

Monday, March 11

**All passages taken from Holy Bible, New Living Translation, copyright © 1996.
Used by permission of Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., Wheaton, Illinois 60189.
All rights reserved.**

Numbers 15:17 - 16:40

15 **17** Then the LORD said to Moses, **18** “Give the following instructions to the people of Israel. “When you arrive in the land where I am taking you, **19** and you eat the crops that grow there, you must set some aside as a sacred offering to the LORD . **20** Present a cake from the first of the flour you grind, and set it aside as a sacred offering, as you do with the first grain from the threshing floor. **21** Throughout the generations to come, you are to present a sacred offering to the LORD each year from the first of your ground flour. **22** “But suppose you unintentionally fail to carry out all these commands that the LORD has given you through Moses. **23** And suppose your descendants in the future fail to do everything the LORD has commanded through Moses. **24** If the mistake was made unintentionally, and the community was unaware of it, the whole community must present a young bull for a burnt offering as a pleasing aroma to the LORD . It must be offered along with its prescribed grain offering and liquid offering and with one male goat for a sin offering. **25** With it the priest will purify the whole community of Israel, making them right with the LORD, and they will be forgiven. For it was an unintentional sin, and they have corrected it with their offerings to the LORD —the special gift and the sin offering. **26** The whole community of Israel will be forgiven, including the foreigners living among you, for all the people were involved in the sin. **27** “If one individual commits an unintentional sin, the guilty person must bring a one-year-old female goat for a sin offering. **28** The priest will sacrifice it to purify the guilty person before the LORD, and that person will be forgiven. **29** These same instructions apply both to native-born Israelites and to the foreigners living among you. **30** “But those who brazenly violate the LORD ’s will, whether native-born Israelites or foreigners, have blasphemed the LORD, and they must be cut off from the community. **31** Since they have treated the LORD ’s word with contempt and deliberately disobeyed his command, they must be completely cut off and suffer the punishment for their guilt.” **32** One day while the people of Israel were in the wilderness, they discovered a man gathering wood on the Sabbath day. **33** The people who found him doing this took him before Moses, Aaron, and the rest of the community. **34** They held him in custody because they did not know what to do with him. **35** Then the LORD said to Moses, “The man must be put to death! The whole community must stone him outside the camp.” **36** So the whole community took the man outside the camp and stoned him to death, just as the LORD had commanded Moses. **37** Then the LORD said to Moses, **38** “Give the following instructions to the people of Israel: Throughout the generations to

come you must make tassels for the hems of your clothing and attach them with a blue cord. **39** When you see the tassels, you will remember and obey all the commands of the LORD instead of following your own desires and defiling yourselves, as you are prone to do. **40** The tassels will help you remember that you must obey all my commands and be holy to your God. **41** I am the LORD your God who brought you out of the land of Egypt that I might be your God. I am the LORD your God!”

16 1 One day Korah son of Izhar, a descendant of Kohath son of Levi, conspired with Dathan and Abiram, the sons of Eliab, and On son of Peleth, from the tribe of Reuben. **2** They incited a rebellion against Moses, along with 250 other leaders of the community, all prominent members of the assembly. **3** They united against Moses and Aaron and said, “You have gone too far! The whole community of Israel has been set apart by the LORD, and he is with all of us. What right do you have to act as though you are greater than the rest of the LORD’s people?” **4** When Moses heard what they were saying, he fell face down on the ground. **5** Then he said to Korah and his followers, “Tomorrow morning the LORD will show us who belongs to him and who is holy. The LORD will allow only those whom he selects to enter his own presence. **6** Korah, you and all your followers must prepare your incense burners. **7** Light fires in them tomorrow, and burn incense before the LORD. Then we will see whom the LORD chooses as his holy one. You Levites are the ones who have gone too far!” **8** Then Moses spoke again to Korah: “Now listen, you Levites! **9** Does it seem insignificant to you that the God of Israel has chosen you from among all the community of Israel to be near him so you can serve in the LORD’s Tabernacle and stand before the people to minister to them? **10** Korah, he has already given this special ministry to you and your fellow Levites. Are you now demanding the priesthood as well? **11** The LORD is the one you and your followers are really revolting against! For who is Aaron that you are complaining about him?” **12** Then Moses summoned Dathan and Abiram, the sons of Eliab, but they replied, “We refuse to come before you! **13** Isn’t it enough that you brought us out of Egypt, a land flowing with milk and honey, to kill us here in this wilderness, and that you now treat us like your subjects? **14** What’s more, you haven’t brought us into another land flowing with milk and honey. You haven’t given us a new homeland with fields and vineyards. Are you trying to fool these men? We will not come.” **15** Then Moses became very angry and said to the LORD, “Do not accept their grain offerings! I have not taken so much as a donkey from them, and I have never hurt a single one of them.” **16** And Moses said to Korah, “You and all your followers must come here tomorrow and present yourselves before the LORD. Aaron will also be here. **17** You and each of your 250 followers must prepare an incense burner and put incense on it, so you can all present them before the LORD. Aaron will also bring his incense burner.” **18** So each of these men prepared an incense burner, lit the fire, and

placed incense on it. Then they all stood at the entrance of the Tabernacle with Moses and Aaron. **19** Meanwhile, Korah had stirred up the entire community against Moses and Aaron, and they all gathered at the Tabernacle entrance. Then the glorious presence of the LORD appeared to the whole community, **20** and the LORD said to Moses and Aaron, **21** “Get away from all these people so that I may instantly destroy them!” **22** But Moses and Aaron fell face down on the ground. “O God,” they pleaded, “you are the God who gives breath to all creatures. Must you be angry with all the people when only one man sins?” **23** And the LORD said to Moses, **24** “Then tell all the people to get away from the tents of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram.” **25** So Moses got up and rushed over to the tents of Dathan and Abiram, followed by the elders of Israel. **26** “Quick!” he told the people. “Get away from the tents of these wicked men, and don’t touch anything that belongs to them. If you do, you will be destroyed for their sins.” **27** So all the people stood back from the tents of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram. Then Dathan and Abiram came out and stood at the entrances of their tents, together with their wives and children and little ones. **28** And Moses said, “This is how you will know that the LORD has sent me to do all these things that I have done—for I have not done them on my own. **29** If these men die a natural death, or if nothing unusual happens, then the LORD has not sent me. **30** But if the LORD does something entirely new and the ground opens its mouth and swallows them and all their belongings, and they go down alive into the grave, then you will know that these men have shown contempt for the LORD.” **31** He had hardly finished speaking the words when the ground suddenly split open beneath them. **32** The earth opened its mouth and swallowed the men, along with their households and all their followers who were standing with them, and everything they owned. **33** So they went down alive into the grave, along with all their belongings. The earth closed over them, and they all vanished from among the people of Israel. **34** All the people around them fled when they heard their screams. “The earth will swallow us, too!” they cried. **35** Then fire blazed forth from the LORD and burned up the 250 men who were offering incense. **36** And the LORD said to Moses, **37** “Tell Eleazar son of Aaron the priest to pull all the incense burners from the fire, for they are holy. Also tell him to scatter the burning coals. **38** Take the incense burners of these men who have sinned at the cost of their lives, and hammer the metal into a thin sheet to overlay the altar. Since these burners were used in the LORD’s presence, they have become holy. Let them serve as a warning to the people of Israel.” **39** So Eleazar the priest collected the 250 bronze incense burners that had been used by the men who died in the fire, and the bronze was hammered into a thin sheet to overlay the altar. **40** This would warn the Israelites that no unauthorized person—no one who was not a descendant of Aaron—should ever enter the LORD’s presence to burn incense. If anyone did, the same thing would happen to him as happened to Korah and his followers. So the LORD’s instructions to Moses were carried out.

Mark 15:1 - 47

15 1 Very early in the morning the leading priests, the elders, and the teachers of religious law —the entire high council —met to discuss their next step. They bound Jesus, led him away, and took him to Pilate, the Roman governor. **2** Pilate asked Jesus, “Are you the king of the Jews?” Jesus replied, “You have said it.” **3** Then the leading priests kept accusing him of many crimes, **4** and Pilate asked him, “Aren’t you going to answer them? What about all these charges they are bringing against you?” **5** But Jesus said nothing, much to Pilate’s surprise. **6** Now it was the governor’s custom each year during the Passover celebration to release one prisoner—anyone the people requested. **7** One of the prisoners at that time was Barabbas, a revolutionary who had committed murder in an uprising. **8** The crowd went to Pilate and asked him to release a prisoner as usual. **9** “Would you like me to release to you this ‘King of the Jews’?” Pilate asked. **10** (For he realized by now that the leading priests had arrested Jesus out of envy.) **11** But at this point the leading priests stirred up the crowd to demand the release of Barabbas instead of Jesus. **12** Pilate asked them, “Then what should I do with this man you call the king of the Jews?” **13** They shouted back, “Crucify him!” **14** “Why?” Pilate demanded. “What crime has he committed?” But the mob roared even louder, “Crucify him!” **15** So to pacify the crowd, Pilate released Barabbas to them. He ordered Jesus flogged with a lead-tipped whip, then turned him over to the Roman soldiers to be crucified. **16** The soldiers took Jesus into the courtyard of the governor’s headquarters (called the Praetorium) and called out the entire regiment. **17** They dressed him in a purple robe, and they wove thorn branches into a crown and put it on his head. **18** Then they saluted him and taunted, “Hail! King of the Jews!” **19** And they struck him on the head with a reed stick, spit on him, and dropped to their knees in mock worship. **20** When they were finally tired of mocking him, they took off the purple robe and put his own clothes on him again. Then they led him away to be crucified. **21** A passerby named Simon, who was from Cyrene, was coming in from the countryside just then, and the soldiers forced him to carry Jesus’ cross. (Simon was the father of Alexander and Rufus.) **22** And they brought Jesus to a place called Golgotha (which means “Place of the Skull”). **23** They offered him wine drugged with myrrh, but he refused it. **24** Then the soldiers nailed him to the cross. They divided his clothes and threw dice to decide who would get each piece. **25** It was nine o’clock in the morning when they crucified him. **26** A sign announced the charge against him. It read, “The King of the Jews.” **27** Two revolutionaries were crucified with him, one on his right and one on his left. **28 29** The people passing by shouted abuse, shaking their heads in mockery. “Ha! Look at you now!” they yelled at him. “You said you were going to

destroy the Temple and rebuild it in three days. **30** Well then, save yourself and come down from the cross!”**31** The leading priests and teachers of religious law also mocked Jesus. “He saved others,” they scoffed, “but he can’t save himself! **32** Let this Messiah, this King of Israel, come down from the cross so we can see it and believe him!” Even the men who were crucified with Jesus ridiculed him.**33** At noon, darkness fell across the whole land until three o’clock. **34**Then at three o’clock Jesus called out with a loud voice, “Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?” which means “My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?” **35** Some of the bystanders misunderstood and thought he was calling for the prophet Elijah. **36** One of them ran and filled a sponge with sour wine, holding it up to him on a reed stick so he could drink. “Wait!” he said. “Let’s see whether Elijah comes to take him down!” **37** Then Jesus uttered another loud cry and breathed his last. **38** And the curtain in the sanctuary of the Temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. **39** When the Roman officer who stood facing him saw how he had died, he exclaimed, “This man truly was the Son of God!” **40**Some women were there, watching from a distance, including Mary Magdalene, Mary (the mother of James the younger and of Joseph), and Salome. **41** They had been followers of Jesus and had cared for him while he was in Galilee. Many other women who had come with him to Jerusalem were also there. **42** This all happened on Friday, the day of preparation, the day before the Sabbath. As evening approached, **43** Joseph of Arimathea took a risk and went to Pilate and asked for Jesus’ body. (Joseph was an honored member of the high council, and he was waiting for the Kingdom of God to come.) **44** Pilate couldn’t believe that Jesus was already dead, so he called for the Roman officer and asked if he had died yet. **45** The officer confirmed that Jesus was dead, so Pilate told Joseph he could have the body. **46** Joseph bought a long sheet of linen cloth. Then he took Jesus’ body down from the cross, wrapped it in the cloth, and laid it in a tomb that had been carved out of the rock. Then he rolled a stone in front of the entrance. **47** Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Joseph saw where Jesus’ body was laid.

Psalm 54:1 - 7

54 1 Come with great power, O God, and rescue me! Defend me with your might. **2** Listen to my prayer, O God. Pay attention to my plea. **3** For strangers are attacking me; violent people are trying to kill me. They care nothing for God. Interlude **4** But God is my helper. The Lord keeps me alive! **5** May the evil plans of my enemies be turned against them. Do as you promised and put an end to them. **6** I will sacrifice a voluntary offering to you; I will praise your name, O LORD, for it is good. **7** For you have rescued me from my troubles and helped me to triumph over my enemies.

Proverbs 11:5 - 6

11 5 The godly are directed by honesty; the wicked fall beneath their load of sin. **6** The godliness of good people rescues them; the ambition of treacherous people traps them.