

Numbers 4:35

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

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:

Analysis

From thirty years old and upward even unto fifty years old—The twenty-year service window (מִבֶּן שְׁלֹשִׁים שָׁנָה, miben shloshim shanah) matched Jesus's age at ministry commencement (Luke 3:23). Thirty represented maturity and tested character; fifty marked transition from active labor to mentorship roles (Numbers 8:24-26).

Every one that entereth into the service (כָּל־הָבָא לַצָּבָא, kol-haba latzava)—The verb צָבָא (tzava) literally means 'to wage war,' depicting tabernacle service as spiritual warfare. Paul echoed this in 1 Timothy 1:18 and 2 Timothy 2:3-4, calling believers to 'soldier' for Christ. Service wasn't passive ritual but active engagement in God's kingdom advance.

Historical Context

The age requirement ensured physical strength for transporting the tabernacle's heavy furnishings during wilderness migrations. Later, David lowered the minimum age to twenty-five (1 Chronicles 23:24-27), then twenty, as temple service became stationary rather than nomadic.

Related Passages

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Study Questions

1. How does viewing Christian service as 'spiritual warfare' (tzava) transform your approach to seemingly mundane ministry tasks?
2. What role does spiritual maturity (the 'age thirty' principle) play in qualifications for church leadership today?

Interlinear Text

בֶּן	שְׁלֹשׁ	יָמִים	שָׁנָה	וְעַד	בֶּן	חֲמִשָּׁן	יָמִים	שָׁנָה
old	From thirty	years	and upward	H5704	old	even unto fifty	years	
H1121	H7970	H8141	H4605		H1121	H2572	H8141	

כָּל	הַבָּא	לְעֹבֵד	אֶל	לְעֹבֵד	בְּהֵל
H3605	every one that entereth	into the service	for the work	in the tabernacle	
	H935	H6635	H5656	H168	

מוֹעֵד:
of the congregation
H4150

Additional Cross-References

1 Chronicles 23:24 (Parallel theme): These were the sons of Levi after the house of their fathers; even the chief of the fathers, as they were counted by number of names by their polls, that did the work for the service of the house of the LORD, from the age of twenty years and upward.

Numbers 4:23 (Temple): 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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