Refreshed IN THE WORD
For thy word hath quickened me
PSALM 119:50

Torah Studies

Connecting the Torah and Jesus

STUDY 32

Learn to Carry Your Part

Numbers · Lesson 4 · Chapter 4

Learning to Walk with Our Father. Learn to handle responsibility with care, receive help, and serve others through the strength God gives.

For personal reading and study with friends

King James Version · Complete Scripture passages

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Read one section at a time. Take turns reading the verses aloud, discuss the questions, and choose one practical response. Every passage referenced in the teaching is included in full.

Let’s begin together

Father, help us listen carefully and handle our responsibilities with love. Teach us to ask for help, work together, and honor You through what we do. In Jesus’ name, amen.

In Numbers 3, the Levite families learned their different duties. Numbers 4 explains how they would carry the tabernacle when Israel traveled. The tabernacle was the sacred tent where God met with His people. Its furnishings were not ordinary luggage. They had to be handled in the way God commanded.

A caring father does more than say, “Get it done.” He explains the task, shows how to do it, and gives help when it is needed. In this lesson, we will see why clear instructions and shared responsibility matter.

Main truth: We learn to serve faithfully by listening, taking care, and depending on the help God provides.

1. Understand the responsibility

Numbers 4:1-4

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:

This count concerns Levite men from thirty to fifty years old who would do the work described here. Numbers 3 counted males from one month old as members of the tribe. Now the focus is on adults carrying a particular responsibility. These ages are not a rule that Christians must be thirty before they can serve God.

At home, responsibilities should fit a person’s age, ability, and preparation. A child can help without carrying an adult’s whole burden. Asking for guidance is a wise part of learning.

2. Care begins with listening

Numbers 4:5-10

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.

Aaron and his sons covered the ark, the table, and the lampstand before the camp moved. "Staves" means carrying poles. "Shewbread" refers to the bread placed before God. The careful covering and carrying instructions remind us that these objects had been set apart for worship.

Numbers 4:11-16

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.

The priests prepared the holy objects; then the Kohathites carried them. Eleazar oversaw important supplies and the sanctuary's care. The order of the work mattered. A person could be eager to help and still need to wait for the right preparation.

Numbers 4:17-20

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.

These are serious warnings about approaching the holy things under Israel's covenant at Sinai. Verse 19 gives the purpose: that the workers may live. Aaron and his sons had to assign each person's work with care. Leaders were responsible for giving clear direction.

We should not turn this passage into a threat that God will strike a child for making an ordinary mistake. It describes a particular sanctuary arrangement. Its lesson about reverence and responsible leadership must be understood in that setting. Later in this study, Hebrews will explain our access to God through Jesus.

3. Small parts still matter

Numbers 4:21-28

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.

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.

The Gershonites carried coverings, curtains, and cords under Ithamar's direction. Their work helped the whole tent function. A task does not have to attract attention to matter. Cleaning a shared space or putting supplies away can be an act of care for everyone who uses them.

Numbers 4:29-33

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.

The Merarites carried the boards, bars, pillars, bases, and other supports. Even the smaller items were assigned by name. Losing a needed part could affect the whole job. Faithfulness includes caring for details because other people depend on them.

4. Share the work faithfully

Numbers 4:34-41

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.

The chapter records 2,750 Kohathites and 2,630 Gershonites for this service. Each group was counted according to the instructions. The workers were known, and the tasks were clear. Shared work goes better when people understand both their own part and whom to ask for help.

Numbers 4:42-49

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.

There were also 3,200 Merarites. The total was 8,580 workers. Verse 49 brings us back to the purpose: each person had a service and a load to carry. The list is about an organized task, not a ranking of who mattered most to God.

5. Come near through Jesus

Hebrews 10:19-25

19 Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus,

20 By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh;

21 And having an high priest over the house of God;

22 Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water.

23 Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;)

24 And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works:

25 Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.

Hebrews teaches that we draw near to God through Jesus' blood and His work as our great priest. Our confidence rests in Him. We do not gain access by carrying a sacred object or performing an ancient sanctuary duty. Jesus opens the way, and we respond with faith, hope, and love.

Notice what comes next: encourage one another toward love and good works. Drawing near to God teaches us to care for people. A father can model this by helping a child learn patiently, instead of only pointing out what went wrong.

1 Peter 4:10-11

10 As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.

11 If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

Peter says to use the gifts we have received to serve others. A “steward” is someone trusted to care for what belongs to another. We serve through the strength God gives, so that He is honored through Jesus. The goal is faithful care, not showing that we can do everything alone.

Talk it over together

1. How is the count in Numbers 4 different from the count in Numbers 3?

2. What responsibility did the priests have before the Kohathites carried the holy things?

3. What does Hebrews say gives us confidence to draw near to God?

4. Which task could we explain more clearly or share more fairly at home?

Practice it this week

Choose one shared task. Explain what needs to happen, show the steps, and decide who will do each part. Ask what help is needed. Finish by thanking each person. If something goes wrong, learn from it together and try again with patience.

A verse to carry with you

1 Peter 4:10

10 As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.

What God gives us can become a way to care for someone else.

Let’s pray together

Father, thank You for welcoming us through Jesus. Teach us to listen, prepare, and serve with care. Help those who lead to give patient guidance, and help each of us receive instruction humbly. Give us strength to carry our part and love to help others. In Jesus’ name, amen.

I love you, my friends.

Scripture and sources

Scripture text was checked against the King James Version published by eBible.org. The complete verses are reproduced with their historical wording. Verse numbers and layout are adapted for reading; editorial footnotes are omitted. Tap any Scripture reference to view its source.

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