

# Numbers 18:22

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Neither must the children of Israel henceforth come nigh the tabernacle of the congregation, lest they bear sin, and die.

## Analysis

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**Neither must the children of Israel henceforth come nigh the tabernacle** (קָרַב qarab, to approach/draw near)—The verb used for priestly approach to God now becomes forbidden for laity. **Lest they bear sin, and die** (נָסָא אָוֹן nasa avon, bear iniquity)—This phrase indicates fatal guilt, not mere ritual impurity. After Korah's rebellion (ch. 16-17), God reinforced the boundary between holy and common.

This exclusion anticipated the gospel breakthrough: Christ's torn veil grants all believers priestly access (Hebrews 10:19-22). The same approach that meant death under Moses now means life through Christ. The Levites' mediating role prefigured Christ's unique mediation—"there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus" (1 Timothy 2:5).

## Historical Context

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This command follows immediately after Korah, Dathan, and Abiram's rebellion (Numbers 16), where 14,700 Israelites died for challenging priestly boundaries. The people's fear (17:12-13) led to this formal separation, establishing clear zones of access that protected Israel from further casualties due to unauthorized approach to God's holiness.

## Related Passages

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

**John 3:16** — God's love and salvation

**Revelation 20:12** — Judgment according to deeds

**Matthew 25:31** — Final judgment

## Study Questions

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1. How does the deadly exclusion from the tabernacle deepen your appreciation for Hebrews 10:19—"confidence to enter the holy places by the blood of Jesus"?
2. What modern attitudes toward God's holiness might this verse correct?
3. How does the Levites' mediating role help us understand why Christ's priesthood is both necessary and sufficient?

## Interlinear Text

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וְלֹא	יִקְרַב ו	ע וְ	בְּנֵי י	אֶל יִשְׂרָאֵל	ל
H3808	come nigh	henceforth	Neither must the children	of Israel	H413
	H7126	H5750	H1121	H3478	
אֶת הַתְּבָאִיִּם	מִן הַקְּהִלָּה	לֵאמֹר	לֹא יִשָּׂא	חַטָּאת	וּמָוֶת:
the tabernacle	of the congregation	lest they bear	sin	and die	
H168	H4150	H5375	H2399	H4191	

## Additional Cross-References

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**Leviticus 22:9** (Sin): They shall therefore keep mine ordinance, lest they bear sin for it, and die therefore, if they profane it: I the LORD do sanctify them.