

Words for the Wandering and Wondering

Numbers 15

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Message Transcript

Numbers chapter 15. This is an interrupt chapter, it interrupts the history that we have been reading about in the nation of Israel. I told you quite early on in the study of the book of Numbers, that that's just the flow of this book, you'll get some reiteration of instructions followed by history, the stories of the nation of Israel, followed by a brief interruption, if you want to call it, that for the re-edification of God's instructions, things that the Lord has already shared with them. And then we go back to more stories, and so on and so forth. For now, tonight, we take a one chapter break in the history of Israel, at a rather crucial junction. This comes on the heels of the disastrous chapter 14. What happened in chapter 14 was devastating to the destination of the nation of Israel. The Lord brought the nation of Israel to the brink of his best for them, He was ready to give them everything. But the adult population of the nation of Israel decided, no, it's too tricky. It looks too tough. We don't want anything to do with it. We don't want to go in. In fact, we would rather just die in the desert. And the Lord gave them what they wanted, the Lord obliged, you don't want to go in that land of promise, that's fine, you can die here in the desert. Now the Lord did lace his sentence of 40 years of probation with mercy, because it was the heart of the people of Israel to die in the desert quickly. In fact, they made the statement that they wish they had already died in the desert. And instead of the Lord just killing them instantly, well, very mercifully, very graciously, the Lord, let them live out the fullness of their lives, albeit there in the desert shut out from the promised land. But in that we see the great grace of God, the mercy of God at work. And then the Lord turned to the younger generation, the younger population, those under 20 years old, they had made no decisions about whether they wanted to go into the land of promise or not, whether that was a conquest that they were willing to pursue or not. So the Lord did not hold them accountable for the decision of the adult population. And therefore it's not that the Lord takes the promises of the adult population, and then hands it to the younger population, it's just simply that they were the remnant of those that still were attached to the promises of God. They still had that right, to inherit those promises, and for the Lord to bring them into the land of promise. And that brings us to Numbers chapter 15, where the Lord is, is meaning here to pick up the pieces of the disaster that took place in Numbers chapter 14. And there are some really good things to see from the Lord here in this chapter. If you look at it really closely, you can see the big and loving heart behind what the Lord is doing here in this chapter and what he is trying to say to the nation of Israel. There are two different generations that the Lord needs to address in this chapter, the adult generation and the younger generation. The adult generation that squandered their every opportunity and the younger generation that stood as future inheritors and inhabitants of the land of promise. Those two generations are in two very different states of mind, I would suspect as of Numbers, chapter 15. I would think that the first group, the older generation, they are reeling, wandering and wondering in the desert. What now? What happens to us? We don't get to go into the land of promise. We were sentenced to 40 years of life, probation, testing out here in the desert, and all the questions of what if? What if we just weren't as dumb as what we actually were? What if we just kept our big mouth shut and tried to trust the Lord and just followed along? What if we didn't blow this opportunity majorly? And we still had a future but now that we, we don't know what our future is, Lord, what what remains left for us? Is there anything that you can do is there hope for us? And then there's the second generation, the younger generation, who are likely reeling as well but for different purposes, they're going to spend now 40 years wandering and wondering, Well, okay, the Lord's making us promises. But it sure seems like the Lord made our parents and our grandparents

promises and then he didn't fulfill them. He didn't come through on it. So what does that say about us? Can we, the younger generation, trust the Lord, or is the Lord going to get us to the Gateway again, and then fail to take us in. So those are the kinds of things that the Lord would be addressing in the hearts of the people in this chapter, the Lord is going to give encouragement to both generations, the older generation, and the younger generation. And here's how it breaks down in general, verses one through 21, the Lord is addressing the younger generation first, he is addressing them exclusively all with the exception of verses 13 through 16. But then in verses 22, through 41, so 22 through the end of the chapter, the Lord addresses the older generation, in verses one through 21, that deals with instructions to the younger generations, once they arrive in the land of promise, verses 22 through 41, that deals with the here and now. So it's what they all need to know. In order to get through the next 40 years of life, and then for the younger generation, the Lord is going to speak to them about life beyond those 40 years of desert wandering. So that's what you have in this chapter. Let's begin to take a look at it in verse one. The Lord spoke to Moses saying, verse two, speak to the people of Israel, and say to them, when you come into the land, you are to inhabit, which I am giving you. So as I just stated, that would exclude the older generation, they will not be inheriting and inhabiting the land of promise now, so this is obviously addressed to the younger generation, those younger than 20 years old. When you come into the land, verse three, and you'll offer to the Lord from the herd, or from the flock a food offering or a burnt offering, or a sacrifice to fulfill a vow, or as a free will offering or at your appointed feast, to make a pleasing aroma to the Lord, verse four, then he who brings his offering shall offer to the Lord, a grain offering of a 10th of an ephah of fine flour. So for those of you who are interested in going home and trying out these recipes, an ephah was a dry measurement. And it was around 30 to 35 liters. So 1/10 of an ephah is about point three, or point four liters roughly. And then 1/10 of an ephah of fine flour mixed with a quarter of a hin of oil. Now a hin is a liquid measurement, and that would be approximately 1.5 gallons. So a quarter of a hin would then be .375 of a gallon. Verse five, and you shall offer with the burnt offering, or for the sacrifice a quarter of a hin of wine, and that is the word yayin which is intoxicating wine. Yes, the Lord, as I shared with you before, he did call for intoxicating wine in these offerings that the people were to bring to him. That was okay, that was a good thing. If you were here with us in our study of alcohol and the Christian, you're now mature enough to not let that bother you. You understand that was a part of it. You understand that wine, intoxicating wine in the Bible was used as a symbol for joy, so long as that wine was being used responsibly, and not abused. Now, because we have studied the five different offerings spoken about in the first five chapters of the book of Leviticus, I choose today, to rely on your memory that as we go through this, at least some of this will come back to you. If we go through this and something seems foggy to you, you can study through those five chapters again, Leviticus one through five, it won't kill you, probably.

To date, no one has died listening to any of my teachings. If that should change, I'll be sure to update you. So if you need to, go back and listen to those teachings. But for Numbers chapter 15, there's only a few things you need to know here in order to fully understand what the Lord is trying to communicate to the nation in chapter 15. First of all, I will just summarize this, there were five offerings, do you remember them? Leviticus chapter one, the burnt offering, or the consecration offering, and that was a free will offering. Leviticus chapter two, the grain offering which was recognition and gratitude, that was also a freewill offering. Leviticus chapter three, the peace offering or the fellowship or offering that was a freewill offering as well. Leviticus chapter four, the sin offering that was not a freewill offering that was a mandatory or obligatory offering. And then Leviticus chapter five, the guilt offering or the trespass offering, which was also a mandatory offering. Now, if we look at the ending of verse three, the language there indicates that the kind of offerings that we are dealing with here in this chapter are freewill offerings. These are offerings that are pleasing aromas in the, to use an anthropomorphism, in the nostrils of God. So anytime you read that expression, depending on which translation, you have a sweet smelling aroma, a pleasing aroma, a sweet smelling savor to the Lord, you know

that what you're dealing with is a freewill offering. The two mandatory offerings, the sin offering and the guilt offering, those were offerings that were necessary to cover sin, and then recover loss. So those were not going to be pleasing offerings in the nostrils of the Lord. Does that make sense? Obviously, those are offerings that the Lord would just prefer to not have to need in the first place. If you need a sin offering, or a guilt offering, a trespass offering, that means that someone got hurt. And now it's all about restoration. So those aren't pleasing in the nostrils of the Lord, the Free Will offerings, those first four, pardon me those first three offerings, those were the ones that were pleasing to the Lord, because these were offerings that no one had to bring, they got to bring. If they brought these offerings, it wasn't because it was the Lord pressuring them to do it. It was just simply because they love the Lord, they wanted to bless the Lord, and so they would bring those offerings. Of course, the sin offering and the guilt offering, those would still be in play for this future generation of the nation of Israel in the land of promise, no doubt about that. But the Lord's focus here initially, well, actually, in this whole chapter, concerning that future generation, is upon the willingness of their hearts to worship Him, once they arrive in the land of promise. They're going to be bringing these offerings, not because they have to, but because they want to, the Lord knows that that's going to happen, the Lord is going to be blessed by that, and you must know by now that when you do things for God, out of obligation, he is as unblessed as you are unmotivated. If God doesn't have your heart, he really gets nothing out of it. But when you do something with all of your heart, when your heart is behind it, the Lord now has your heart, and he's blessed by that, he's as blessed as you are motivated in the things that you offer to him. That's kind of like Christianity 101, I think we learned that in our first week of being a Christian, that what we do for the Lord, it has to be from the heart, our heart has to be behind it. If it's mandatory, it's just not going to bless the Lord. It's not going to bless you. So it's pointless. You know, one of those things where, well, I gotta go to church, because if I don't, the people are going to talk. That's a great attitude. Don't get me wrong, the Lord would rather you be here than not be here because once you're here, he can still do stuff in your heart. But it's the person that says oh man, I can't wait to get to church tonight. I can't wait to worship, I can't wait to sing praises to the Lord, I can't wait to hear about what the Lord says in His word, so that I can use that to be the guide for my life. So things done from the heart, the Lord is truly blessed by those. So in this chapter, if you can look past the reiteration of these instructions, if you can look past the laws, and try to see God's intent behind them, what you find really is that the instructions that we read about here for these offerings really were advanced statements of the future health of that younger generations' relationship with the Lord. It means that the younger generation is going to make it into the promised land. And It foretells of their elation that the Lord has carried through, that the Lord has delivered for them and brought them. It's like me saying, Maggie, I can't wait to get home, you are not going to believe what I built for you today, you're going to be so happy that you're gonna want to buy me stuff. So you should know in advance, I like power tools. Yeah, here's my Harbor Freight wish list. That's what the Lord is doing here. He's saying, Look, when you get to the land of promise, younger generation, you're going to be so thrilled, you're going to be so blessed that I brought you here, you're gonna want to give me these offerings. So here are some instructions on how you can do that. And the only thing I would add to this before I move on is that concerning these offerings to the Lord, As you should know, by our studies through Leviticus, different kinds of animals had different value. Obviously, the bull was the most valuable animal. So if you're offering, regardless of what it was for, if you're offering was a bull, that was the most valuable animal that you could bring, the most tasty too, I might add, the most valuable animal that you could bring. So if you brought a bull, all of the side offerings that the Lord is going to speak about here, the grain, flour, the oil, the wine, you would need less of that. But then, as you study this, you're going to see that the ram and the goat, these were offerings that weren't as valuable as the bull. So the way the Lord did this was, he designed this so that you could make up for those less valuable offerings, by throwing more into those side offerings. So the flour, the oil, and the wine. And I just tell you that so that

you're not confused as we go through this. And you see the Lord sort of upping the ante with each one of these, there's a reason for that it's all based on the value of the offerings that he is prescribing. Verse six, or for a ram, so that's not as valuable as a bull. So the side offerings that are offered up to the Lord with this ram will be different. He says, You shall offer for a grain offering not 1/10, as was the case with the bull, but two tenths of an ephah of fine flour mixed with not a quarter, but a third of a hin of oil, verse seven, and for the drink offering you shall offer not a quarter, but a third of a hin of wine, a pleasing aroma to the Lord, verse eight, and when you offer a bull as a burnt offering, which I'll remind you is a consecration offering, it's still a freewill offering. I know it's an important offering. It's a valuable offering, but it's a free will offering. And that should make sense to us because it connects to New Testament doctrine. Once you're in, once you're consecrated to the Lord, once you're dedicated to the Lord, sacrifice for sin, that's going to be mandatory, restitution for your trespasses against others, that's going to be mandatory, but consecration that's up to you. The Lord's never gonna force you to be dedicated to him, that has to come from free will. So this is a freewill offering, which means it's going to be an offering that is a pleasing aroma to the Lord. If you bring a bull as a burnt offering, or sacrifice to fulfill a vow, or for peace offerings to the Lord, verse nine, then one shall offer with the bull a grain offering of three tenths of an ephah of fine flour. So now we're up to three tenths of an ephah. Why would that be? This is more than what was spoken about for the ram. Could it be possible that the bull is of lesser value in this offering than the ram was in the other offering? Well, it's just a matter of the fact that this is a more costly offering in general. So that's why even with the bull, in this case, you need more of those side offerings to bring a proper offering. So three tenths of an ephah of fine flour, mix with not a quarter, not a third but half a hin of oil. That's .75 of a gallon, almost a full gallon there. Verse 10. And you shall offer for the drink offering half a hin of wine as a food offering a pleasing aroma to the Lord. Verse 11, Thus it shall be done for each bull or ram or for each lamb or young goat verse 12, as many as you offer, so shall you do with each one, as many as there are. And the Lord now inserts, verse 13 here, 13 through 16, as General Instructions for the whole nation. He was speaking to exclusively the younger generation, he is going to come right back to that at verse 17. But for now, the Lord inserts this general word of instruction for the entire nation of Israel. And here's what he says verse 13, every Native Israelite shall do these things in this way, in offering a food offering with a pleasing aroma to the Lord, verse 14, and if a stranger is sojourning with you, or anyone is living permanently among you, and he wishes to offer a food offering with a pleasing aroma to the Lord, he shall do as you do. Verse 15, for the assembly, there shall be one statute, a statute is a written law, one statute for you, and for the stranger who sojourns with you. A statute forever throughout your generations, you and the sojourner shall be alike before the Lord, verse 16, one law and one rule shall be for you and for the stranger who sojourns with you. This is something that the Lord has already told the nation of Israel, we studied it actually multiple times now that when non Jews choose to join with them, then the laws and the privileges that belong to Israel now belong to that foreigner, that stranger, as well. So concerning the laws, let's just look at that first, concerning the laws of the nation of Israel. If the stranger or foreigner decides to join with the nation of Israel, and they don't want to live by God's laws, they are free to leave. But if they choose to stay, they are to obey all of God's laws. And you really can't have it any other way, can you? I mean, for example, let's say a Canaanite joins up with the nation of Israel, and this Canaanite, he has no sexual morals whatsoever. So there he is going about through the camp, molesting whoever he desires, and what's the nation of Israel gonna do, if there are not one set of laws for all the nation? All that they could do is say, Oh, well, a Canaanites gonna be a Canaanite. That's just the way they are, there's nothing we can do about it because they're not subject to our laws. You can see where that would be a problem. You could see where that wouldn't work. So the Lord has to bring this all into one. And he's got to say, this is mandatory. Obviously, no one here is forced to love God, that's not going to be forced on anyone. It's not about that. You don't have to love God, you don't even have to believe in God. But if you're going to be a foreigner among the nation of

Israel, you've got to live like Israel. You've got to live by God's laws, you got to obey Him. And hey, that's only going to benefit you. Regardless of why you obey God's word, its wisdom, its truth, and it's going to benefit you. You have the same right as a parent to enact this kind of law in your home, don't you? As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord. Son, daughter, I love you. And I'm not going to force you to love the Lord, I'm not even going to force you to believe in the Lord, I can't do that. You don't have to love him. You don't have to believe in Him. But you're going to follow God's laws in this house. This is our house, mom and dad. And we want this household to serve the Lord. We want this household to honor the Lord. So if you're going to live here, you're gonna fall in step with that. Not very popular, but you have that right to enact as parents, I would encourage you to do that. Now concerning the privileges of this, the privileges of the nation of Israel offered to the foreigner or stranger, simply by conversion into the Jewish way of life, it would stress the point of equality. The Jews were not to see foreigners as less than themselves or half a human or whatever. The Jews, if someone wanted to join with them, they were to receive them, they were to treat them as equals and therefore see them as equals, if pagans convert accept them without discrimination, so long as they toe the line. Now, the same is true for the New Testament Church, of course. That has been a major topic for our Sunday morning study through the book of Acts. And Paul writes in Romans chapter 10, verse 12, for there is no distinction between Jew and Greek. For the same Lord is Lord of all bestowing Riches on all who call on him, Jew, Gentile, male, female, Bond, free, rich, poor, doesn't matter. Old Testament to New Testament, this is a consistent biblical truth, that when you come to Christ, regardless of where you came from, when you come to the Lord, you get a new identity in him. You're no longer a Jew, yes, I'm a Jew, or a Gentile, or a free person or a slave or a male or a female or rich or poor. Your new identity is this. You are Christ, you are the Lord's child. And we're all on equal footing with the Lord in that new identity. Verse 17, the Lord spoke to Moses saying, verse 18, speak to the people of Israel and say to them, when you come into the land to which I bring you again, who is eventually coming into the land of promise? Not the older generation, the younger generation, therefore, who is the Lord speaking to here? He's speaking to the younger gentleman. Verse 19, when you come into the land, and when you eat of the bread of the land you shall present a contribution or heave offering to the Lord. Verse 20, of the first of your dough, you shall present a loaf as a contribution, the heave offering, like a contribution from the threshing floor, so shall you present it. Verse 21, Some of the first of your dough you shall give to the Lord as a contribution throughout your generation. That's a good verse For tithing right there, verse 21, give the first of your dough to the Lord. But it's not really about tithing. This is first fruits, which is, I guess you would say the predecessor of tithing, it's sort of follows along that same line. This would be of course, the offering of First Fruits. And though you really can't see this in the ESV, the Lord here prescribes the exact mechanics that were to be used in the offering up of First Fruits. There are two different types of mechanics that you could use or methods that you could use to present an offering to the Lord. It's confusing because we call them offerings. We know full well, there's only five offerings, Leviticus one through five, but they're not really offerings. In that sense, it's a way of offering and that would be the wave offering. And the heave offering. Now the wave offering was a back and forth motion like this right to left. And that was an offering symbolizing consecration, burnt offering. So if you took a sacrifice, or you know, barley in your hands, whatever you had, that you were waving back and forth to the Lord, you were saying, Lord, all of this is yours. I'm not taking any of this, I'm giving this to you, this is going to be burnt up on the offering, that's all yours. That was the wave offering the heave offering was the up and down motion. And that was used to symbolize recognition, gratitude, and even fellowship here was the mechanics of it, raising that sacrifice or that offering up that was saying, God, I recognize this came from you. And then when you lower it, you're saying, and yet you've given it to me, and I'm gonna partake of it, I'm gonna receive it, and I'm gonna partake of it. So wave offering, Lord, all of this is yours. I'm not taking any of it. Heave offering Lord, this came from you, you gave it to me, and I'm gonna partake of it. Thank you, Lord, right, you see the difference? Now, I will

help you out if you want to try to employ some of these mechanics, at the table, lunch and dinner and breakfast, when you're saying grace. Here's how you remember this.

If the food was burnt to a crisp, that right there is a burnt offering. And you consecrate that to the Lord with the wave offering you say, Lord, you can have all of this. This is inedible. Hopefully you can do something with this wave offering Lord, this is yours. Consecration burnt offering and waving, you know, that sort of helps with the smoke too. So remember that. And then when it comes to food that's edible, food that survived the oven, wow, that right there is an offering that you're going to partake in. So you would use the mechanics of the heave offering, Lord, you gave this to me, I recognize that this came from you, you gave it to me, it survived my oven, I'm going to receive it with thanksgiving, I'm going to partake of it. So, heave offering to show that gratitude, and then announce the pleasure in partaking of it. Hope that helps. Hope that helps. So now we come to verse 22. And there is a difference in the language that is used here. Most of this so far has been addressed to those who are going to make it into the land of promise, the younger generation exception being verses 13 through 16. But beginning in verse 22 now, this is no longer addressed to only those that are going to be entering into the promised land. This is addressed to nonspecific you, if you sin, here's what you do. And we take that I believe accurately to mean that the Lord is actually speaking to the whole nation here, not just the younger generation, not just the older generation, but to every single one of them beginning at verse two. And this would be extremely encouraging for the older generation, because again, as I said in the introduction, they had to be wondering, what about us? What do we do? We're not going into the promised land. And what does that leave? Can we still work on our relationship with the Lord? Can we still know him? Can we still come into His presence? And based on what I read in verses 22 and on, I think the Lord's answer to them is clear. You've been locked out of the promised land, but you haven't been locked out of my presence, you've been barred from entering into the promised land, but you haven't been barred from my love, you can still come into my fellowship, my presence, you can still have fellowship with me, you can continue to have a relationship with me and here's what that's gonna look like. So isn't that encouraging knowing that when your sin causes horrible consequences, and you rob yourself of certain privileges, that the Lord doesn't cold shoulder you, or get rid of you. The Lord doesn't ban you from his presence. He doesn't kick you out of relationship with him. But if you come back repentant, you come back confessing and seeking a change and seeking restoration, the Lord will continue in his relationship with you. The consequences of your sin, they may have limited the kind of enjoyment that you can have in your life, but the Lord, He loves you so much and he will work around those consequences of your sin, and He will present you with the best kind of living that he can give you in light of those consequences. I don't know why this popped in mind, but this just popped in mind. So I'll share it. A person that lives intentionally knowing God's will, a promiscuous lifestyle, and contracts STDs, there are lifelong consequences in many cases, for a person like that. They knew God's will. They transgressed God's laws intentionally. There are lasting consequences of that sin, and yet the Lord can move in and he can handle that situation. He's not going to, in most cases, cause the consequences to go away. Usually, the consequences of our sins stick with us That's my motivation for not sinning. Will the Lord forgive you of sin? Yes, he'll forgive you, if you're genuine, every time. There's no question about that. But you've still got to deal with the consequences of your sin. Thankfully, the Lord can help us with that, and make things as good as they can be, though we do live with those repercussions and consequences of sin. Verse 22, but if you, and that would be the whole congregation of Israel, if you sin unintentionally, and do not observe all these commandments that the Lord has spoken to Moses, all that the Lord has commanded you by Moses from the day that the Lord gave commandment and onward throughout your generations, then if it was done unintentionally, without the knowledge of the congregation, all the congregation shall offer one bull from the herd for a burnt offering a pleasing aroma to the Lord, with its grain offering and its drink offering according to the rule, and one male goat for a sin offering, verse 25, and the priest shall make atonement for all the

congregation of the people of Israel, and they shall be forgiven, because it was a mistake. This is an unintentional sin. And they have brought their offering, a food offering to the Lord and their sin offering before the Lord for their mistake. Verse 26, and all the congregation of the people of Israel shall be forgiven, and the stranger who sojourns among them, because the whole population was involved in the mistake. Verse 27, if one person sins unintentionally, he shall offer a female goat a year old for a sin offering. 28, And the priest shall make atonement before the Lord for the person who makes the mistake when he sins unintentionally, to make atonement for him and he shall be forgiven. Verse 29, you shall have one law for him who does anything unintentionally, for him who is native among the people of Israel and for the stranger who sojourns among them. So in short, there is forgiveness for any unintentional sin. If you didn't know any better, if it was something that you did, by accident, if you were deceived into it, if you stumbled into it, any sin committed without full knowledge and full intention, that was pardonable with the right offering. Now, whether that be an offering for the sin of the entire nation, verses 22 through 26, or the unintentional sin of an individual, verses 27 through 29, forgivable, all of it forgivable. Didn't mean it, didn't intend it, didn't know any better as the case may be. And the Lord forgives, but make a note of this. It does still need to be confessed. When it's uncovered When it's found out, it does still need to be confessed, and there still needs to be a sacrifice. Because even though it was an unintentional sin, it was still a sin. Sin is sin, intentional or not. And Christians contend to get sloppy with that truth. But it is a truth, not just in the Old Testament, in the New Testament is as well. Sin is sin, don't get sloppy with this. Well, it's not a sin because I didn't know any better, or I didn't really mean it. So obviously, it's not a sin. No, that's false. It is a sin whether you meant it or not. Remember when Jesus was praying for those that were crucifying Him, and Luke chapter 23, verse 34? Here's what he said, Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do. Christ's confession was, they weren't doing this with full understanding. They weren't doing this with full intention. They really didn't know what they were doing. And yet, the Lord still said, it's a sin and it needs to be forgiven. So he prayed for it. And then in a few short moments, eventually he would die for the forgiveness of that sin that he was praying for. So this right here is the single reason why I never go a day without praying something like this, Lord, forgive me of my sins. Can't think of anything that I've done, but Lord, forgive me for my sins, purify my heart. If there's anything outstanding; I don't mean outstanding, as in Wow, that was good. Anything outstanding, as uncovered by the blood. Lord, I want that covered. Maybe I did something I didn't know about. Maybe I sinned and I don't even realize that I did it. Lord, I don't just want to get a pass on that. I want to know about it. I want to confess it to you. I want to make sure it's all confessed. And I want to know about it so that I don't repeat it so that I can avoid that sin in the future. Not too proud to pray that way. Lord, I don't know if I did anything. But if I did, please forgive me. I would encourage the same thing for you as well because unintentional sin is still sin. Verse 22. No. Now we're on verse 30, verse 30, thank you. She's like, Don't you dare go backwards. Uh uh, 720. Don't you dare go backwards. So the Psalmist David said, in Psalm 19, verse 12, who can discern His errors, declare me innocent, or forgive me for hidden faults. And then in verse 13, the Psalmist David says, Keep back your servant also from presumptuous or intentional sin. All right, we know the Lord forgives unintentional sin. How about intentional or presumptuous sin? Yep. He forgives that as well. I can give you about 100 examples of that in the Bible, David being one of them, the guy that wrote this, but notice the acknowledgement of David, David's prayer is an acknowledgment that he needs God's help, just to help to prevent him from committing intentional sins. Do you see that? That's what he's saying, Lord, please keep me from committing intentional sins. In other words, that's going to be my predisposition. That's going to be my bent my slant. I'm going to trend toward that committing intentional sin, Lord, if I'm not going to it's going to be because you helped me I need your help in that. So the Lord does forgive intentional sin as well, of course, but here's where the flow of this chapter and the instructions that the Lord is giving might surprise you. The Lord doesn't say anything about intentional sin. He strips, he skips, pardon me straight from

unintentional sin, to sin with a high hand and there is a difference between a sin with a high hand and an intentional or presumptuous sin. Let's take a look at it, verse 30. But the person who does anything with a high hand, whether he is a native or a sojourner, reviles the Lord and that person shall be cut off from among his people, verse 31, because he has despised the word of the Lord and has broken his commandment, That person shall be utterly cut off, which means excommunicated, his iniquity shall be on him. Now the ESV uses the words high hand, if you read from the New King James version or the King James Version, you'll see the word presumptuous that actually is not a good translation, because presumptuous Sin means intentional sin. But if you go back to the original language here, it literally says sin with a high hand. That is a Hebrew expression and we have a similar English expression or a couple of them, we would say raising a fist, or clenching a fist, or raising a fist in the air. I think I said that when raised fist or clenched fist, shaking the fist, those kinds of things. Those are expressions, we understand what they mean. They mean that they're done in defiance. Those are brazen kind of sin. So, this is not just speaking about someone who presumptuously or intentionally sins. This is actually speaking about someone who defiantly sins, someone who shakes their fist at God as they sin. I don't care what your Word says,

I don't care what you think I don't care about your definitions of right and wrong, I'm going to do what I want to do. And that's just the way it is. It's a challenge to God. It's brazen, brash, reckless, careless kind of sin against the Lord. So this is not the person who cares anything about forgiveness of sins. That's what's being said here. This is a person that defiantly sins. This is like a terminal sin. It's a permanent decision to sin, to break off the restraints of the Lord's word, and do what a person wants terminally. Therefore, because that's the case, the Lord offers no forgiveness for that kind of person. They continue to bear that sin indefinitely in their life, it would be similar to the New Testament, blasphemy of the Holy Spirit, it's that terminal once and for all decision, I'm not going to believe I'm not going to follow, I'm not going to live according to God's word. And that's the Lord's solution. He gives them what they want. They don't want to be forgiven. They don't want to seek that they want to live by God's law. They don't want the Lord so the Lord gives that to them in the punishment, it's in the form of excommunication, okay? They don't want to be a part of this, then they can be outside the camp, they can be separated from the rest. And that's a wise thing, because you can't allow that influence to permeate the rest of the bunch. And it will quickly if you don't deal with it. All it takes us to see someone in that defiance of God and no lightning bolt, and that emboldens a whole bunch of other people. Well, they got away with it, maybe there's no God, or maybe you don't matter. So it's like, you know, the statement in the Bible quite a few times, little leaven leavens the whole lump, you got to get that kind of influence out of the camp, the Lord says, excommunicate them. And it's passages like this and New Testament passages where we see this, utilized as well with a New Testament twist to it, that we get the idea of shunning or excommunication in the church. Now, listen, when it's done correctly, it's actually a biblical thing you can read about the New Testament church doing that, shunning and excommunicating brothers and sisters that will not repent of their sins. But it's not really something that we prepare for here at anchored fellowship, we don't have like bylaws for how to shun or excommunicate, it's not really something that we concern ourselves with, because in our modern day, it just happens to work out that when a person becomes a defiant and terminal sinner like this, the first thing that they do is part ways with the church, the first thing that they do is stop coming to church. So this problem, pretty much takes care of it in this modern era, I have had to do this before, and I hope that's the last time I ever had to do it, I have had to excommunicate someone, it was just an awful situation, there was no intent to try to rectify things or go in the right direction. So for the good of the church, I had to excommunicate someone, I pray to God, that's the last case. But it's something that occasionally might need done in this modern era. Not quite so often, I don't think, the problem just resolves itself. But believe it or not, in the New Testament, early church days, that really wasn't the reality of things for the church. For some reason, in that day, those that wanted to continue on in their defiant and terminal kind

of sinful lifestyles, for some reason, they didn't separate from the church. It was like, no, no, I still want to be part of the church. I want to be an adulterer and still part of the church, or I want to be a serial killer and still be a part of church. I don't want to give up my church membership. So excommunication had to be sort of forced on there. And what it does is when it is needed, it sends a definite message that I don't care who you are, we serve the Lord here. If you're on the fence about whether you want to make that decision to choose the Lord, you can show up here as much as you want, we're not evaluating your lifestyle to see if there's sin in it. If you're on the fence, if you're trying to decide you show up every week for 40 years, if you want, but once you make that terminal once and for all decision, nope, I want nothing to do with this, I'm not going to serve the Lord, I'm going to live in sin, then that might be the time that we might have to move into a more, well, you get the point, time to shun, no. So having given instructions about high handed sinners, the Lord now gives us a case study on a man who broke the Sabbath of all things by gathering sticks. So let's take a look at this story. Verse 32, while the people of Israel were in the wilderness, they found a man gathering sticks on the Sabbath day. Terrible. Verse 33, And those who found him gathering sticks brought him to Moses and Aaron and to all the congregation, verse 34. They put him in custody, because it had not been made clear what should be done to him. Now, to be clear, they were clear on what was to happen to someone who violated the Sabbath day laws. They were told that all the way back in Exodus chapter 31, verse 15, the Lord said, six days work shall work be done. The seventh day is the Sabbath, a solemn rest, holy to the Lord, whoever does any work on the Sabbath day shall be put to death. So they're certain about that they're clear on that. The penalty, the punishment for violating the Sabbath is execution, not excommunication. This is slightly worse, execution. So what is it that they're unclear about? Well, they're unclear about whether what this guy was doing constituted work and therefore violated the Sabbath day laws. So they bring this guy to Moses, Moses, this guy, we can you believe it? He was gathering sticks on the Sabbath day. That doesn't sound right. The Lord said, no work. And he's gathering sticks. I don't know, maybe he's trying to make a fire, cook some stew, whatever. But is that a violation of the Sabbath. So they take this to the Lord, they put him in custody, they pray about it, verse 35. And the Lord said to Moses, the man shall be put to death. I would not have seen that coming. I gotta admit, had I not read the story before I would not have seen that coming. The man shall be put to death. All the congregation shall stone him with stones outside the camp, verse 36, And all the congregation brought him outside the camp and stoned him to death with stones as the Lord commanded Moses, this is obviously a terrible thing to have to read about. It is a passage that is difficult for some to come to peace with. I don't know why I'm like this, but this just does not bother me. Because anytime I read about the judgments of the Lord, I just automatically know he knows stuff I don't he knows this person's heart. And if the Lord made that judgment call, because he is always just and fair, it is going to be the right call. So if I read a story in the Bible, which is not in there, this hypothetical, but if I read a story in the Bible that says a man decided to go for a walk in the park, and the Lord struck him down dead, I'm just going to assume there was a good reason for that. I trust the Lord in that way. But not everyone has that kind of trust. So they want to find something to make this sit a little easier on the stomach, you know. So to that end, I have some, some exposition for you that might help you toward that end. For starters, I think we absolutely have to connect this with what we just read. We were studying about intentional sins, and sins that are done defiantly with fist raised to God. And I think we have to assume that that's the kind of thing that was involved here. This guy was defiantly, High handedly, fist in the nose of God sinning against the Sabbath laws intentionally. I say that because it has to be that if this was an accident, we just read it. There's forgiveness for unintentional sin. All this guy would have to do is say I didn't mean it. I didn't know I thought it was Tuesday. And then my buddy said, No, it's It's the Sabbath. It's Saturday. Oh my goodness. I'm so sorry, Moses. This wasn't an unintentional sin. There was pardon for that. This was an intentional sin for sure. And I'm gonna say it was the kind of sin like this: I'm disgruntled that I lost out on the promised land. This whole thing stinks to high heaven. I don't like the

Lord's laws. I don't like how he's navigated us through the desert life has been tough. I'm done with this. I could care less about the Sabbath laws. I want some stew I'm gonna go gather some sticks. And to that end, I say the Lord would have made the right decision. Because this all goes back to how important it was in the early days of this nation for God to establish the harsh punishments for sins to show us the severity of sin. And the problem is when you do that, when you set stiff laws like that, and you say, if you violate the Sabbath, you got to be put to death. Well, then what do you do when someone actually does it? I think you almost have to, at least in those early days, carry through with the punishments that you assigned to those to those crimes against Lord.

Don't you have to do that? If you're telling your kid don't do that, or you're grounded, and they do it, and they look at you, and you go, don't you do it again? That's a vicious cycle you're getting yourself into, I think you have to set the example, early on. And sure enough, that is the pattern of the scriptures. Very early on in the movements that the Lord takes his people through in the scriptures, you'll see these harsh, stiff examples set, we see it with Ananias and Sapphira, in the New Testament, and then it dies out. Aren't you glad the Lord doesn't now strike down every Christian who lies? I'm glad, tell a fib, gone, slain in the Spirit. Well, the Lord does the same with the Sabbath day, not everyone that violates the Sabbath day in the history of the nation of Israel is going to be struck dead. But this is the first occasion of it. They don't even know how to diagnose this, and render a verdict. They've never had to deal with this the first case, and because it's the first case, the Lord has to use this guy and his poor decisions, to set a very stiff example, for the rest of the nation. And it's just a terrible thing, this should have never happened. And that's what makes it even more painful. Because the Lord didn't give Sabbath laws in order to restrict them or make life difficult. He gave them Sabbath laws so that they could rest and recuperate. He gave them Sabbath laws to bless them. And here's this guy saying, I'm not going to do it. So I say, get rid of that influence the Lord's right. The Lord knows this heart, this guy's heart. He knows what kind of influence would have come from allowing this guy to live. There's just people like that, that no matter what God says, they are not going to do it. If God put a law here that says, Every Day ye shall breathe, there would be some fool that would stand up and say, What me breathe, you're going to tell me to breathe? I'm not going to do it. Lord, I'm not going to listen, I'll show you how about this. There's just people like that. And I take it that this is one of those guys, he's just like that the Lord said it, he's not going to do it. And the Lord says, Let's make him an example. So I don't feel sorry for this guy, or anyone like him, defy the Almighty, stand before the Almighty. play stupid games, win stupid prizes. Verse 37, the Lord said to Moses, speak to the people of Israel, that is addressed to everyone, and tell them to make tassels on the corners of their garments throughout their generations and to put a cord of blue on the tassel of each corner. And it shall be a tassel for you to look at. And remember all the commandments of the Lord, to do them not to follow after your own heart and your own eyes, which you are inclined to where after verse 40. So you shall remember and do all My commandments and be holy to your God, I am the Lord your God who brought you out of the land of Egypt to be your God, I am the Lord your God. I think it has become evident at this point in history that the nation of Israel was having a difficult time remembering the Word of God. And so the Lord says, I got an idea. Let's stick some tassels on the edges of your robes, and on the corner of your robe. Let's put a blue string in that tassel. And that's going to be your reminder to obey my word that's going to remind you of my laws. And historically, the nation of Israel has done that to this day, the Orthodox Jews, see that, you'll see that on their prayer shawls. You'll see that sometimes on their robes, their top garments, there will be white tassels, all along the edge of their garment front to back, and on the front corners of those garments. There will be a white tassel that has a blue cord tied through it. White, biblically speaking, represents purity blue, biblically speaking, represents heaven there's a powerful little message packed in that example of the tassel. It would be this holiness is heavenliness. Holiness is happiness, obey the LORD and your life is going to be blessed. And so they wear that around as reminders. I would say to you that if I caught you doing that, I

wouldn't think strangely of you. But I do think there are better ways to do that in the modern day. Wearing a cross necklace, cross earrings, cross ring, wearing a Christian t shirt, wearing an anchored fellowship t shirt. It's those kinds of visible reminders that you wear around that reminds you when you're in the world, that you're in the world but not of the world. It reminds you to obey the Lord. And sometimes those visible things that you have on you, they help to keep you from sinning. Like for example, should I go into that bar and get just absolutely plastered tonight? Oh, you know what? I forgot, I wore my anchored fellowship shirt. I can't do that. Someone's going to get word back to the church. So I can't do that. Hey, whatever works. Whatever keeps you from sinning even if that's fear of getting caught, whatever keeps you from sinning is worth it. If you need to walk around with your Bible in your hand, do that as a reminder to not get roped into the world's junk and bizarre-ity not to get roped into sin, but to be reminded of the Lord in His Word. Anytime that tassels come up, I think of David and First Samuel chapter 24. David got convicted when he found Saul in the cave, thought I think briefly about killing him. But then he thought I can't do that. I know what I'll do. I'll cut the corner of his robe off. Well, on the corner of his robe would be this blue tassel. This white tassel with the blue cord through it the reminder to obey God's word. And when he did that, before he could even lift it up and go haha sucker cut your tassel off. It dawns on him what that tassel represented. It's a reminder of God's Word. And he thought of a passage, didn't he? He thought of a passage that said, touch not mine anointed. And he became convicted in his heart that he had taken matters into his own hands on that occasion. Then you have the lady with the issue of blood for 12 years, who was just determined that if she could touch the hem of Christ's garment that she would be healed. What's on the hem of the garment, the tassels. what she was doing is she was believing in the power of Christ over his promises to her. So she touched the hem of his garment and she was healed so beautiful picture with the tassels I'm thinking about going out and getting me a shirt covered with tassels on the edge and on the corners and wearing that Sunday morning. See if anyone notices. Would you stand with me?