

Numbers 4:17

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And the LORD spake unto Moses and unto Aaron, saying,

Analysis

God's concern that the Kohathite tribe 'be not cut off from among the Levites' reveals His desire to preserve those set apart for sacred service, despite the mortal danger involved. The Hebrew karat (cut off) often indicates judgment, but here God provides protective instructions to prevent it. This demonstrates divine mercy within judgment—God establishes both the threat and the means of escape. He preserves His servants through obedience to prescribed order, foreshadowing how Christ keeps us from spiritual death through His mediatorial work.

Historical Context

The Kohathites' strategic importance to tabernacle worship meant their preservation was vital. Later Kohathite descendants included Samuel the prophet and king David's musicians. God's concern for preserving this tribe shows His providential oversight in maintaining the structures of worship and prophecy.

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Study Questions

1. How does God demonstrate both severity and kindness in His dealings with His people?
2. What protective commands has God given that we tend to view as burdensome?
3. How does Christ preserve us from the judgment we deserve?

Interlinear Text

וַיִּדְבֹּר	יְהוָה	אֶל	מֹשֶׁה	וְאֶל	אַהֲרֹן	לֵאמֹר:
spake	And the LORD	H413	unto Moses	H413	and unto Aaron	saying
H1696	H3068		H4872		H175	H559

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