. As we care for one another. What are we doing? We are bringing pleasure to God. He's pleased. With these sacrifices. Pleased with these offerings.
- We are bringing. So the very beginning. Of chapter 15. Is all about encouragement. After sin. After the failings.
- Of God's people. God assures them. That he will keep his promises. He's faithful to his word. And he assures them. That they can enjoy. Fellowship with him. In spite of the sin. In spite of the failing.
- His desire is that they should. Enjoy him. And please. Him. Let me get back to this matter of sin. Does that mean then. As we said at the very beginning.
- That God does not care about sin. No. Certainly not. Gets back to that. How do we measure sin? How do we quantify sin? Well according to.
- [21 : 57] Numbers 15. There are just two. Sorts. Of sin. Two measurements of sin. If I can put it that way. Now I'm not. You know what I'm saying.
- I'm not saying that. Somehow. When you say a lie. It's just as bad. As when you kill somebody. Of course. There are those gradients. Of awfulness. And. And effect of sin.
- And some sins. Yes. People will say. Well it doesn't hurt anybody. But actually. All sin is destructive. To the sinner. At the very least. We hurt ourselves. But of course.
- Others. Can be very. Very. Damaged by them. But there's two sins. That are spoken of here. First of all. There's the unintentional sin. Verse 22.
- If you as a community. Unintentionally. Fail to keep any of these commands. The Lord gives you. He talks again. About this. Unintentional sin. Of the community. And then verse 27.
- [22 : 53] Just one person sins. Unintentionally. These are those failings. And mistakes. That we all make. In ignorance. All of us do it.

Every single one of us. We don't realize it. Most of the time. Unfortunately. It's a bit like. When we open our mouths. And we. We. We let our tummies rumble.

Don't we. You know. I mean. We don't engage the brain. We say something. Ignorantly. Foolishly. Unthinkingly. We know that we're. Guilty of that. Unintentional sin.

In other words. We haven't purposely. Gone out of our way. To say. I know this is wrong. But I'm definitely. Going to do it. This is unintentional. Unknown. Unrecognized. Unrecognized to us.

Perhaps as well. Even though. Such sins. Are done in ignorance. Even such sins. Which are unintentional. Even those sins. Which we say.

[23 : 51] Well. Well I didn't realize. Still can only be forgiven. Through sacrifice. God does not say. Well because. You didn't intend to sin. I can brush it under the carpet.

No. No. Sin is sin. And sin can only. Be forgiven through blood. Through sacrifice. And so we find. That God gives these instructions. Doesn't he. To Moses.

And to the people. If this is done. Unintentionally. Then the whole community. Is to offer a young bull. For a burnt offering. And or to offer a male goat. As a sin offering. Notice verse 25.

The priest. Is to make atonement. For the whole. Israelite community. And they will. Be forgiven. And again. The single person. The one person. Who in sins.

As well. They must come and make atonement. For the sin. That they've committed. And once more. Notice there. Do you see. How God is pleased.

[24 : 45] Verse 24. Offer a young bull. Burnt offering. As a pleasing. To the Lord. God desires. To atone.

God rather. God desires. To forgive sin. But that sin. Can only be forgiven. Through shed blood. And for us. Dear believers. That forgiveness. Is ours in Christ.

The blood. That was shed for us. All the sacrifices. All the animals. That were put to death. All the pouring out. As it were. Of wine. And fluids. And oils. And all sorts of things. All of them. Are pointing to.

The finished. And perfect work. Of Christ. On the cross. So we are forgiven. Dear friends. Those. Unintentional. Sins.

Well how do I know. If I've sinned. That's the question. Isn't it. If it's an unintentional sin. In an ignorant sin. How do I know. That I've sinned. How can. How can you bring a sacrifice. Or how can you come with repentance. And confession of sin.

[25 : 43] And don't even realize. You've done it. King David was concerned. About this himself. And so he prayed. In Psalm 139. This prayer. And I would encourage you.

To think of this prayer. And make it part of your own prayer life. Search me. He says. In verse 23. Of Psalm 139. Search me God. And know my heart.

Test me. And know my anxious thoughts. And he says this. See if there is any offensive way. In me. And lead me in the way everlasting.

It's good for us to pray. We have the Holy Spirit within us. His work is to convince us. And convict us of sin. So it's good to pray. Lord. Is there anything in my heart.

Anything in the way I've spoken. Or lived. Or acted. That. Has been sinful. And more than that. I would say this. Every single one of us.

[26 : 39] Here. Will sin. Every single day. Mostly unintentionally. Because most of our sins.

Are what we might say. Are sins of omission. In other words. We do not do the things. That we should have done. I.e. What is the greatest commandment.

And the first commandment. Love the Lord your God. With all your heart. And mind. Soul and strength. Hands up. That you've done that today. Oh.

You let me down. I thought you were also godly. And saintly. And perfect. None of us can do it. None of us do do it. We know that we fail. The way that we sin. So therefore dear friends. Part of our daily.

Fellowship with God. Is not to. Bring an offering to. As it were. Atone for our sin. But certainly it's to bring. A confessing heart. Say Lord. I know that. I haven't seen. I haven't lived that life.

[27 : 35] You would have me to live today. And I ask you to forgive me. I thank you that you do forgive me. And though I make mistakes. And though I get it wrong. I don't want to live that sort of life Lord.

I want to live that life which is pleasing to you. Most of our sins are sins of omission. Not doing what we should do. Rather than sins of commission.

Which is doing what we know we shouldn't do. Notice as well. And I think this is important for us as a church. As a community of believers. Let's remember that.

The Old Testament. Company as it were. If I put that way. Of Israel. Are a picture to us of the church of Jesus Christ. And in one sense. They're a picture not only of the universal church.

But of the local church as well. And dear friends. Churches can sin. Churches can sin. Members can sin. I'm not just talking about individuals.

[28 : 31] Remember that when we become part of the Lord Jesus Christ. We cease to be individuals. We become part of the body of Christ. The church of the Lord Jesus Christ.

We become part of the vine. And the branches. We are not individuals. As Christians we become part of something. Wonderfully supernatural and eternal.

And therefore when we act. And it comes out doesn't it. It comes out in various things. Like Achan's sin. Where he was one individual. But because he sinned. The whole community. Were punished.

And do not think for a moment dear friends. That you can live as a Christian. As a member of this church. A sinful life. A life which is unloving. Or unforgiving. Or unthoughtful.

Or is indulging in your lusts. Or desires and pleasures. And that it will not affect the rest of the church. It must do and it will. And that's a very, very good reason not to sin.

[29 : 34] Unintentional sins. Thankfully our sins are covered by the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. And even when as a church we sin. There are times. I know other churches have done it.

And perhaps it may be appropriate. I'm not suggesting that we do it. Times that when we meet together for prayer. That part of our praying is repentance. As a church. Father forgive us as a church.

Let me say this. And if you don't know it already. And I'm sure most of you do. We are not perfect. This church is not the best church in the world. This church is not holy and perfect and godly.

We don't do everything right. So if you see things that are wrong in the church. Don't be surprised. Don't be surprised.

And certainly don't go around moaning about it. And saying well this church. They don't do this. And they don't do that. And they should do this. And they should do that. Often when we do that. What we're actually saying is this.

[30 : 38] How can I put it? I think I'm pretty good. And I think the church should know how to do all these things.

If only they knew. If only I was the pastor. I'd kick him into shape. I'd sort him out. Wouldn't be as soft as this fella. Let's him get away with blue murder. When we complain against God's people.

We're actually complaining about ourselves. Because we're part of the fellowship. And complaining about one another is not the way to deal with it. Pray for one another. Encourage one another.

Support one another. Love one another. I didn't mean to say that. But sometimes these things happen. As a church we need to ask for forgiveness.

But again the assurance is that dear friends. Though we are not a perfect church. And though we get it wrong. And we fail. And in so many different ways. And in so many different levels. The wonderful thing is that the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ.

[31 : 38] was shed for his church. Ephesians chapter 5 tells us that wonderfully. Doesn't it? That Christ loved the church. And gave himself up for her.

Why did he do that? To make her holy. Cleansing her. By the washing with water through the word. To present her to himself as a radiant church.

Without stain or wrinkle. Or any other blemish. But holy and blameless. Yes we will be. Thank God that when we get to heaven. You and I will be perfect.

And we'll be a perfect church. But we won't be now. An intentional sin. Dear friends. Is something that we are to be aware of.

But remember there is forgiveness for us. But then there is another measure of sin. Isn't there? And it comes out here. And it is what we might call deliberate sin. There is an intentional sin.

[32 : 36] And we can put it that way. Intentional sin. Deliberate sin. Do you see that there? Verse 30. Anyone who sins defiantly. The phrase there is the phrase with a high hand.

Anybody who sins with a high hand. We use that. We don't use it so much now. That was very high handed of them. Don't we? But we mean in one sense. That they. They've sort of taken the authority upon themselves.

They've acted as if they're in the right. But notice how God's. God feels. If I can put it that way. God thinks about. An intentional sin.

Anyone who sins defiantly. Whether it's native born or foreigner. Utters blasphemy against the Lord. Must be cut off from the people of God. Because they have despised the Lord's word.

But again. Sin. Firstly and foremostly. Is against God. Against God. So somebody says. Well it never did anybody harm. It did. It did God harm.

[33 : 37] It was a blasphemy against him. It was something that he counted as an act of despising him. And his word. It's to sin.

Deliberately. And this sense of with a high hand. It's as if somebody is about to strike. God. God. That's what it's sort of saying. To sin deliberately is to say.

I'm striking God. I am hitting against God. I'm fighting against God. Lifting my hand against God. And certainly the implication is here.

Isn't it? That what God means by a deliberate sin. Is somebody who knows God's law. But chooses purposefully to go against it. It's not a sin of ignorance.

It's not a sin of naivety. It is a sin of deliberate defiance against God. And God treats that sin differently to an intentional sin.

[34 : 36] If you were here just last Sunday morning in Luke chapter 12. We thought about that just very briefly. I'll just remind you what Jesus says himself. In Luke 12.47.

The servant who knows the master's will and does not get ready. Or does not do what the master wants. Will be beaten with many blows. That's the sin of defiance. Knowing what God wants.

But refusing to do it. Then he goes on. But the one who does not know. And does things that deserve punishment. Will be beaten with fewer blows. Yes God forgave the sin of the people.

When they refused to go into the land. But their sin could not be ignored. Their sin could not fail to go unpunished. And in one sense to impress upon God's people and us.

We have this example of a deliberate sin. That's why I say this whole chapter runs together. We have God assuring his people they'll be in the land. And in fellowship with him.

[35 : 45] But reminds them and speaks to them. And tells them about the provision for forgiveness for sin. That God is gracious and tender. With unintentional sin. And there is forgiveness there.

But then there is. But there is defiant sin. And definite sin. And intentional sin. And that intentional sin. Has to be dealt with. With judgment and justice.

And so we have an example here of a man. A man who surely along with all the Israelites. Would have known God's law. After all. Remember this is just a matter of months. Since Sinai.

Since they had the ten commandments carved in stone. And explained to them by Moses. And declared to them. He would have been there on that day. When God spoke to Moses. And through Moses.

And Moses would have said to him. What God had said to his people. In Exodus 31. Say to the Israelites. You must observe my Sabbaths. Observe the Sabbath.

[36 : 40] Because it is holy to you. Anyone who desecrates it. Will be put to death. Those who do any work on that day. Will be cut off from their people. For six days work is to be done.

Seventh day is to be a day of rest. Holy to the Lord. It is explained. Isn't it? That man must have been there. He would have been amongst the people. He would have known that. But here he is on the Sabbath.

Defiantly. Gathering. Wood. Working in this way. Contrary to God's commandments. And clearly the people who were there.

Who found him doing this. Knew and understood the law. Because otherwise they wouldn't have. They would have just ignored him. And said. Oh well he is gathering sticks. He is old Bob over there. We won't bother with him. He is doing what he wants.

It is the Sabbath. It doesn't matter. They knew God's law. And so that is why they took hold of him. And brought him before Moses. And he was held in custody. And Moses knew the law better than any.

[37 : 37] Because he had met with God. And God had spoken to him. Yet he is reticent isn't he? It seems to me. To put this man to death. And so he seeks God. He is reticent to take a life.

That is a good reticence to have. Until God has been consulted. And God gives a very clear. Judgment. The man must die.

Here the law of God. And God himself is being put to the test. For the first time. Will God really carry through. What he said he will do. Does God's law really mean.

Death. For sin. Would God really punish. Those who disobeyed him. And he did. And the people were part. Of the punishment.

Again remember we are not. Individuals. But a community. And so as we come to a close. As it were. As it were on this chapter.

[38 : 38] It seems to us. Maybe to be a strange thing. Once more. That we have this. Teaching on having a tassel. On your garments. But I think it very much.

Is in keeping with what. We've been looking at. How do we live in relationship. With God. How do we keep from sinning. Against him. How do we live lives. In the promised land.

Which ultimately for us. Is in Christ. In such a way. That please him. Well. We need to keep being reminded. Of God's commandments. And. Let's remember. That these. These Israelites.

They didn't. They couldn't just go down. To the local bookshop. And said. I'd like. I'd like. A new NIV. Please. Of the law. Of God. And there was. Some of the older ones. Of course. Say. Oh. We don't want the NIV.

You want. You want the King James version. Of the law. And they'd probably have an argument. About. You couldn't do that then. They didn't have the law. To the hand. Like we have. They didn't have. The scriptures. To it.

[39 : 32] Like we had. So how are they going to keep. Being reminded. How are they going to be. Refreshed. In their thinking. About the importance. Of keeping God's law. And living it. So God says. Well put some tassels. On your. On your sort of.

Your shawl. On your outer cloak. Your coat. So that whenever you leave the house. And put it on. Those tassels will be there. And they'll. Spark in your mind. The thought. As I go out this house.

Into the world. I want to go out. Keeping God's law. I want to go out. Avoiding sin. I want to live. And please. My God.

God's. It was there to remind them. Of the word of God. And the law of God. But dear friends. Here we are so blessed. Each one of us.

Has at least one. Some two. Some three. Maybe four or five. Or half a dozen. Copies of God's law. God's word to us. That we can read. And look to. Every day.

[40 : 26] And let me. And encourage you again. Dear friends. Before you leave the house. In the morning. Read the word. Before you go to work. Read the word. Before you go out. To have a meal.

With some friends. Read the word. Let God's word. Be there to remind you. So that whenever you do. And in whatever we're about. The word of God. Is in our thinking. And in our thoughts.

So that. That will keep us. That will keep us from sinning. It will protect us. And help us. That we may live those lives. In this world. That please.

And honor. God. That's what Paul has to say. Doesn't he. To Timothy. This. This. Young man. In the faith. He says to him.

Continue in what you've learned. And been convinced of. How from infancy. You've known the holy scriptures. Which are able to make you wise. For salvation. Through faith in Christ Jesus.

[41 : 24] For all scripture is God breathed. And is useful for teaching. Rebuking. Correcting. And training in righteousness. So that the servant of God.

May be thoroughly equipped. For every good work. God has provided for you and me. His word. That it may be a light.

To our path. A lamp to our feet. And lead us. In those lives. Which please him. In the world today.