

Numbers 5

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[0 : 00] Take your Bibles, let's go to the book of Numbers, Numbers chapter 5, Numbers chapter 5. We're just continuing to make our way through this, and really now that we have entered into the fifth chapter of the book of Numbers, we are moving beyond the counting of, and even the, really the camp of the nation here. So the first four chapters deal with the counting and the camping and the carrying, right? So how many there are, where they should camp, and what they should carry, and how many people can do the work, and then we move forward into the bulk of the book of Numbers. I'm going to go ahead and tell you before we read the chapter, and really before we get into it, there are some things, there are a number of things that we encounter in the Old Testament that we may not fully ever understand, or not ever fully understand. There are some things that kind of cause us to scratch our head, and some things that we just say that, well, that was God's choice, that's God's command and God's word, and we leave it at that. We can take some time, at least in my own limited understanding, we could take some time to try to define and describe exactly what God is doing, but what we need to see is we are reading the, especially in the Old Testament, okay, primarily in the Old Testament, we are reading the historical account of God's interaction with his people.

So this is the historical account of God's interaction with his people, how he was setting his people apart. So a number of the laws, and the commandments, and the regulations, and the rules that he wanted them to follow were for the specific purpose of setting them apart from everyone else around them.

And while we read these truths, now in the New Testament, studying the New Testament is so much different, right? But in the Old Testament, when we read these things which are true, but we do not really see the direct application that it has to our life. Like, no lady's going to come before me, and I'm going to get some dirt off the floor, mix it with some water, wash a scroll in it, and have you drink it, okay? Because we're going to read that tonight. We're not going to do that. And we kind of say, what does that mean to me? Let's not get lost in the details of the command that we fail to see the glory of God, if you will. Because I know there are things that we spend so much time, about we, I mean me, a lot of times, spend so much time trying to figure things out, but we can't figure God out, okay? So we need to take it in its grand scheme. What God is doing after he counts his people is he is leading them into the wilderness. The wilderness is their sanctification. He is setting them apart from everyone else around them. They come into contact with a number and a multitude of other tribes and people and all this great plethora of false gods and false worship and these practices and all these customs, things which really aren't applicable to us today, not even in the world we live in today. But yet God is setting his people apart from everyone else. So most of the laws, most of the rules and regulations, are God setting his people apart that they would be a peculiar people?

That is strange. You know, God's people have always been a little strange and that's okay because God has always wanted his people to be peculiar, to look different than everyone else around them, to stand out, though not pointing to ourselves that the thing which makes them different is the relationship they have with their God. So let's not get lost in that or let's not get lost in the rules and miss that when we see Numbers 5. Now as I read it, you will understand why I say those things because Numbers 5 tells us or it lays out for us here the first steps of purity. God is beginning to set his people apart. He's calling them, the theme of the book of Leviticus is, be holy as I am holy, says the Lord. And the book of Numbers is how they're going to practice that holiness while walking through the wilderness, how they're setting, being set apart. So here is God is about to lead them out. He is giving them some first steps of maintaining purity because God is literally in their midst. So Numbers 5 reads this way. Then the Lord spoke to Moses saying, command the sons of Israel that they send away from the camp every leper and everyone having a discharge and everyone who is unclean because of a dead person. You should send away both male and female. You should send them outside the camp so that they will not defile their camp where I dwell in their midst. The sons of

Israel did so and sent them outside the camp just as the Lord had spoken to Moses, thus the sons of Israel did. Then the Lord spoke to Moses saying, speak to the sons of Israel. When a man or a woman commits any of the sins of mankind acting unfaithfully against the Lord and that person is guilty, then he shall confess his sins, which he has committed and he shall make restitution in full for his wrong and add to it one fifth of it and give it to him whom he has wronged. But if the man he has, or, but if the man has no relative to whom restitution may be made for the wrong, the restitution which is made for the wrong must go to the Lord for the priest besides the realm of atonement by which atonement is made for him. Also every contribution pertaining to all the holy gifts of the sons of Israel, which they offer to the priest shall be his. So every man's holy gifts shall be his. Whatever any man gives to the priest, it becomes his. Then the Lord, this is going to be the head scratching part, right? So let's just stay with it. Then the Lord spoke to Moses saying, speak to the sons of Israel and say to them, if any man's wife goes astray and is unfaithful to him and a man has intercourse with her and is hidden and it is hidden from the eyes of her husband and she is undetected, although she has defiled herself and there is no witness against her and she has not been caught in the act. If a spirit of jealousy comes over him and he is jealous of his wife when she has defiled herself, or if a spirit of jealousy comes over him and he is jealous of his wife when she has not defiled herself, the man shall then bring his wife to the priest and shall bring an offering for her one-tenth of an F of barley meal. He shall not pour oil on it, nor put frankincense on it, for it is a grain offering of jealousy, a grain offering of memorial, a reminder of iniquity. Then the priest shall bring her near and have her stand before the

[6 : 37] Lord and the priest shall take holy water and an earthenware vessel and he shall take some of the dust that is on the floor of the tabernacle and put it into the water. The priest shall then have the woman stand before the Lord and let the hair of the woman's head go loose and place the grain offering of memorial in her hands, which is the grain offering of jealousy and in the hand of the priest and the hand of the priest is to be the water of bitterness that brings a curse. The priest shall have her take an oath and shall say to the woman, if no man has lain with you and if you have not gone astray into uncleanness, being under the authority of your husband, being immune to this water of bitterness that brings a curse. If you, however, have gone astray, being under the authority of your husband, and if you have defiled yourself and a man other than your husband has had intercourse with you, then the priest shall have the woman swear with the oath of the curse and the priest shall say to the woman, the Lord make you a curse and an oath among your people by the Lord's making your thigh waste away and your abdomen swell and this water that brings the curse shall go into your stomach and make your abdomen swell and your thigh waste away and the woman shall say amen, amen.

Then the priest shall write these curses on a scroll and he shall wash them off into the water of bitterness. Then he shall make the woman drink the water of bitterness that brings a curse so that the water which brings a curse will go into her and cause bitterness. The priest shall take the grain offering of jealousy from the woman's hand and he shall wave the grain offering before the Lord and bring it to the altar. And the priest shall take a handful of the grain offering as a moral offering and offered up in smoke on the altar and afterward he shall make the woman drink the water.

When he has made her drink the water, then it shall come about. If she has defiled herself and has been unfaithful to her husband, that the water which brings a curse will go into her and cause bitterness and her abdomen will swell and her thigh will waste away and the woman will become a curse among her people.

But if the woman has not defiled herself and is clean, she would then be free and conceive children. This is the law of jealousy. When a wife being under the authority of her husband goes astray and defiles herself or when a spirit of jealousy comes over a man and he is jealous of his wife, he shall then make the woman stand before the Lord and the priest shall apply all this law to her. Moreover, the man will be free from guilt, but that woman shall bear her guilt. Numbers five. Let's pray.

Lord, we thank you that you have given us this day and we thank you for every opportunity we have to read your word, even the parts and portions which cause us to think and to seek, to find understanding.

[9 : 14] So God, we pray that you would open it up to us tonight and Lord, that application would ring in our lives, Lord, along with the truth as well. Lord, we just give you the glory for this day you've provided for us and it's in your name. We ask all these things in Jesus name. Amen.

Numbers five lays out for us God's call upon the nation for their first steps of purity. If you remember, when we went through the book of Leviticus, a lot changed in the nation of Israel with the completion of the tabernacle because they were a group of people who were following a cloud, a pillar of cloud by day or a pillar of fire by night, who were just really a group of redeemed or freed slaves and they were traversing through a land with the completion of the tabernacle and entering into a covenant relationship with Yahweh, Yahweh being the covenant name of God at Mount Sinai when God had said, I will be your God and you will be my people. And they said yes to that.

He entered into a covenant relationship with him and that covenant relationship led to the manifestation of his presence among them. When the tabernacle was erected, God's glory filled the Holy of Holies and the Shekinah glory, the very glory really that is a reference to Jesus on the Mount of Transfiguration. The Shekinah glory would indwelt the tabernacle when no man could go in there.

The book of Leviticus tells us how man can approach the tabernacle, how man approaches God even in their sin. But again, we are reminded that much changes when God is present. Things look different. People behave differently or they should because being in the presence of God is not a light manner. He is holy.

As a matter of fact, we call it the thrice holiness. He is holy, holy, holy. Over and over in scripture, every time we see a manifestation of the throne of God and there are all the creatures around that throne, whether it would be in the book of Isaiah, the book of Ezekiel, or the book of Revelation, you have this same thrice repeated phrase, holy, holy, holy. That means God is absolutely holy.

[11 : 26] He is above and beyond what we consider holy. He is the holy of the holies. And when he is present, then things change. Things are different. And he calls his people to live in purity and holiness.

And as he is calling his people to himself and he is bringing them to the promised land and he is going to sanctify or set them apart from everyone around them, the first way they are set apart is in their purity as a people. As individuals, yes, but also as a people. They would look different as a corporate body because God is speaking here to a corporate body. It amazes me how much of scripture, when we study scripture, that God is often speaking to the group. And even when he is speaking to the individual, it is as that individual fits within the group or the body. That the phrase, and while we like it, and I think it is, and it has some application, the phrase as Jesus as a personal savior is not found in scripture. He is the savior of the world. Now, is he personally my savior? Yes.

But is he my personal savior? Like mine alone? No. Because the moment he saves me, he connects me to a body called the church. When God redeemed his people, he called Abram out of the land of the Ur of the Chaldeans in order to make a great nation out of him. And when he redeemed Israel out of Egypt, he redeemed all of them. It was a corporate body. As a matter of fact, the corporate body was so important. There was at one point, if you remember in the book of Exodus, where God told Moses, Moses, stand aside. I'm going to wipe them all out. It was after the golden calf incident. Let me wipe them all out. And Moses, I'll make another nation out of you. And Moses stood in the gaps and, no, God, that's not your way.

Right? And what he was showing Moses there is Moses, it's not just about you. It's about the body. So the purity aspect, sure, we ought to be pure and holy as individuals, but it has direct application.

The reason I need to be pure is because I'm a part of the body. The reason you need to be pure is because you are part of the body. And when we gather together, we're two or more gathered. I am there as well. And all of a sudden, God is in our midst. So the first steps of purity among the nation here as they are being sanctified together, we see just three truths or three applications from this passage. First and foremost, we see that it is a restricted access. Purity comes by way of a restricted access. God says, then the Lord, that is Yahweh, the covenant name of God, in the aspect or in the realm of that covenant, the Lord spoke to Moses saying, command the sons of Israel that they send away from them, sending away those that were considered unclean. Now, no one really knows what leprosy the Bible is talking about. Okay? That's why some translations say a disease of the skin or some translations of in the English language say a disease of the skin because modern day leprosy doesn't seem to match the biblical definition of leprosy as it's defined there. It doesn't really, I mean, there are some aspects that it does, but it's not really identical. So what God is saying here is God had determined and set aside. Again, we need to remember this. This wasn't man saying, well, you're unclean and you're unclean and you're unclean, right? Man didn't pick and choose.

[15:08] God did it. Now, some of these things are for health concerns, right? Leprosy was very, as defined in scripture, was very contagious and could be spread from person to person. And therefore God isolated them or he set them apart for that purpose. Even here with those who were at a bodily discharge and we don't know what type of bodily discharge this may be, but because of infectious reasons, he set them apart. And then there are those who were considered unclean because of the defilement of touching a dead body. That would be if someone had to bury a family member or carry a family member out. But what we see here is God is saying, because I am in the midst, I'm going to restrict the access to my presence. My presence is in the middle of the camp.

And what I'm saying is those who are deemed unclean have to stay out. Now, why is this important? Does it seem, does it seem mean or does it seem like God is being unfair?

Well, we need to understand scripture. Scripture testifies to us. Now, hear me out. God does not allow unrestricted access into his presence to whosoever.

Now, follow me, okay? I know someone else, but wait a minute. Whosoever is in scripture. Stay with me. God does not allow unrestricted access into his presence to whosoever.

Which is simply a way of saying, not just anyone can run into the presence of God. He allows that access to whosoever will come in the name of the Lord.

[16 : 46] For whosoever comes by the way of the blood of Jesus Christ. Whosoever will can go to the Lord and confess his sins and cry to Jesus.

You know, right? He has found redemption and salvation in the blood of the Lamb. But Jesus himself said, broad is the way that leads to destruction, but narrow is the way that leads to everlasting life. But Jesus also said that he was the gate.

He was the gate, right? He was the good shepherd. He is the gate, and he lays in the gap. Some of you, not all of you know we have some sheep, and we were trying to get this across to Braden one time. I remember we were back there, and we were kind of herding our sheep around.

I said, all right, Braden, I need you to be a shepherd. You need to stand in the gap, right? Lay across the way. Well, when 11 sheep are running at you, it's kind of hard to do, so he kind of moved out of the way. But what we understand is that Jesus would put them in a pen, and what he was saying is the shepherd in that day would lay across the doorway, and nobody could go in.

Nobody could come out without going across the shepherd. So we understand it wasn't unrestricted access. Things were kept in. Things were kept out. We do not have unrestricted access into the holy presence of God available to us.

[17 : 51] The very presence of God is a restricted place. We only come through the blood of Jesus Christ. And God is showing us this here.

God has set his people apart. But he's saying, I'm going to dwell in your presence. But because I'm in your presence doesn't mean I'm just going to accept you however you are.

Just because I manifest my glory there doesn't mean you can live and do and act and behave however you want to, and I'm just there.

Because purity is the issue. If you are unclean or defiled, get outside the camp. Because he says here, he says, the sons of Israel did so and sent them outside the camp just as the Lord had spoken to Moses.

Thus the sons of Israel did. Why? Why did they do that? He says, so that they would not defile their camp where I dwell in their midst. He said, not just everybody is allowed.

[18 : 56] Only the clean can come and remain in the presence of God. Here's the good news. We are clean in the cross.

In our uncleanness, in our defilement, in our nature, our natural person, we are not allowed into the presence of God's manifest glory.

But through Jesus, we are allowed. We are clean. So we see that it is a restricted access. The very presence of God, or the fact that God is present, brings with it a restricted nature or restricted access.

This is why in Scripture we see that the church is often spoken of those who are without the church or those who are outside of the church, that the church is set apart. Because to be a part of that corporate body and to live in purity and holiness means that you are entering into a place that not just everyone can go.

Because we have available to us access and to restricted places. That is the presence of God. Secondly, we see that the step to purity comes with retribution being paid.

[20 : 18] Retribution being paid. He says, then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, Speak to the sons of Israel. When a man or a woman commits any of the sins of mankind, acting unfaithfully against the Lord, and that person is guilty, then he shall confess his sins which he has committed, and he shall make restitution in full for his wrong, and add to it one-fifth of it, and give it to him whom he has wronged.

That is, if he does a sin towards another, or commits a sin towards another, another individual, or another brother. Now, the reason this is important is because God is calling his people to purity, and purity is greatly hindered when there is animosity or bitterness between individuals, or there is division.

And God has often, or not often, always called his people to unity. Paul says we ought to be intent and united upon one purpose and fixed on one goal and pushing forward together.

One of the greatest harms that has ever been done inside the people of God is to have division among the people of God. And God has called his people to live in unity. And the way he calls them to live in unity is that when we sin against another, the Bible says that our retribution begins with confession.

We confess that to God, and then we make retribution to the one that we have sinned against. At least that's what God is commanding his people and nation of Israel to do, that they are to pay them back.

[21 : 35] But he says if no family member exists for you to pay back, then bring that money, plus one-fifth of it, and give it to the priest. It belongs to the priest. What God is saying is, just say, well, I'm sorry is not enough.

We need to make retribution. We need to be amended. We need to have this coming together and having a complete forgiveness with one another. And God is calling his people to be mighty warriors.

And you ought to excuse me. My eyes are tearing me up, and I'm sorry about that. But my eyes are watering and blurring my vision and all this good stuff. I love spring. I love when trees bloom. But I hate what it does to me, okay?

It's just part of it. But I've been dealing with it my whole life. It's okay. It just happens. So, complete side note. It happens worse on Sunday night than Sunday morning for some reason. I know it's a lot of it.

Carrie, let me stop right here and just back this up a little bit. Carrie says, amazing things. She said, you know, a lot of times you'll go day and day and day and not be able to talk and breathe.

[22 : 29] You know, all this stuff. Your eyes are watering. You walk around. She said, the moment you stand up on Sunday morning, she's like, oh, that goes away. I'm like, oh, great. You could. And then the moment you stand up on the floor, it all comes back. She said, I just want to give me a little bit of that every now and then, right?

Not that she's just. She said, just a little bit of relief. But God is gracious in that, right? But anyway, we get back on subject. But God is calling his people to be united because he's about to bring them into battle.

As a matter of fact, we'll read very soon when they begin to fight and fight against the Amalekites. And when they go into the book of Numbers, they fight a lot, right? They have these battles. They're in the wilderness. And in the wilderness, there's all these battles.

You don't go into battle a divided front. So he's speaking here of the retribution that must be paid so that unity can be maintained. And he says that our relationship with one another is a great determining factor in the purity we possess.

John would say it like this. We cannot say we love God and hate our brother. Because how can we love God whom we have not seen and hate our brother whom we have seen?

[23 : 39] He said in order for us to maintain purity and to maintain unity, we must at times make retribution to one another.

Now I'm not saying that if I was offended you, I didn't even come to give you monetary retribution, right? I'm not saying, well, he offended me. He owes me this much money. That's not what I'm saying. What I'm saying is in Christ, our penalty has been paid in full.

But in Christ, we also need to maintain unity with one another. We need to maintain openness and transparency as a body.

And we need to be assured of the fact that we are not causing a division within the body because our purity really dictates our unity.

I cannot be pure in the presence of God if I am living divided among the people of God. Now that's a hard thing. I'll say this. There have been a couple of times in particular.

[24 : 41] James says that if we know that we have sinned against a brother or if we know a brother has an offense against us, we already go to that brother and confess our sins and ask his forgiveness, right? That is a humbling thing.

There have been a couple of instances to me that have happened in particular while preaching a message and realize that God just rests his hand upon me and say, you need to be reconciled to your brother.

And at the close of that service, I would go to find this individual if I could and talk to this individual and try to be reconciled to them. Not because I need this, but because the purity and unity of the body needs it.

There was one individual I tried to be reconciled with and it wasn't here. It was at the former church I pastored. And I had intended to offend them, but many years earlier than that, I had offended them not with anything intentional, right?

Sometimes we're all offended at times and nobody does it to us intentionally, or sometimes they do. Sometimes we are unintentionally offended. And it wasn't something that I had decided to do. But I found out later on that it had been a cause for stumbling for this brother in Christ.

[25 : 45] And I remember I was preaching and his man's birth was laid upon me. And so I sought to find this brother and to be reconciled. By this time they were not in church anywhere. So I called him and he didn't answer.

I went to his house and he wasn't there. I couldn't find no peace. So finally I just wrote a letter, a handwritten letter. Now I never got a response. I've seen him one other time.

But as much as it depended upon me, I tried to live peaceably with all men. I don't say that to fuck me up. I say that because God was beating me up until I did.

Because my purity dictated the fact that I needed to live in unity. I needed to make retribution. And while I had not intended to offend this individual, I asked his forgiveness for the offense that I caused.

Now does the world tell me I have to do that? No. But the Spirit of God told me I needed to do that. So I did. And it was a burden relieved when I did.

[26 : 48] So we see here the retribution paid. Now the third thing, which leads us to what is the bulk of the chapter, which is kind of the confusing part about the husband and the wife here and the water and the dirt and the floor and the scroll.

We just need to know this, okay? We'll pull this application out of it and then we'll kind of look at the truth. The application is there is we must stand in reserved judgment. Okay? So we have restricted access, retribution paid, and reserved judgment.

And the reason I believe we're speaking here of reserved judgment is because the most intimate relationship among the people of God is the relationship between a husband and a wife. Especially in this time.

And I don't mean any disrespect to this. And I think God really didn't mean it this way. In that culture, ladies were seen with very, very low status. And ladies and wives in particular were seen more as possessions.

Now I'm not saying in the culture of the Jewish people. I'm saying in the culture where God had put his people. So in that ancient near A.N.E., ancient near Eastern culture there, people weren't really exalted.

[27 : 51] They were a very patriarchal society. There were men who were leading things. And men had rulership and authority over the ladies. And I'm not saying that's not the same. God had his people there, right?

So while living among those people, we understand here that husbands seem to have a sense of entitlement or a sense of right to do whatever they wanted to do.

Now think of this. We're talking about unity among the people of God and the purity of the people of God. So God begins to address something that literally hits home. And he speaks of the fact of a woman and her actions, but then he kind of moves it to the husband because he says, if the husband becomes jealous, okay, he spoke of an act that a woman did with another man, was unknown to anybody else.

And then he says, if the husband becomes jealous, let's put it in context, in that culture and in that society among the wilderness wandering up there and all the inhabitants of the promised land, if the husband became jealous enough, he would just end it.

That was his right. He said, I don't trust her anymore. I'm done with it. And he would cut it off. Now let's see how God elevates that because he's speaking of purity here.

[29 : 04] He says, if the husband becomes jealous, the husband doesn't have the right to pass that judgment alone. Even if she has committed an act which has defiled her, the husband does not have the right among the people of God to cast that judgment.

Look at what God does. God says the husband is to bring her to the priest and to bring the simplest of sacrifices, this grain offering of barley, which would be the humblest and the cheapest sacrifice that could be offered.

So anybody could do it. It was offered to anybody, the rich and the poor, right? So what he's saying is the husband is to bring it to the priest. And the judgment was to be reserved for God alone to pass. Because let's just be honest, there is nothing in this concoction of water, dirt, and ink that would cause infertility.

It is the oath that is being taken before God in which the woman says, amen and amen. Where he says, if you drink this water of bitterness, if you have committed this act, let your abdomen swell and your thigh waste away.

And she says, amen and amen. So it's really nothing the priest is doing here. It's the fact that God is asking judgment. So what the husband literally is doing, is he says, I'm jealous. I have this suspicion about it.

[30 : 23] And most in that culture, it's like, okay, well, if you think that's going to happen, then it doesn't matter what anybody else thinks. You do what you want to do. And the husband says, I'm glad this has happened. But the husband had to stop and let God determine the outcome of if this had happened or not.

But let's take this a little bit further. Even if the woman was found guilty and her abdomen did swell and her thigh did waste away, did you notice? The husband was never given the right to leave.

Jesus became his son. Now, historically, we have no recorded event of this happening.

Never happened. There are a lot of things that we find in the Old Testament where God gives a command and we don't see it historically recorded as happening. Warren Wiersbe assumes that this is never recorded as actually taking place because God set the standard so high that it wouldn't.

Wiersbe says, think of this. A man would literally have to bring his private affairs and make them public because these things happened at the doorway of the tabernacle. He would have to set his wife in front of everyone for them to see.

[31 : 39] And having made his private affairs very public knowledge to everyone else, he would be really, the husband would have been helpless to make any determining decision on his own.

He gave all right to God to make that decision. And even after the verdict had been passed and she had been humiliated and shown to be found guilty, then the man would still have to take her home and provide for her and take care of her.

Now, as we see that in his historical setting, we don't know. Honestly, I'll just be honest with you. I'm not 100% clear on why God set it up this way.

Other than, God says, it's not man's right alone to pass judgment. All judgment comes forth from me. Just because you're suspicious or you assume or you think you know, God says, stop.

Bring the matter to me. Because see, what we're talking about here is corporate national purity. If she was found guilty, God would cast the judgment, but not man.

[32 : 49] If she was found innocent, then God would pronounce that as well. But think of the humility of the husband who brought an innocent wife before them. Some of this was set aside to the point that both husband and wife would have such a holy reverence for the way these things would transpire.

Neither one of them would ever go there. It would safeguard the sanctity of marriage in her eyes and it would safeguard the sanctity of trust in his.

They would both say, we are pure. I don't want my private affairs aired out in a public setting. So I'm going to live in such a way that God doesn't pronounce his judgment upon me.

We see this being played out again, by the way. We see it being played out again when we look back. The husband and wife again. But this time, she hasn't been on the face when she's not pregnant.

This time, they told him he was a problem. And the husband came and laid that money, a portion of that money, as his hostile feet. And the earlier, the prophet says, this is the amount of money you've sold the land for.

[33 : 58] He said, yeah, I have to have to have to pull them out. And he fell down and died. And then his wife came and said the same thing. He fell down and died. What God did was take a private life and made it public. Now, did they have to bring the whole portion and give it to the prophet's feet?

No. Because Peter himself said, was it not the Lord in the street? He should have said, not the portion of the part and all of the people. He had to give it. God made commandments. But it was proud.

And it was proud. We're going to upset ourselves up. And they had privately come together and decided to test God. And the holiness of God and the purity of God's people was put on display in a public fashion before all.

And then there's this great phrase that follows that. So the fear of God fell upon all the people. A sense of fear and awe.

And then immediately following that says, and the Lord added to their number daily. Because, see, it's not purity and holiness which scares people away.

[35 : 01] As a matter of fact, it's purity and holiness which draws people in. Someone asked Gandhi, the leader of India, one time, what do you think hinders Christians from making any inroads into India with the evangelism of the gospel message?

This was some time ago. And Gandhi responded in one word. He said, Christians. Christians, the Christians themselves, are the greatest hindrance to the message they proclaim.

Because God has called his people to live lives of purity and by purity he begins to set us apart and call us out and make us peculiar. And as he is doing this with his people, there are some things we don't know exactly why God said to do that, but he did and that's all that matters.

And we leave it there. So let's pray. Lord, thank you so much for this day and the gift of time that you have given me. Lord, thank you for the opportunity to read your word and hopefully come to the greater understanding of it.

Lord, we may allow tonight and the rest of this day and the gift of time for us to look more like your steps and your glory as we look forward as there are people for your names that you can see in the same way that you have to do.

[36 : 25] Amen. Amen.