

**May 21**

**Scriptures:** Read Numbers 4

**Key Verse:** “From thirty… to fifty years old, everyone who came to do the work of service and the work of bearing burdens in the tabernacle… were numbered by the hand of Moses… as the Lord commanded…” (Numbers 4:47, 49 )

## **Overview**

Here again we find more details concerning the organization and the specific ministries of the Levites. We learn of a second census to establish the number of Levites from each family that was eligible and able to serve in the tasks of the Tabernacle. Their main responsibilities were to guard the Tabernacle, transport it, assemble and disassemble it; all with great care and reverence. These divinely given directions emphasize the holiness of the sacred symbols of worship, which were to be carefully guarded and respected; not to be treated in a casual way, nor made to be something common.

The Kohathites, the family of Moses and Aaron, had the important ministry of carrying the most holy articles of the Tabernacle. Before they could do their job, Aaron and his sons were to wrap and cover the pieces of furniture and the different articles in the prescribed manner. The priests were also to insert the poles that the Kohathites would use to carry them upon their shoulders. Upon the treat of death, they were not to touch, nor even take a glance at the holy things. The responsibility was put upon the priests to warn the Kohathites of the danger involved in their duties, for they were especially exposed to the risk of violating the law since they worked so closely with these items as assistants to the priests (4:15, 18; cf. 2 Sam.6:6-7). Eleazer, the son of Aaron and the future high priest, was to personally carry the holy oil and incense, as well as supervise and oversee all the activities of the Kohathites that they might not violate the law nor handle their law nor handle their loads carelessly, but remain safe from God’s wrath.

The Kohathites did their jobs in fear, but for us today, through Jesus Christ, there is a lovely change. Those who minister before God need not fear getting too close to His holiness, because we have been privileged: “we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, concerning the Word of life” (1 John 1:1). Jesus Christ was made manifest to us, and His blood “cleanses us from all sin” (1 John 1:7). With this knowledge, our “joy may be full” (1 John 1:4) and we may “come boldly to the throne of grace” (Heb.4:16).

We may find it hard to see the jobs of the Gershonites (in charge of carrying the tent and the curtains, and Merarites (responsible for the smaller things like the tent pegs) as sacred duties, but they were, for it was God’s calling for their lives. In fact, all the Levites were called in the service of hard work, and each was to do this kind of work for a period of 20 years, from ages 30 to 50 (4:39). It was not the most glamorous or exciting work, but was necessary that the work of the Lord might go smoothly and with unity. Those who do more menial jobs should still do them as a ministry unto the Lord, for that is where the Lord has placed them. We need to submit to the Lordship of Jesus Christ and strive to glorify Him in all things, for that is which is done as unto the Lord, no matter how small, will not go unrewarding.

## **Prayer**

Father God, please reveal to each of us our calling. Grant us grace to be willing to do the most humble tasks in Your service.