

# Deuteronomy 18:5

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

For the LORD thy God hath chosen him out of all thy tribes, to stand to minister in the name of the LORD, him and his sons for ever.

## Analysis

**The LORD thy God hath chosen him out of all thy tribes** (כִּי בּוֹ בָּחַר יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ) —bachar (chosen) emphasizes divine election, not human qualification. God sovereignly set apart Levi's tribe for perpetual ministry: **to stand to minister in the name of the LORD, him and his sons for ever** (la'amod lesharet beshem-YHWH hu uvanav kol-hayamim).

The phrase **to stand** (la'amod) indicates standing in God's presence as servants before a king. **To minister** (lesharet) means to serve, attend, officiate in sacred duties. **In the name of the LORD** means by His authority, as His representatives. This wasn't self-appointed ministry but divinely authorized service. Kol-hayamim (all the days, forever) establishes perpetuity until the Levitical priesthood's fulfillment in Christ.

Hebrews 7-8 reveals Christ as the superior high priest from Judah's tribe, not Levi —chosen by divine oath, not ancestral lineage. The Levitical priesthood, though divinely chosen, was temporary and preparatory. Christ's eternal priesthood after Melchizedek's order supersedes it, but the principle remains: God chooses His ministers, and only those He calls should presume to serve in His name.

## Historical Context

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God chose Levi's tribe after the golden calf incident when they sided with Moses (Exodus 32:26-29). This choice demonstrated that privilege comes through faithfulness, not birthright alone. Aaron and his sons received the priesthood specifically (Exodus 28:1), while other Levites served as assistants. The phrase 'for ever' governed Israel's covenant age—the Levitical system lasted roughly 1,400 years (1440 BC to AD 70) before its fulfillment in Christ.

## Related Passages

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**Romans 10:9** — Confession and belief for salvation

**Ephesians 2:8** — Salvation by grace through faith

## Study Questions

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1. How should God's sovereign choice of ministers shape our understanding of vocational calling and church leadership?
2. What does 'standing to minister in the name of the LORD' teach about the seriousness and accountability of spiritual leadership?

## Interlinear Text

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בּוֹכִי	בָּחַר	יְהוָה	אֱלֹהֶיךָ	מִכָּל	שִׁבְטֶיךָ
H3588	H0			H3605	
	<b>hath chosen</b>	<b>For the LORD</b>	<b>thy God</b>		<b>him out of all thy tribes</b>
	H977	H3068	H430		H7626
לָעֹמֵד	לְשֵׁרֵת	בְּשֵׁם	יְהוָה	הוא	וּבָנָיו
				H1931	
<b>to stand</b>	<b>to minister</b>	<b>in the name</b>	<b>For the LORD</b>		<b>him and his sons</b>
H5975	H8334	H8034	H3068		H1121
					H3605
הָעֶדְוָה:					
<b>for ever</b>					
H3117					

## Additional Cross-References

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**Deuteronomy 10:8** (References Lord): At that time the LORD separated the tribe of Levi, to bear the ark of the covenant of the LORD, to stand before the LORD to minister unto him, and to bless in his name, unto this day.

**Numbers 3:10** (Parallel theme): And thou shalt appoint Aaron and his sons, and they shall wait on their priest's office: and the stranger that cometh nigh shall be put to death.

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