

## THE HOLY THINGS ARE COVERED

### **NUMBERS 3:1 – 4:49**

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~ Order in the camp of the children of Israel was of primary importance to the Lord on the wilderness march. In our first two reports from the Book of Numbers in our Spiritual Safari expedition through the entire Word of God, we saw the census commanded by God and taken by Moses that men might be chosen for an army. We learned how the pedigree that proved you were a son of Abraham meant the difference between you being a part of the nation - or not. We also looked closely at the standards which denoted where the tribes belonged in the camp. Here, we will consider the tribe of Levi and the particular census and standards that was given concerning them who had oversight of the tabernacle....

III

***1 These also are the generations of Aaron and Moses in the day that the LORD spake with Moses in mount Sinai.***

***2 And these are the names of the sons of Aaron; Nadab the firstborn, and Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar.***

***3 These are the names of the sons of Aaron, the priests which were anointed, whom he consecrated to minister in the priest's office.***

***4 And Nadab and Abihu died before the LORD, when they offered strange fire before the LORD, in the wilderness of Sinai, and they had no children: and Eleazar and Ithamar ministered in the priest's office in the sight of Aaron their father.***

***5 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,***

***6 Bring the tribe of Levi near, and present them before Aaron the priest, that they may minister unto him.***

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~ So, the tribe of Levi is chosen by God and given to Aaron to assist him in the priestly duties that he was tasked with performing. Christians are to be a royal priesthood of believers, as we have already seen; given to our Great High Priest. Frankly, I feel like God didn't get much when He saved me. How about you? Is God lucky you decided to let Him save you? Should He be thankful that you allowed Him to be on your team?

*John 17:6 I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world: thine they were, and thou gavest them me; and they have kept thy word...9 I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine ~*

### RETURN TO NUMBERS III

***7 And they shall keep his charge, and the charge of the whole congregation before the tabernacle of the congregation, to do the service of the tabernacle.***

***8 And they shall keep all the instruments of the tabernacle of the congregation, and the charge of the children of Israel, to do the service of the tabernacle.***

***9 And thou shalt give the Levites unto Aaron and to his sons: they are wholly given unto him out of the children of Israel.***

***10 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.***

***11 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,***

***12 And I, behold, I have taken the Levites from among the children of Israel instead of all the firstborn that openeth the matrix among the children of Israel: therefore the Levites shall be mine;***

***13 Because all the firstborn are mine; for on the day that I smote all the firstborn in the land of Egypt I hallowed unto me all the firstborn in Israel, both man and beast: mine shall they be: I am the LORD.***

~ God wants us to dedicate our children to Him as well as our possessions. Have you turned your child over to God and submitted them to His providence and care? It really is a wonderful thing to be able to do so sincerely with God. I can only thank Him that He chose me early enough and taught me well enough to make the decision to dedicate my children to Him before it was too late! This doesn't necessarily mean the child is to go into the ministry, but it does mean they are to be redeemed. God says the first born are His; I say they're all His! Well, God says that, instead of the first-born children, the whole tribe of Levi are all His....

***14 And the LORD spake unto Moses in the wilderness of Sinai, saying,***

***15 Number the children of Levi after the house of their fathers, by their families: every male from a month old and upward shalt thou number them.***

***16 And Moses numbered them according to the word of the LORD, as he was commanded.***

***17 And these were the sons of Levi by their names; Gershon, and Kohath, and Merari.***

***18 And these are the names of the sons of Gershon by their families; Libni, and Shimei.***

***19 And the sons of Kohath by their families; Amram, and Izehar, Hebron, and Uzziel.***

***20 And the sons of Merari by their families; Mahli, and Mushi. These are the families of the Levites according to the house of their fathers.***

**21 Of Gershon was the family of the Libnites, and the family of the Shimites: these are the families of the Gershonites.**

**22 Those that were numbered of them, according to the number of all the males, from a month old and upward, even those that were numbered of them were seven thousand and five hundred.**

**23 The families of the Gershonites shall pitch behind the tabernacle westward.**

**24 And the chief of the house of the father of the Gershonites shall be Eliasaph the son of Lael.**

**25 And the charge of the sons of Gershon in the tabernacle of the congregation shall be the tabernacle, and the tent, the covering thereof, and the hanging for the door of the tabernacle of the congregation,**

~ We're out in the wilderness marching with Israel as God commands Moses. The three families are named, and their assignment and number are given here. "Gershon" means "exile." That is the first name mentioned because it speaks to the wilderness march. Next, we are given the number and assignments of the other two families....

**26 And the hangings of the court, and the curtain for the door of the court, which is by the tabernacle, and by the altar round about, and the cords of it for all the service thereof.**

**27 And of Kohath was the family of the Amramites, and the family of the Izeharites, and the family of the Hebronites, and the family of the Uzzielites: these are the families of the Kohathites.**

**28 In the number of all the males, from a month old and upward, were eight thousand and six hundred, keeping the charge of the sanctuary.**

**29 The families of the sons of Kohath shall pitch on the side of the tabernacle southward.**

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**30 And the chief of the house of the father of the families of the Kohathites shall be Elizaphan the son of Uzziel.**

**31 And their charge shall be the ark, and the table, and the candlestick, and the altars, and the vessels of the sanctuary wherewith they minister, and the hanging, and all the service thereof.**

**32 And Eleazar the son of Aaron the priest shall be chief over the chief of the Levites, and have the oversight of them that keep the charge of the sanctuary.**

**33 Of Merari was the family of the Mahlites, and the family of the Mushites: these are the families of Merari.**

**34 And those that were numbered of them, according to the number of all the males, from a month old and upward, were six thousand and two hundred.**

**35 And the chief of the house of the father of the families of Merari was Zuriel the son of Abihail: these shall pitch on the side of the tabernacle northward.**

**36 And under the custody and charge of the sons of Merari shall be the boards of the tabernacle, and the bars thereof, and the pillars thereof, and the sockets thereof, and all the vessels thereof, and all that serveth thereto,**

**37 And the pillars of the court round about, and their sockets, and their pins, and their cords.**

**38 But those that encamp before the tabernacle toward the east, even before the tabernacle of the congregation eastward, shall be Moses, and Aaron and his sons, keeping the charge of the sanctuary for the charge of the children of Israel; and the stranger that cometh nigh shall be put to death.**

**39 All that were numbered of the Levites, which Moses and Aaron numbered at the commandment of the LORD, throughout their families, all the males from a month old and upward, were twenty and two thousand.**

**40 And the LORD said unto Moses, Number all the firstborn of the males of the children of Israel from a month old and upward, and take the number of their names.**

**41 And thou shalt take the Levites for me (I am the LORD) instead of all the firstborn among the children of Israel; and the cattle of the Levites instead of all the firstlings among the cattle of the children of Israel.**

**42 And Moses numbered, as the LORD commanded him, all the firstborn among the children of Israel.**

**43 And all the firstborn males by the number of names, from a month old and upward, of those that were numbered of them, were twenty and two thousand two hundred and threescore and thirteen.**

~ If you do the math correctly, you'll notice what appears to be a discrepancy. The critic loves to single out this passage, because they say it proves the Bible is not reliable. Now, if you will simply take the number of the family members of Aaron and Moses - that are also given separately - and add it to the number of the immediate host, you'll discover it is exactly accurate. See, it helps to have studied the entire Bible before we comment on it or about it. Moving on, these are the instructions for what the children of Israel were to do....

**44 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,**

**45 Take the Levites instead of all the firstborn among the children of Israel, and the cattle of the Levites instead of their cattle; and the Levites shall be mine: I am the LORD.**

**46 And for those that are to be redeemed of the two hundred and threescore and thirteen of the firstborn of the children of Israel, which are more than the Levites;**

**47 Thou shalt even take five shekels apiece by the poll, after the shekel of the sanctuary shalt thou take them: (the shekel is twenty gerahs:)**

**48 And thou shalt give the money, wherewith the odd number of them is to be redeemed, unto Aaron and to his sons.**

**49 And Moses took the redemption money of them that were over and above them that were redeemed by the Levites:**

**50 Of the firstborn of the children of Israel took he the money; a thousand three hundred and threescore and five shekels, after the shekel of the sanctuary:**

**51 And Moses gave the money of them that were redeemed unto Aaron and to his sons, according to the word of the LORD, as the LORD commanded Moses.**

#### **IV**

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

**2 Take the sum of the sons of Kohath from among the sons of Levi, after their families, by the house of their fathers,**

**3 From thirty years old and upward even until fifty years old, all that enter into the host, to do the work in the tabernacle of the congregation.**

**4 This shall be the service of the sons of Kohath in the tabernacle of the congregation, about the most holy things:**

**5 And when the camp setteth forward, Aaron shall come, and his sons, and they shall take down the covering vail, and cover the ark of testimony with it:**

**6 And shall put thereon the covering of badgers' skins, and shall spread over it a cloth wholly of blue, and shall put in the staves thereof.**

**7 And upon the table of shewbread they shall spread a cloth of blue, and put thereon the dishes, and the spoons, and the bowls, and covers to cover withal: and the continual bread shall be thereon:**

**8 And they shall spread upon them a cloth of scarlet, and cover the same with a covering of badgers' skins, and shall put in the staves thereof.**

**9 And they shall take a cloth of blue, and cover the candlestick of the light, and his lamps, and his tongs, and his snuffdishes, and all the oil vessels thereof, wherewith they minister unto it:**

**10 And they shall put it and all the vessels thereof within a covering of badgers' skins, and shall put it upon a bar.**

**11 And upon the golden altar they shall spread a cloth of blue, and cover it with a covering of badgers' skins, and shall put to the staves thereof:**

**12 And they shall take all the instruments of ministry, wherewith they minister in the sanctuary, and put them in a cloth of blue, and cover them with a covering of badgers' skins, and shall put them on a bar:**

**13 And they shall take away the ashes from the altar, and spread a purple cloth thereon:**

**14 And they shall put upon it all the vessels thereof, wherewith they minister about it, even the censers, the fleshhooks, and the shovels, and the basons, all the vessels of the altar; and they shall spread upon it a covering of badgers' skins, and put to the staves of it.**



**15 And when Aaron and his sons have made an end of covering the sanctuary, and all the vessels of the sanctuary, as the camp is to set forward; after that, the sons of Kohath shall come to bear it: but they shall not touch any holy thing, lest they die. These things are the burden of the sons of Kohath in the tabernacle of the congregation.**

**16 And to the office of Eleazar the son of Aaron the priest pertaineth the oil for the light, and the sweet incense, and the daily meat offering, and the anointing oil, and the oversight of all the tabernacle, and of all that therein is, in the sanctuary, and in the vessels thereof.**

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

**18 Cut ye not off the tribe of the families of the Kohathites from among the Levites:**

**19 But thus do unto them, that they may live, and not die, when they approach unto the most holy things: Aaron and his sons shall go in, and appoint them every one to his service and to his burden:**

**20 But they shall not go in to see when the holy things are covered, lest they die.**

~ Thirty to fifty years old is the prime of life - and this is the age they were to serve in the tabernacle. This was the way it was done on the wilderness march. The only ones that even saw the articles of furniture were the sons of Aaron. These things were kept under cover during travel and the others were to come nowhere near them. That would include the ark, the mercy seat, the lamp stands, the table of showbread, the altars of incense and the brazen altar. Merari carried the heavy stuff; and Merari means "bitterness." The other two weren't exactly easy but they weren't as heavy and as difficult as Merari. We have a glorious message here for all who are serving. This is where it would appear the Lord told them to stop and set up camp. The way the children of Israel moved is also very important to see; and I don't intend to be tedious, but there are some things we must examine closely.

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When Moses and Aaron came out of their tents in the morning, they didn't have a board meeting to decide whether they would march that day or not. They watched to see if the pillar of fire by night or the cloud of smoke by day lifted off of the tabernacle and moved! If the fire or smoke moved – they marched; when the fire or smoke stopped – they stopped. All Moses and Aaron had to do was just watch for the Lord to move right before their very eyes. The pillar of fire and the cloud of smoke represent the Holy Spirit of the Almighty God! Today, we should be led by the Holy Spirit. We won't see Him visibly, but we can hear His voice in His Word. Many are led by the Spirit and these are the sons of God. The Holy Spirit wants to lead you and speak directly to you today, friends; but that will only ever happen in one place – the Bible. I know many people think God speaks to them in dreams and visions. Well, it's easier to dream it all up than it is to actually study it. That's why they make it up. They're lazy.

When the cloud lifted, the sons of Aaron went immediately to take down the veil. You will remember the ark and the mercy seat were within the veil. I think when the priests went in to the Holy of Holies the furniture was up against the veil and the priests would have had to turn around and face east! So, when they marched, the priests would just drop the veil down over the mercy seat and the ark. When they wrapped the items up, each had several different coverings. The last would have been the outside cover of the tabernacle. After that, the Kohathites came in and would pick up the staves of the ark and away they went - way out in front of the camp. Next, Judah would come along with articles of furniture.

We're going to see that the trumpet was blown seven times to get them marching. When they stopped to pitch camp, I think it was thrilling and exciting - and every man knew exactly what he was supposed to do. The first thing that happened is the ark was laid down and established in a certain place. Then, the entire camp was arranged according to that placement. Next, the articles of furniture were brought in and the tabernacle was set up around them. We don't normally build a house beginning with the furniture - but they did. When they came to rest on the wilderness march, I doubt it took them thirty minutes to set the tabernacle

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up! After forty years of experience, I would imagine they were rather efficient at it!

God has a gift for every believer, and He wants you to do that which is His will - not what YOU decide you should do. The only way to discover that purpose is in His Word. Most people just do what they want to do and demand God bless it. It generally amounts to them asking God to clean up a mess behind them as they hurry along to the next disaster. Jesus is RARELY – and I do mean rarely – out front leading Christian's today. They love to say He has their back. That means they aren't following Him! The reason is – you guessed it – they do not know the Bible and it is meaningless in their lives. They may write verses with quick thoughts or they may memorize entire chapters, but the Word of God has no LEADING in their lives! Most Christians never exercise the gift God gave them.

Now, suppose the man who was assigned to carry the tenth socket on the west wall decided, one day, after twenty years of carrying the socket around the dessert, that he was pretty bored with the routine. To be honest, no one seems to recognize how hard I work in the safari to keep us afloat. Nobody seems to want to reward me for what I do. I doubt the man carrying the tenth socket set was ever commended to receive a medal from Moses. Well, without that tenth socket, the tabernacle doesn't go together correctly. Do you feel like your service is important? The amount of our work will not be in question with God, as we have seen from the parables. What WILL be in question is: were you faithful in doing that which He is directly leading you to do. See, friends - God does things His way, and His way is orderly. His order is in the order of the Word of God....

***21 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,***

***22 Take also the sum of the sons of Gershon, throughout the houses of their fathers, by their families;***

***23 From thirty years old and upward until fifty years old shalt thou number them; all that enter in to perform the service, to do the work in the tabernacle of the congregation.***

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**24 This is the service of the families of the Gershonites, to serve, and for burdens:**

**25 And they shall bear the curtains of the tabernacle, and the tabernacle of the congregation, his covering, and the covering of the badgers' skins that is above upon it, and the hanging for the door of the tabernacle of the congregation,**

**26 And the hangings of the court, and the hanging for the door of the gate of the court, which is by the tabernacle and by the altar round about, and their cords, and all the instruments of their service, and all that is made for them: so shall they serve.**

**27 At the appointment of Aaron and his sons shall be all the service of the sons of the Gershonites, in all their burdens, and in all their service: and ye shall appoint unto them in charge all their burdens.**

**28 This is the service of the families of the sons of Gershon in the tabernacle of the congregation: and their charge shall be under the hand of Ithamar the son of Aaron the priest.**

**29 As for the sons of Merari, thou shalt number them after their families, by the house of their fathers;**

**30 From thirty years old and upward even unto fifty years old shalt thou number them, every one that entereth into the service, to do the work of the tabernacle of the congregation.**

**31 And this is the charge of their burden, according to all their service in the tabernacle of the congregation; the boards of the tabernacle, and the bars thereof, and the pillars thereof, and sockets thereof,**

**32 And the pillars of the court round about, and their sockets, and their pins, and their cords, with all their instruments, and with all their service:**

***and by name ye shall reckon the instruments of the charge of their burden.***

***33 This is the service of the families of the sons of Merari, according to all their service, in the tabernacle of the congregation, under the hand of Ithamar the son of Aaron the priest.***

***34 And Moses and Aaron and the chief of the congregation numbered the sons of the Kohathites after their families, and after the house of their fathers,***

***35 From thirty years old and upward even unto fifty years old, every one that entereth into the service, for the work in the tabernacle of the congregation:***

***36 And those that were numbered of them by their families were two thousand seven hundred and fifty.***

***37 These were they that were numbered of the families of the Kohathites, all that might do service in the tabernacle of the congregation, which Moses and Aaron did number according to the commandment of the LORD by the hand of Moses.***

***38 And those that were numbered of the sons of Gershon, throughout their families, and by the house of their fathers,***

***39 From thirty years old and upward even unto fifty years old, every one that entereth into the service, for the work in the tabernacle of the congregation,***

***40 Even those that were numbered of them, throughout their families, by the house of their fathers, were two thousand and six hundred and thirty.***

***41 These are they that were numbered of the families of the sons of Gershon, of all that might do service in the tabernacle of the***

**congregation, whom Moses and Aaron did number according to the commandment of the LORD.**

**42 And those that were numbered of the families of the sons of Merari, throughout their families, by the house of their fathers,**

**43 From thirty years old and upward even unto fifty years old, every one that entereth into the service, for the work in the tabernacle of the congregation,**

**44 Even those that were numbered of them after their families, were three thousand and two hundred.**

**45 These be those that were numbered of the families of the sons of Merari, whom Moses and Aaron numbered according to the word of the LORD by the hand of Moses.**

**46 All those that were numbered of the Levites, whom Moses and Aaron and the chief of Israel numbered, after their families, and after the house of their fathers,**

**47 From thirty years old and upward even unto fifty years old, every one that came to do the service of the ministry, and the service of the burden in the tabernacle of the congregation,**

**48 Even those that were numbered of them, were eight thousand and five hundred and fourscore.**

**49 According to the commandment of the LORD they were numbered by the hand of Moses, every one according to his service, and according to his burden: thus were they numbered of him, as the LORD commanded Moses ~**

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