

# Numbers 8:26

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

But shall minister with their brethren in the tabernacle of the congregation, to keep the charge, and shall do no service.  
Thus shalt thou do unto the Levites touching their charge.

## Analysis

**But shall minister with their brethren in the tabernacle... to keep the charge**—Retired Levites continued advisory ministry (שָׂרָת sharat, to serve/attend) and oversight (שָׁמַר מִשְׁמֶרֶת shamar mishmeret, guard responsibility) without performing heavy labor. The phrase **with their brethren** (עִתֵּי עִתֵּי et-echayv) emphasizes intergenerational partnership—young strength complementing aged wisdom.

**Shall do no service** (אֲבוֹדָה לֹא יַעֲבֹד avodah lo ya'avod) specifically refers to physical labor prohibited in verse 25, not all ministry. This balance between rest and continued contribution models healthy transitions from active to emeritus roles. Paul's mentorship of Timothy (2 Timothy 2:2) reflects this multigenerational pattern, where experienced leaders equip successors while gradually reducing direct responsibilities.

## Historical Context

The specific duties retired Levites could perform included mentoring younger Levites, supervising tabernacle security, teaching proper handling of sacred objects, and maintaining institutional memory of worship practices. This preserved continuity across generations while respecting physical limitations.

## Related Passages

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**John 3:16** — God's love and salvation

**Romans 10:9** — Confession and belief for salvation

## Study Questions

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1. What advisory or mentoring roles should churches create for retired ministers and leaders?
2. How can 'keeping the charge' (oversight without heavy labor) utilize seasoned wisdom while allowing rest?
3. What intergenerational ministry partnerships in your church could benefit from pairing young energy with experienced wisdom?

## Interlinear Text

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וְשָׂרָת	אֶת	אֶחָיו	בְּאֵהֶל	מוֹעֵד
But shall minister	H854	with their brethren	in the tabernacle	of the congregation
H8334		H251	H168	H4150
כִּי כֹה	יַעֲבֹד	לֹא	וְעִבְדָּה	בְּמִשְׁמֶרֶתָם:
H3602	H5647	H3808	H5647	
and shall do		no service	the charge	to keep
		H5656	H4931	H8104
בְּמִשְׁמֶרֶתָם:	לְלִוִּים	תַּעֲשֶׂה		
H4931	H3881	H6213		
the charge	unto the Levites	Thus shalt thou do		

## Additional Cross-References

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**Numbers 1:53** (Temple): But the Levites shall pitch round about the tabernacle of testimony, that there be no wrath upon the congregation of the children of Israel: and the Levites shall keep the charge of the tabernacle of testimony.

