

NUMBERS 8

Written and compiled by Gary Kukis (first draft)

Numbers 8:1–26

The Cleansing and Retirement of the Levites

These studies are designed for believers in Jesus Christ only. If you have exercised faith in Christ, then you are in the right place. If you have not, then you need to heed the words of our Lord, Who said, “For God so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten [or, uniquely-born] Son, so that every [one] believing [or, trusting] in Him shall not perish, but shall have eternal life! For God did not send His Son into the world so that He should judge the world, but so that the world shall be saved through Him. The one believing [or, trusting] in Him is not judged, but the one not believing has already been judged, because he has not believed in the Name of the only-begotten [or, uniquely-born] Son of God.” (John 3:16–18). “I am the Way and the Truth and the Life! No one comes to the Father except through [or, by means of] Me!” (John 14:6).

Every study of the Word of God ought to be preceded by a naming of your sins to God. This restores you to fellowship with God (1John 1:8–10). If there are people around, you would name these sins silently. If there is no one around, then it does not matter if you name them silently or whether you speak aloud.

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Links to the [word-by-word](#), [verse-by-verse studies](#) of **Numbers** ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)) (that is what this document is). This incorporates 2 previous studies done in the book of Numbers. However, much of this material was thrown together without careful editing. Therefore, from time to time, there will be concepts and exegetical material which will be repeated, because there was no overall editing done once all of this material was combined.

This study makes reference to a wide-range of sources. There are quotations from doctrinal teachers, of course; but from Catholic commentaries and from other sources as well. Wherever I found relevant truth, I quoted from it or was inspired by it. Even though it is clear that some churches have a better concept of our reason for being here, that does not mean that there is no truth to be found anywhere else. So, from time to time, I will quote from John Calvin, even though I do not subscribe to 5-point Calvinism; I will quote from some Catholic sources, even though I believe that they are very wrong regarding Mary, the pope, apostolic succession and other such doctrines. The intention is for this to be the most thorough and accurate study of Numbers available anywhere.

Also, **it is not necessary that you read the grey Hebrew exegesis tables.** They are set apart from the rest of the study so that you can easily skip over them (based upon the suggestion of a friend). However, if you ever doubt the translation of a word, phrase or a verse, these translation tables are then available.

Preface: The sons of the Levites are purified for service. They would perform services between the ages of 25 and 50.

The Bible Summary of Numbers 8 (in 140 characters or less): *Present the Levites as a wave offering to the LORD and make atonement for them. I have set them apart to serve at the tent of meeting.*¹

There are many **chapter commentaries** on the book of Numbers. By the third draft, this should be the most extensive examination of Numbers 8, where you will be able to examine in depth every word of the original text. Every attempt has been made to make this both a complete and self-contained study. Therefore, all references, vocabulary, and related concepts should be found within this extensive study. Easy access links to more in-depth studies of some vocabulary words, concepts and doctrines are also provided.

Quotations:

Outline of Chapter 8:

Introduction

v. 1–
v.
v.
v.
v.

Chapter Summary Addendum

Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines:

Preface

Quotations

Introduction
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Titles and/or Brief Descriptions of Numbers 8 (by various commentators)
Brief, but insightful observations of Numbers 8 (various commentators)
Fundamental Questions About Numbers 8
The Prequel of Numbers 8

The Principals of Numbers 8

The Places of Numbers 8

By the Numbers

Timeline for Numbers 8

A Synopsis of Numbers 8

Outlines of Numbers 8 (Various Commentators)

A Synopsis of Numbers 8 from the Summarized Bible

The Big Picture (Numbers 1–15)

Changes—additions and subtractions (for Numbers 8)

¹ From <http://www.biblesummary.info/numbers> accessed September 7, 2024.

Introduction and Text	First Verse	Addendum
www.kukis.org	Numbers folder	Exegetical Studies in Numbers

Doctrines Covered or Alluded To		
Additional doctrines and links are found in Definition of Terms below.		

Chapters of the Bible Alluded To and/or Appropriately Exegeted with this Chapter		

Many who read and study this chapter are 1st or 2nd generation students of R. B. Thieme, Jr., so that much of this vocabulary is second nature. One of Bob's contributions to theology is a fresh vocabulary along with a number of concepts which are theologically new or reworked, yet still orthodox. Therefore, if you are unfamiliar with his work, the definitions below will help you to fully understand all that is being said. Also, I have developed a few new terms and concepts which require definition as well.

In addition, there are other more traditional yet technical theological terms which will be used and therefore defined as well.

The terms below are cross-linked with their first occurrence in this document. This allows you to click on the first occurrence of a technical term and that will take you back to its definition below. Then you can click on that term below and be taken back to where you last left off in this document.

Sometimes the terms in the exegesis of this chapter are simply alluded to, without any in-depth explanation of them. Sometimes, these terms are explained in detail and illustrated. A collection of all these terms is found here: ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)). Often, the terms below are linked to complete doctrines.

Definition of Terms	
Rebound (Restoration to fellowship with God)	In the New Testament, this is naming your sins to God, so that you are both restored to temporal fellowship with God and are then filled with the Spirit of God. In the Old Testament, naming your sins to God would result in a restoration of fellowship and, in some cases, the empowerment of the Holy Spirit once again (the Holy Spirit was not given to all Old Testament believers). See the Doctrine of Rebound (HTML) (PDF) (WPD).

Some of these definitions are taken from
<http://gracebiblechurchwichita.org/>
<http://rickhughesministries.org/content/Biblical-Terms.pdf>
<http://www.gbible.org/index.php?proc=d4d>
<http://www.wordoftruthministries.org/terms-and-definitions/>
<http://www.theopedia.com/>

[Chapter Outline](#)

[Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines](#)

An Introduction to Numbers 8

Introduction: Numbers 8 deals with three different topics: (1) The reassembling of the lampstand is important because the function of the Jews on earth is to be the light of the world to the Gentiles. (2) The Levites are also set aside for service to Yahweh and herein cleansed. A ceremony which sets them apart to Yahweh, bought

by the death of the first-born in Egypt, occurs in this chapter. (3) Finally, God sets up specific ages at which time the service of the Levites will begin and at what time they will retire from physical labor (although they might remain on the scene in an advisory position).

The cleansing of the Levites for service takes place in this chapter. I believe that the specific directions to do this have already been given (maybe back in Exodus or Leviticus?), and these directions are being followed here (most of Numbers is a narrative and much of that narrative is doing what God has asked Israel to do).

Exodus was begun around the time that Moses comes across the burning bush; and it is completed about 40 years later when Moses gives his last set of sermons to Israel and then dies. Even the aftermath of Moses' death is recorded in the final chapter of Deuteronomy (this would have been written by Joshua).

These are God's instructions of how the Levites are to be purified (Numbers 8:5–22b). Moses does what God tells him to do in Numbers 8:22c. That is, he fulfills these instructions.

God is said to speak to Moses three times in Numbers 8. (1) He tells Moses to light the lampstand in the Tabernacle; (2) He tells Moses to purify the Levites, separating them out from the rest of Israel; and (3) God specifies the ages at which the Levites may serve Him.

The lampstand (Numbers 8:1–4) being lit providing light for a room, which is generally associated with knowledge or revelation (see the reference in Revelation 1:20c (...and the seven lampstands are the seven churches.—ESV) and Revelation 2:1c ([Jesus] ...Who walks among the seven golden lampstands.—ESV; capitalized)

Titles and/or Brief Descriptions of Numbers 8 (by various commentators)

[Chapter Outline](#)

[Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines](#)

Sometimes, a commentator will begin with a good observation of this chapter of the Bible.

Brief, but insightful observations of Numbers 8 (various commentators)

[Chapter Outline](#)

[Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines](#)

As I study a chapter, questions will occur to me—some of them important and many of them minor. Not all of these questions will be satisfactorily answered.

Fundamental Questions About Numbers 8

[Chapter Outline](#)

[Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines](#)

It is important to understand what has gone before.

The Prequel of Numbers 8

Numbers 8 will begin with

[Chapter Outline](#)

[Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines](#)

We need to know who the people are who populate this chapter.

The Principals of Numbers 8

Characters

Commentary

Characters	Commentary

[Chapter Outline](#)

[Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines](#)

We need to know where this chapter takes place.

The Places of Numbers 8

Place

Description

Place	Description

[Chapter Outline](#)

[Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines](#)

By the Numbers	
Item	Duration; size
Chapter Outline	Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines

Timeline for Numbers

There is very little narrative in the book of Numbers; so this information may have been given to Moses in a few days or, at most, a few weeks; and Moses both wrote these things down and informed the people. Because of information previously studied in the introduction, we are not 100% certain if all of this material was given to Moses while in the newly erected Tabernacle. I would lean towards that being the case.

Here is what to expect from Numbers 8:

A Synopsis of Numbers 8

Like all chapters of the Word of God, you need more than just the simple plot outline to understand what God wants us to know.

Chapter Outline	Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines
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Outlines of Numbers 8 (Various Commentators)

Chapter Outline	Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines
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Some of the passages are included below, using the ESV; capitalized.

A Synopsis of Numbers 8 from the Summarized Bible

Keith L. Brooks, *Summarized Bible; Complete Summary of the Bible*; ©1919; from e-Sword, Numbers 8.

[Chapter Outline](#)

[Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines](#)

It is helpful to see what came before and what follows in a brief summary.

The Big Picture (Numbers 1–15)

Numbers

Text/Commentary

God speaks to Moses from the Tabernacle.

1–7

8

[Chapter Outline](#)

[Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines](#)

Changes—additions and subtractions (for Numbers 8): Very often, when I begin a new chapter, I have either discovered a new translations, a new commentary; or have decided to leave out a particular translation or commentary. Sometimes, I make a minor formatting change. I have always placed such comments before the beginning of the first verse. So one formatting change is, *the addition of this more formal approach to changes, giving it a section of its own*. Many times, if I like a change a lot, I will occasionally go back and make that change in previous chapters.

I have begun to draw from over 40 translations when doing my initial exegetical study of a chapter. This will include some translations which I have not used before: Modern Literal Version 2020, Benner's Revised Mechanical Translation (which I should like to go back and include this with my Genesis and Exodus studies), the Literal Standard Version, the Scriptures 2009, the Unfolding Word Literal Text, the Unfolding Word Simplified Text, and the Samaritan Pentateuch (in English). These are some of the various translations which have been recently made available to e-sword 12.1. Four of these simply replace previous texts done by the same translator or translation group.

I added the recently produced Update American Standard Version.

After every verse, I will give the Kukis mostly literal translation for that verse. At the end of every passage, I will give both the Kukis mostly literal translation and the Kukis paraphrase for that passage.

After every verse, I will give the Kukis mostly literal translation for that verse. At the end of every passage, I will give both the Kukis mostly literal translation and the Kukis paraphrase for that passage. However, there is a great deal of repetitive text both in Leviticus and in Numbers. For that reason, in some chapters, the listing of every single verse may be deemed unnecessary.

At the end of this study, I have listed other doctrinal teachers who have taught this chapter. This section is also bookmarked.

I have not yet begun a weekly mail-out study of Numbers, but I will probably do that after I complete the Exodus and Leviticus study.

As I have done previously, since this chapters is what God is saying to Moses, I will begin and end the chapter with quotation marks. I will not insert a new set of quotation marks for each new paragraph.

The first verse of this chapter is actually Numbers 7:89.

Numbers 7:89 *And so when Moses comes unto the Tent of Meeting, and so he hears the voice [of God] speaking to him from the cover which [is] above the Ark of the Testimony. He [God] keeps on speaking to him from between the two cherubim. (Kukis mostly literal translation)*

Numbers 7:89 *On many occasions, Moses would enter into the Tent of Meeting. He heard God's voice come to him from behind the curtain, over the Mercy Seat which was on the Ark of the Covenant. God spoke to Moses on many occasions from between the two cherubim which stood on the top of the Mercy Seat. (Kukis paraphrase)*

Chapter Outline

Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines

As always, 3 separate translations will be produced for each verse. The slavishly literal translation attempts to preserve word order and number, making it even more literal than Young's translation (however, I do not preserve the consistency of the translation that Young does). The moderately literal translation may add or delete a definite article, change the number of a noun to correspond with the English sense of thinking, and the order is often changed in order to better represent our English sentence structure. The paraphrase is an attempt to give a thought-for-thought interpretation of what each verse tells us.

Kukis slavishly literal:

And so speaks Y^ehowah unto Moses, to say, "And so you speak unto Aaron, and you have said unto him, 'In your causing to go up the lamps unto a front of faces of the lampstand, to cause to light seven of the lamps.' " And so does therefore Aaron unto a front of faces of the lampstand. He caused to go up the lamps as which commanded Y^ehowah Moses. And this [is] a deed of the lampstand, a hammered work, gold, as far as her thigh, as far as her bloom. A hammered work she [is] like a vision which caused to see Y^ehowah Moses. So he made the lampstand.

Numbers
8:1-4

Kukis mostly literal:

Y^ehowah spoke to Moses, saying, "And you will speak to Aaron and you have said to him, 'When causing to go up the lights in front of the lampstand, to cause to light the seven lamps.' " Therefore, Aaron does [this] to the front of the Lampstand: he caused the [light of] the lamps to go up just as Y^ehowah commanded Moses. And this [is] the work of the lampstand: [it is] a hammered work [made of] gold, from its base to its bloom [at the top]. It [is] a hammered work like the vision which Y^ehowah caused Moses to see. So he [Moses] made the lampstand.

Kukis paraphrase:

Jehovah spoke to Moses, saying to him, "Find Aaron and talk to him about the lighting of the golden lampstand inside of the Tabernacle. 'Light the seven lamps of the golden lampstand.' " Therefore, Aaron did what Gold told Moses to tell him what needed to be done, and the lampstand cast its light forward after being lit. The lampstand had been hammered from a single figure of gold, carefully crafted from the base all the way up to the blooms at the top. God gave Moses a vision as to how it should look; and Moses used this vision to explain to his inspired workers what needed to be done.

Here is how others have translated this passage:

Ancient texts:

Note: I compare the Hebrew text to English translations of the Latin, Syriac (= Aramaic) and Greek texts, using the Douay-Rheims translation²; George Lamsa's translation, and Sir Lancelot Charles Lee Brenton's translation as revised and edited by Paul W. Esposito, respectively. I often update these texts with non-substantive changes (e.g., *you* for *thou*, etc.). I often use the text of the Complete Apostles' Bible instead of Brenton's translation, because it updates the English text.

The Septuagint was the earliest known translation of a book (circa 200 B.C.). Since this translation was made before the textual criticism had been developed into a science and because different books appear to be translated by different men, the Greek translation can sometimes be very uneven.

When there are serious disparities between my translation and Brenton's (or the text of the Complete Apostles' Bible), I look at the Greek text of the Septuagint (the LXX) to see if a substantive difference actually exists (and I reflect these changes in the English rendering of the Greek text). I use the Greek LXX with Strong's numbers and morphology available for e-sword. The only problem with this resource (which is a problem for similar resources) is, there is no way to further explore Greek verbs which are not found in the New Testament. Although I usually quote the Complete Apostles' Bible here, I have begun to make changes in the translation when their translation conflicts with the Greek and note what those changes are.

The Masoretic text is the Hebrew text with all of the vowels (vowel points) inserted (the original Hebrew text lacked vowels). We take the Masoretic text to be the text closest to the original. However, differences between the Masoretic text and the Greek, Latin and Syriac are worth noting and, once in a great while, represent a more accurate text possessed by those other ancient translators.

In general, the Latin text is an outstanding translation from the Hebrew text into Latin and very trustworthy (I say this as a non-Catholic). Unfortunately, I do not read Latin—apart from some very obvious words—so I am dependent upon the English translation of the Latin (principally, the Douay-Rheims translation).

The comparisons which I do are primarily between the English translations which are taken from the ancient tongues. For the most part, the variances are so minor that I rarely investigate them any further than that.

Underlined words indicate differences in the text.

Bracketed portions of the Dead Sea Scrolls are words, letters and phrases lost in the scroll due to various types of damage. Underlined words or phrases are those in the Dead Sea Scrolls but not in the Masoretic text.

I will only list the translation from the Dead Sea Scrolls if it exists and if it is different from the Masoretic text.

The Targum of Onkelos is actually the Pentateuchal Targumim, which are The Targums of Onkelos and Jonathan Ben Uzziel. On the Pentateuch With The Fragments of the Jerusalem Targum From the Chaldee by J. W. Etheridge, M.A.

² I have begun to doubt my e-sword Douay-Rheims version, so I now use www.latinvulgate.com.

From http://www.becomingjewish.org/texts/targum/onkelos_Numbers.html and first published in 1862.

Occasionally, there is an obvious error in the English translation, and I correct those without additional mention or footnoting. For instance, the online version of the Targum of Onkelos which I use has *gorund* in Ex. 4:9; I simply corrected the text. This may occur once or twice in a chapter.

I attempt to include translations which are different in their vocabulary and phrasing. On many occasions, I may include a translation which is not substantially different than another listed translation.

Most of the translations can be found [here](#).

The very fact that we have ancient Greek, Latin, Syriac and Arabic translations of the Bible testifies to its accuracy. There may be a difference word or phrase here or there; the Greek may have a singular where the Hebrew has a plural, but there is no set of doctrines in the Latin Bible which are any different from those found in the Greek Bible or the Syriac Bible. These different cultures when they chose to translate the Bible chose to translate it as accurately as possible. Where human viewpoint would expect to find doctrinal differences between the Bible of the Hebrews, of the Greeks or of the Romans, no such differences exist.

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text (Hebrew)

And so speaks Y^ehowah unto Moses, to say, "And so you speak unto Aaron, and you have said unto him, 'In your causing to go up the lamps unto a front of faces of the lampstand, to cause to light seven of the lamps.'" And so does therefore Aaron unto a front of faces of the lampstand. He caused to go up the lamps as which commanded Y^ehowah Moses. And this [is] a deed of the lampstand, a hammered work, gold, as far as her thigh, as far as her bloom. A hammered work she [is] like a vision which caused to see Y^ehowah Moses. So he made the lampstand.

Dead Sea Scrolls

Targum (Onkelos)

Targum (Pseudo-Jonathan)

Jerusalem targum

Updated Douay-Rheims³

Douay-Rheims 1899 (Amer.)

And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying:
 Speak to Aaron, and thou shalt say to him: When thou shalt place the seven lamps, let the candlestick be set up on the south side. Give orders therefore that the lamps look over against the north, towards the table of the loaves of proposition, over against that part shall they give light, towards which the candlestick looketh.
 And Aaron did so, and he put the lamps upon the candlestick, as the Lord had commanded Moses.
 Now this was the work of the candlestick, it was of beaten gold, both the shaft in the middle, and all that came out of both sides of the branches: according to the pattern which the Lord had shewn to Moses, so he made the candlestick.

Aramaic ESV of Peshitta

Mar-Yah spoke to Mosha, saying,
 "Speak to Aaron, and tell him, 'When you light the lamps, the seven lamps shall give light in front of the menorah.'"
 Aaron did so. He lit its lamps to light the area in front of the menorah, as Mar-Yah commanded Mosha.

³ I have simply taken the 1899 American version and updated the thee's and the thou's.

This was the workmanship of the menorah, beaten work of gold. From its base to its flowers, it was beaten work: according to the pattern which Mar-Yah had shown Mosha, so he made the menorah.

Lamsa's Peshitta (Syriac)
V. Alexander's Aramaic T.
Samaritan Pentateuch

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And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying
Speak unto Aaron, and say unto him, When thou lightest the lamps, the seven lamps shall give light over against the candlestick.
And Aaron did so; he lighted the lamps thereof over against the candlestick, as the LORD commanded Moses.
And this work of the candlestick [was of] beaten gold, unto the shaft thereof, and unto the flowers thereof, [was] beaten work: according unto the pattern which the LORD had shewed Moses, so he made the candlestick.

Updated Brenton (Greek)⁴

And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying,
Speak to Aaron, and you shall say to him, Whenever you shall set the lamps in order, the seven lamps shall give light opposite the lampstand.
And Aaron did so. On one side opposite the lampstand he lighted its lamps, as the Lord appointed Moses.
And this is the construction of the lampstand: it is solid, golden-- its stem, and its lilies were all solid; according to the pattern which the Lord showed Moses, so he made the lampstand.

Significant differences:

Limited Vocabulary Translations:⁵

Bible in Basic English

And the Lord said to Moses,
Say to Aaron, When you put the lights in their places, the seven lights will give light in front of the support.
And Aaron did so; he put the lights in their places so that they gave light in front of the support, as the Lord gave orders to Moses.
The support for the lights was of hammered gold work, from its base to its flowers it was of hammered work; from the design which the Lord had given to Moses, he made the support for the lights.

Easy English

Easy-to-Read Version--2008

.
The LORD said to Moses, "Tell Aaron to put the seven lamps in the place I showed you. These lamps will light the area in front of the lampstand."
Aaron did this. He put the lamps in the right place so that they lighted the area in front of the lampstand. He obeyed the command that the LORD gave Moses.
This is how the lampstand was made: It was made from hammered gold, all the way from the gold base at the bottom to the gold flowers at the top. It looked just like the pattern that the LORD had shown to Moses.

God's Word™

The LORD said to Moses, "Speak to Aaron and tell him: When you set up the seven lamps on the lamp stand, they should light up the area in front of it."
So Aaron set up the lamps on the lamp stand to light up the area in front of it, as the LORD commanded Moses.
This is how the lamp stand was made: The whole lamp stand, from top to bottom, was hammered out of gold. It was made exactly like the one the LORD had shown Moses.

⁴ I am using the Complete Apostles Bible, available through e-sword.

⁵ Many of these Bibles fall into 2 or more categories. The CEV, for instance, is **approved** by the Catholic Church, it is a limited vocabulary Bible, and it is a paraphrase, for the most part.

Good News Bible (TEV)	The LORD said to Moses, "Tell Aaron that when he puts the seven lamps on the lampstand, he should place them so that the light shines toward the front." Aaron obeyed and placed the lamps facing the front of the lampstand. From top to bottom the lampstand was made of hammered gold, according to the pattern that the LORD had shown Moses.
<i>The Message</i>	.
Names of God Bible	.
NIRV	.
New Simplified Bible	.

Thought-for-thought translations; dynamic translations; paraphrases:

Casual English Bible	.
Contemporary English V.	The LORD said to Moses, "Tell Aaron to put the seven lamps on the lampstand so they shine toward the front." Aaron obeyed and placed the lamps as he was told. The lampstand was made of hammered gold from its base to the decorative flowers on top, exactly like the pattern the LORD had described to Moses.
The Living Bible	.
New Berkeley Version	.
New Life Version	.
New Living Translation	.
UnfoldingWord (Simplified) ⁶	Yahweh said to Moses, "Tell Aaron to put the seven lamps on the lampstand and place them in such a way that they shine toward the front of the lampstand." So Moses told him what Yahweh said, and he did that. The lampstand had been made from gold that had been hammered from one large lump of gold, from its base to the decorations at the top that resembled flowers. The lampstand was made exactly as Yahweh had told Moses that it should be made.

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	.
Beck's American Translation	.
Common English Bible	.
New Advent (Knox) Bible	.
Translation for Translators	.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Christian Standard Bible	.
Berean Study Bible	. fashioned
Conservapedia	.
Revised Ferrar-Fenton Bible	.
God's Truth (Tyndale)	.
The Heritage Bible	And Jehovah spoke to Moses, saying, Speak to Aaron and say to him, When you cause the lamps to light up, the seven lamps shall give light to the front of the face of the lampstand. And Aaron did so; he caused the lamps to light up to the front of the face of the lampstand, as Jehovah commanded Moses. And this work of the lampstand of beaten gold, its shaft, its flowers, a beaten work, according to the appearance which Jehovah caused Moses to see, so he made the lampstand.

⁶ Access via <https://marvel.bible/index.php?text=MIB&b=2&c=9&v=7>

International Standard V	.
Lexham English Bible	.
NIV, ©2011	.
Unfolding Word Literal Text ⁷	.
Urim-Thummim Version	YHWH spoke to Moses saying, Speak to Aaron and say to him, When you light the lamps, the 7 lamps will light the space in front of the lamp stand. And Aaron did so and positioned the lamps to cast light forward in front of the lamp stand, as YHWH commanded Moses. And this work of the lamp stand consisted of beaten gold (from its base to its buds) of beaten work according to the visionary pattern that YHWH had shown Moses, so he fashioned the lamp stand.
Wikipedia Bible Project ⁸	Wikipedia did not do this chapter (at least, not in the e-sword version).

Catholic Bibles (those having the imprimatur):

Christian Community (1988)	Yahweh spoke to Moses and said: “Say this to Aaron: Set up the lamps, so that the seven lamps throw their light toward the front of the lampstand.” Aaron set up the lamps to the front of the lampstand, as the Lord had commanded Moses. This lampstand was made of hammered gold; from its stem to its petals, it was of hammered gold. This lampstand had been made according to the pattern Yahweh had shown to Moses. Exodus 25:31-39
New American Bible(2011) ⁹	.
The Catholic Bible	.
New Jerusalem Bible	.
NRSV (Anglicized Cath. Ed.)	.
Revised English Bible–1989 ¹⁰	.

Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible	.
Eth Cepher Bible	AND Yahuah spoke unto El-Mosheh, saying, Speak unto El-Aharon, and say unto him, When you light the lamps, the seven lamps shall give light over against the menorah. And Aharon did so; he lighted the lamps thereof over against the menorah, as Yahuah commanded Mosheh. And this work of the menorah was of beaten gold, unto the shaft thereof, unto the flowers thereof, was beaten work: according unto the pattern which Yahuah had showed Mosheh, so he made the menorah.
exeGesés companion Bible	.
Hebraic Roots Bible	.
Kaplan Translation	.
The Scriptures–2009	And הוה spoke to Mosheh, saying, “Speak to Aharon, and say to him, ‘When you ascend to trim the lamps, let the seven lamps give light in front of the lampstand.’ ” And Aharon did so. He set up the lamps to face toward the front of the lampstand, as הוה commanded Mosheh. And this is the work of the lampstand: beaten work of gold, from its base to its blossoms it is beaten work. According to the pattern which הוה had shown Mosheh, so he made the lampstand.

⁷ Access via <https://marvel.bible/index.php?text=MIB&b=2&c=9&v=7>

⁸ Access via <https://marvel.bible/index.php?text=MIB&b=2&c=9&v=7>

⁹ From <https://bible.usccb.org/bible> accessed on various dates.

¹⁰ From <https://alkitab.mobi/2/reb/> accessed on various dates.

Tree of Life Version

Adonai spoke to Moses saying, "Speak to Aaron and say to him: When you erect the lamps, the seven lamps are to illuminate the area in front of the menorah." Aaron did so. He erected the lamps facing forward so they illuminated the area in front of the menorah, just as Adonai had commanded Moses. Now this is how the menorah was made: hammered gold from its base to its blossoms. Just as was the pattern that Adonai had shown to Moses, so he made the menorah.

Weird English, Old English, Anachronistic English Translations:

Alpha & Omega Bible¹¹

AND JESUS SPOKE TO MOSES, SAYING,
SPEAK TO AARON, AND YOU SHALL SAY TO HIM, WHENEVER YOU SHALL SET THE LAMPS IN ORDER, THE SEVEN LAMPS SHALL GIVE LIGHT IN FRONT OF THE LAMPSTAND.
AND AARON DID SO: ON ONE SIDE OPPOSITE THE LAMPSTAND HE LIGHTED ITS LAMPS, AS JESUS APPOINTED MOSES.

Awful Scroll Bible

AND THIS IS THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE LAMPSTAND: IT IS SOLID, GOLDEN—ITS STEM, AND ITS LILIES—ALL SOLID: ACCORDING TO THE PATTERN WHICH JESUS SHOWED MOSES, SO HE MADE THE LAMPSTAND. Sustains To Become persists to be the speaker to Moses, to the intent: Be speaking to Aaron, even is you to have said: As you is to stir up the lamps, seven lamps were to shine, turned towards the front of the lampstand. Aaron was to effect it, even is he to have stirred up the lamps, turned towards the front of the lamp stand, as Sustains To Become is to have laid charge to Moses. The work of the lamp stand is a beaten work of gold, from its base to its blossoms, even is it a beaten work, as it is to be shown, that Sustains To Become is to have shown Moses, is he to have made the lamp stand.

Concordant Literal Version

Yahweh spoke to Moses, saying. Speak to Aaron and say to him, When you set up the lamps, toward the face of the lampstand the seven lamps shall give light. Aaron did so; toward the face of the lampstand, he set up its lamps just as Yahweh had instructed Moses. And this was the handiwork of the lampstand:a stiff shell of gold--from its stem unto its buds it was a stiff shell. According to the appearance which Yahweh had shown Moses, so he made the lampstand.

exeGesés companion Bible

HOLOCAUST OF THE LAMPS OF THE MENORAH

And Yah Veh words to Mosheh, saying,
Word to Aharon and say to him,
When you holocaust the lamps,
have the seven lamps
illuminate in front of the face of the menorah.
- and thus Aharon works;
he holocausts the lamps
in front of the face of the menorah
- as Yah Veh misvahed Mosheh.
Num 8:4 And this work of the menorah is of spun gold,
to the flank thereof to the blossoms thereof
- spun according to the vision
which Yah Veh shows Mosheh
- thus he works the menorah.

Orthodox Jewish Bible

BEHAALOSECHA

And Hashem spoke unto Moshe, saying,

¹¹ The A&O Bible follows the Greek text.

Speak unto Aharon and say unto him, When thou set up the Nerot (lamps), the seven Nerot (lamps) shall cast light in front of the Menorah.

And Aharon did so; he set up the Nerot (lamps) thereof to give light in front of the Menorah, as Hashem commanded Moshe.

And the Menorah was made thus of hammered zahav, from its base unto its flower was it hammered out; according unto the mar'eh (pattern) which Hashem had shown Moshe, so he made the Menorah.

Rotherham's *Emphasized B.* .

Expanded/Embellished Bibles:

The Amplified Bible .

The Expanded Bible .

International Standard V

The Seven Lamps **(Exodus 25:31-40)**

The Lord told Moses, "Tell Aaron, 'When you set up the lamps, the seven lamps will illuminate the area in [The Heb. lacks the area in] front of the lamp stand.'" [Or menorah]

So Aaron did so, setting up the lamps to illuminate the area in [The Heb. lacks the area in] front of the lamp stand, just as the Lord had commanded Moses.

This was how the lamp stand was crafted from hammered gold: From its base to its flowers, it was made of hammered gold. Moses crafted the lamp stand just as the Lord had showed him. [Lit. Moses]

Kretzmann's Commentary .

Lexham English Bible

The Seven Lamps

Yahweh spoke to Moses, saying, "Speak to Aaron, and say to him: 'When you are setting up the lamps, the seven lamps will give light in front of the face of the lampstand.'" And Aaron did so; he set up the lampstand in front of the face of its lamps, just as Yahweh commanded Moses. And this is how the lampstand was made, [Literally "the work of the lampstand"] a hammered-work of gold; from its base up to its blossom, [Or "flower"] it was hammered-work according to the pattern that Yahweh showed Moses; so he made the lampstand.

Syndein/Thieme .

The Voice .

Bible Translations with Many Footnotes:

The Complete Tanach¹² .

The Geneva Bible .

Kaplan Translation

Lighting the Lamp

God spoke to Moses, telling him to

speak to Aaron and say to him, 'When you light the lamps, the seven lamps shall illuminate the menorah.'

Aaron did that, lighting the lamps to illuminate the menorah, as God commanded Moses.

The menorah was made of a single piece of beaten gold. Everything from its base to its blossom consisted of a single piece of beaten metal. The menorah was thus made exactly according to the vision that God showed Moses. The Kaplan Translation, particularly in Numbers through Deuteronomy, takes note of historic rabbinic opinions.

light

(Targum; Saadia). Or, 'set in order' (Septuagint). Literally, 'raise up.'

¹² Also known as the Complete Tanach (and as *The Complete Jewish Bible*) with Rashi's Commentary. I do not know who did the original translation, but it has been edited by translator and scholar, Rabbi A.J. Rosenberg. It is found [here](#).

illuminate...

Or, 'Shall shine toward the center of the menorah' (Rashi; Rashbam). See Exodus 25:37.

blossom

At the top of the center shaft. According to tradition, however, there was also a flower directly above the base (see note on Exodus 25:31).

NET Bible®

New American Bible(2011)¹³Rotherham's *Emphasized B.***§ 9. The Priests are to light the Lamps.**

The Levites are consecrated in the place of all Israel.

Chapter 8.

And Yahweh spake unto Moses, saying:

Speak unto Aaron, and thou shalt say unto him,—

<When thou lightest up the lamps> <over against the front of the lampstand> shall the seven lamps give light.

And Aaron did so, <over against the front of the lampstand> lighted he up the lamps thereof,—

As Yahweh commanded Moses.—

Now ||this|| was the work of the lampstand— beaten work of gold <both in the shaft thereof and in^b the flowers^c thereof> was it ||beaten work|| <according to the appearance which Yahweh caused to appear unto Moses> ||so|| made he the lampstand.

^b Ml.: “even the s.t., even the f.t.” Some cod. (w. Sam., Onk. MS. and Jon.) have: “and even”—G.n.

^c So it shd. be (w. Sam. and Sep.) [but M.C.T. has lit.: “flower”]—G.n.

Updated ASV

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

A Faithful Version

. wicks

C. Thomson Updated OT

.

Charles Thomson OT¹⁴

After filling his own hands, and after the anointing, when Moses went into the tabernacle of the testimony to speak to the Lord, he heard the voice of the Lord speaking to him, from above the propitiatory, which is over the ark of the testimony, between the two cherubims, and he answered him, and the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, Speak to Aaron, and thou shalt say to him, When thou hast put on the side lamps, the seven lamps shall give light in a range with the front of the candlestick. And Aaron did so. On each side, on a range with the front of the candlestick, he lighted the lamps thereof as the Lord commanded Moses.

Now the workmanship of the candlestick was of solid gold; both its stem, and its lillies, were of one solid piece. He had made the candlestick according to the pattern which the Lord shewed Moses. Numbers 7:88b–89 are included for context.

Context Group Version

.

English Standard Version

.

Green's Literal Translation

.

Legacy Standard Bible

.

Literal Standard Version

And YHWH speaks to Moses, saying,

“Speak to Aaron, and you have said to him: In your causing the lights to go up, the seven lights give light toward the front of the face of the lampstand.”

And Aaron does so; he has caused its lights to go up toward the front of the face of the lampstand, as YHWH has commanded Moses.

¹³ Also called the revised edition. Found here: <http://www.usccb.org/bible/books-of-the-bible/index.cfm>

¹⁴ Thompson's translation follows the Greek text.

And this [is] the work of the lampstand: beaten work of gold; from its thigh to its flower it [is] beaten work; as the appearance which YHWH showed Moses, so he has made the lampstand.

Modern English Version .
 Modern Literal Version 2020

And Jehovah spoke to Moses, saying, Speak to Aaron and say to him, When you light the lamps, the seven lamps will give light in front of the lamp-stand. And Aaron did so. He lit the lamps of it in front of the lamp-stand, as Jehovah commanded Moses.
 And this was the work of the lamp-stand, beaten work of gold. To the base of it, and it was beaten work to the flowers of it. According to the pattern which Jehovah had shown Moses, so he made the lamp-stand.

New American Standard B. .
 New European Version .
 New King James Version .
 Niobi Study Bible .
 Revised Mechanical Trans.¹⁵

...and YHWH spoke to Mosheh saying, speak to Aharon, and you will say to him, in your making the lamps go up[869], to the forefront of the face of the lampstand, the seven lamps will make light, and Aharon will do so to the forefront of the face of the lampstand, and he will make her light go up[870], just as YHWH directed Moshe, and this is the work of the lampstand, a beaten work of gold, unto her midsection, unto her bud, she is a beaten work, like the appearance that YHWH made Mosheh see, so he did do with the lampstand,...

869. Meaning “to light the lamps.”
 870. Meaning “to light the lamps.”

Updated ASV

The Seven Lamps

And Jehovah spoke to Moses, saying, “Speak to Aaron, and say to him, When you set up the lamps, the seven lamps shall give light in front of the lampstand.” And Aaron did so: he set up its lamps in front of the lampstand, as Jehovah commanded Moses. Now this was the workmanship of the lampstand. It was hammered work of gold. Up to its sides and up to its flowers it was hammered work. According to the pattern that Jehovah had shown Moses, so he had made the lampstand.

Updated Bible Version 2.17 .
 A Voice in the Wilderness .
 Webster’s Bible Translation .
 World English Bible .
 Young’s Literal Translation .
 Young’s Updated LT .

The gist of this passage:

Numbers 8:1			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong #
wa (or va) (i) [pronounced wah]	and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because	wâw consecutive	No Strong’s # BDB #253

¹⁵ From <https://www.mechanical-translation.org/index.html>

Numbers 8:1

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong #
dâbar (דָּבַר) [pronounced daw ^b -VAHR]	<i>to speak, to talk [and back with action], to give an opinion, to expound, to make a formal speech, to speak out, to promise, to propose, to speak kindly of, to declare, to proclaim, to announce</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Piel imperfect	Strong's #1696 BDB #180
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly yohoh-WAH]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y^ehowah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217
'el (אֵל) [pronounced eh]	<i>unto; into, among, in; toward, to; against; concerning, regarding; besides, together with; as to</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39
Mosheh (מֹשֶׁה) [pronounced moh-SHEH]	<i>to draw out [of the water] and is transliterated Moses</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #4872 BDB #602
Up to this point, Moses and God are found in the first verse of every chapter of Numbers.			
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l ^e]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
'âmar (אָמַר) [pronounced aw-MAHR]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think</i>	Qal infinitive construct	Strong's #559 BDB #55

Translation: Y^ehowah spoke to Moses, saying,...

God maintained a clear structure of authority. He spoke to Moses, and Moses was to speak to Aaron, to command him what to do.

Nearly always, God speaks to Moses; sometimes, God speaks to Moses and Aaron. I cannot recall off the top of my head God speaking directly to Aaron.

This verse will occur three times in this chapter. Very likely, that represents three different sessions which Y^ehowah had with Moses.

Numbers 8:2a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB & Strong #'s
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
dâbar (דָּבַר) [pronounced daw ^b -VAHR]	<i>speak [on, further], talk [and back with action], give an [your] opinion, expound, make a formal speech, speak out; continue [to speak], promise, propose, declare, proclaim, announce</i>	2 nd person masculine singular, Piel imperative	Strong's #1696 BDB #180

Numbers 8:2a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB & Strong #'s
'el (אֵל) [pronounced ehʃ]	<i>unto; into, among, in; toward, to; against; concerning, regarding; besides, together with; as to</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39
'Ahărôn (אַהֲרֹן) [pronounced ah-huh-ROHN]	transliterated Aaron	masculine proper noun	Strong's #175 BDB #14
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as; of</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
'âmar (אָמַר) [pronounced aw-MAHR]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think; to command; to promise; to explain; to intend; to decide; to answer</i>	2 nd person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
'el (אֵל) [pronounced ehʃ]	<i>unto; into, among, in; toward, to; against; concerning, regarding; besides, together with; as to</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied) with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #413 BDB #39

Translation: ...“And you will speak to Aaron and you have said to him,...

God tells Moses that he will need to speak to Aaron and this is what he is going to say to him.

Numbers 8:2b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB & Strong #'s
b ^e (בַּ) [pronounced b ^{eh}]	<i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
When verbs in the infinitive construct are preceded by the bêyth preposition, b ^e acts as a temporal conjunction; that is, <i>in their being created</i> = <i>when they were created</i> (Genesis 2:4); <i>in their being in the field</i> = <i>when they were in the field</i> (Genesis 4:8). ¹⁶			
'âlâh (אֵלֵךְ) [pronounced ġaw-LAWH]	<i>to cause to go up [to ascend], to lead up, to take up, to bring up</i>	Hiphil infinitive construct with the 2 nd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #5927 BDB #748
All of the BDB Hiphil definitions: <i>to bring up, cause to ascend or climb, cause to go up; to bring up, bring against, take away; to bring up, draw up, train; to cause to ascend; to rouse, stir up (mentally); to offer, bring up (of gifts); to exalt; to cause to ascend, offer.</i>			

¹⁶ The New Brown-Driver-Briggs-Gesenius Hebrew-English Lexicon; Hendrickson, ©1979, pp. 90–91.

Numbers 8:2b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB & Strong #'s
Bible Hub: Usage: The Hebrew verb "alah" primarily means "to go up" or "to ascend." It is used in various contexts, including physical movement upwards, such as climbing a mountain or ascending stairs. It also refers to the act of bringing something up, such as offerings to God, and can imply elevation in status or position. In a sacrificial context, "alah" is often used to describe the act of offering sacrifices, as they are brought up to the altar. ¹⁷			
ʾêth (אֶת) [pronounced ayth]	generally untranslated; possibly be translated <i>to, toward (s)</i>	mark of a direct object; indicates next word is the object of the verb	Strong's #853 BDB #84
nêrith (תּוֹרֵי) [pronounced nay-RITH]	lit., <i>a glistening; lamps; [bright] lights; luminaries; brightness; figuratively, cheerfulness</i>	masculine plural noun with the definite article	Strong's #5216 BDB #632
ʾel (אֶל) [pronounced el]	<i>in, into, toward, unto, to, regarding, against</i>	preposition denoting direction	Strong's #413 BDB #39
mûwl (לּוּם) [pronounced mool]	<i>in front of, opposite</i>	preposition	Strong's #4136 BDB #557
ʾel combined with mûwl mean <i>towards, to the front of, in the face of, in front of, towards the front of.</i>			
pânîym (פְּנֵי) [pronounced paw-NEEM]	<i>face, faces, countenance; presence; person; surface</i>	masculine plural construct (plural acts like English singular)	Strong's #6440 BDB #815
m ^e nôwrâh/m ^e nôrâh (הַרְנָמִ/הַרְנָמ) [pronounced m ^e -noh-RAW]	<i>lampstand, candlestick; transliterated menorah</i>	feminine plural noun with the definite article	Strong's #4501 BDB #633

Translation: ...'When causing to go up the lights in front of the lampstand,...

This is a very literal translation; however, many of the Hebrew verbs have been translated by several words to convey their actual meanings. The lamps (or lights, or candlesticks) will be caused to be put up by aaron, although he may not actually do it himself. Therefore, the word ʾâlâh (אֲלָה) [pronounced ʾaw-LAWH], meaning *to go up, to ascend, to raise up*, is in the Hiphil infinitive. In the infinitive, we do not have a subject, per se, but we can affix a suffix. Here, that suffix was the second masculine singular. When we express our verbs in general form, we use the infinitive of the verb, as in **to go up, to ascend, to raise up**; and I often do that when giving the meaning of a verb. However, in the Hebrew, verbs expressed in the vocabulary form are given in the Qal stem, just as verbs in the Greek in vocabulary form are given in the present active indicative. This accounts for the added word *to*. The Hiphil stem is causative, meaning that the rendering *to raise up* is most apropos. Strong's #5927 BDB #748.

I have not yet seen a picture of a lampstand which would actually jive with this description. The prepositions involved indicate clearly that there is a front (and, by implication, a back) to the lampstand. The first preposition is ʾel (אֶל) [pronounced el], which means *in, into, toward, unto, to, regarding, against*. Strong's #413 BDB #39. This is followed by the preposition mûwl (לּוּם) [pronounced mool] and it means *in front of*. Strong's #4136 BDB #557. ʾel combined with mûwl mean *towards, to the front of, in the face of, in front of, towards the front of*. This is followed by the word for *face*. These words together mean that there is a front to the lampstand.

¹⁷ From <https://biblehub.com/hebrew/5927.htm> accessed March 13, 2025.

Aaron will cause the lights (or candles) at the top of the lampstand to go up. Because these are candles, that is the direction in which the flame will go.

In the Hebrew, this appears to emphasize the lamps being in front of the lampstand. They are certainly at the top of the lampstand. In studying other translations, the emphasis appears to be that the light is cast forward from the lampstand.

Essentially, Aaron is being told to light the lampstand. This appears to be done every day in the Tabernacle, and that Aaron does not do this himself, but he instructs someone else to take care of this.

Numbers 8:2c			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB & Strong #'s
ʾōwr (אור) [pronounced <i>ohr</i>]	<i>to bring light, to cause to be light, to make light; to make shine; to illuminate, to enlighten; to refresh [gladden]; to kindle</i>	3 rd person masculine plural, Hiphil imperfect	Strong's #215 BDB #21
shib ^ē ʾāh (שֵׁבַע) [pronounced <i>shib^ē-GAW</i>]	<i>seven</i>	numeral feminine construct	Strong's #7651 BDB #987 & #988
nêrith (תּוֹרֵי) [pronounced <i>nay-RITH</i>]	<i>lit., a glistening; lamps; [bright] lights; luminaries; brightness; figuratively, cheerfulness</i>	masculine plural noun with the definite article	Strong's #5216 BDB #632

Translation: *...to cause to light the seven lamps.'* ”

The Hiphil is used because God is telling Moses to tell Aaron to cause these lamps to be lit. Aaron would instruct those who work inside of the Tabernacle to do this daily.

Even the priests did not stay inside of the Tabernacle. They did the things which they were supposed to do, and then they exited it.

Numbers 8:1–2 *Y^{ehowah} spoke to Moses, saying, “And you will speak to Aaron and you have said to him, ‘When causing to go up the lights in front of the lampstand, to cause to light the seven lamps.’ ”* (Kukis mostly literal translation)

God tells Moses to tell Aaron to see to the lighting of the lamps of the lampstand, which stood close to the curtain about two-thirds of the way back from the opening. In the middle was the golden lampstand, and on either side would be the table of showbread and the altar of incense.

As the golden lampstand lit up the Tabernacle, so Jesus is the light of the world.

The lamp was in the holy place and the ark was in the Holy of Holies. Because of the Shekinah glory, there was no light needed in the Holy of Holies; in the holy place, the lamp itself provided the light. Was this actually the case in the Holy of Holies once a year when the high priest entered? Did he have light or did he function mostly in the dark?

The lampstand represented the Jews, who were to be the light of the world, just as we as believers have become.

Numbers 8:3a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB & Strong #'s
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
‘âsâh (עָשָׂה) [pronounced <i>ġaw-SAWH</i>]	<i>to do, to make, to construct, to produce, to fashion, to form, to prepare, to manufacture; accomplish</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #6213 BDB #793
kên (כֵּן) [pronounced <i>kane</i>]	<i>so, therefore, thus; then, afterwards; upright, honest; rightly, well; [it is] so, such, so constituted</i>	properly, an active participle; used primarily as an adverb	Strong's #3651 BDB #485
’Ahârôn (אַהֲרֹן) [pronounced <i>ah-huh-ROHM</i>]	transliterated <i>Aaron</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #175 BDB #14
’el (אֵל) [pronounced <i>el</i>]	<i>in, into, toward, unto, to, regarding, against</i>	preposition denoting direction	Strong's #413 BDB #39
mûwl (מִלְּפָנַי) [pronounced <i>mool</i>]	<i>in front of, opposite</i>	preposition	Strong's #4136 BDB #557
’el combined with mûwl mean <i>towards, to the front of, in the face of, in front of, towards the front of.</i>			
pânîym (פָּנִים) [pronounced <i>paw-NEEM</i>]	<i>face, faces, countenance; presence; person; surface</i>	masculine plural construct (plural acts like English singular)	Strong's #6440 BDB #815
m ^e nôwrâh/m ^e nôrâh (מְנוֹרָה/מִנְרָה) [pronounced <i>m^e-noh-RAW</i>]	<i>lampstand, candlestick; transliterated menorah</i>	feminine plural noun with the definite article	Strong's #4501 BDB #633

Translation: Therefore, Aaron does [this] to the front of the lampstand:...

Aaron does what he is supposed to do. This does not mean that he personally lights these lights, but he instructs the person who is to take care of this.

Numbers 8:3c			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB & Strong #'s
‘âlâh (אָלָה) [pronounced <i>ġaw-LAWH</i>]	<i>to cause to go up [to ascend], to lead up, to take up, to bring up</i>	2 nd person masculine singular, Hiphil perfect	Strong's #5927 BDB #748
All of the BDB Hiphil definitions: <i>to bring up, cause to ascend or climb, cause to go up; to bring up, bring against, take away; to bring up, draw up, train; to cause to ascend; to rouse, stir up (mentally); to offer, bring up (of gifts); to exalt; to cause to ascend, offer.</i>			

Numbers 8:3c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB & Strong #'s
Bible Hub: Usage: The Hebrew verb "alah" primarily means "to go up" or "to ascend." It is used in various contexts, including physical movement upwards, such as climbing a mountain or ascending stairs. It also refers to the act of bringing something up, such as offerings to God, and can imply elevation in status or position. In a sacrificial context, "alah" is often used to describe the act of offering sacrifices, as they are brought up to the altar. ¹⁸			
nêrith (נֹרִיחַ) [pronounced nay-RITH]	lit., a glistening; lamps; [bright] lights; luminaries; brightness; figuratively, cheerfulness	masculine plural noun with the definite article	Strong's #5216 BDB #632
kaph or k ^e (כ) [pronounced k ^e]	like, as, according to; about, approximately	preposition of comparison, resemblance or approximation	No Strong's # BDB #453
'ăsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced ash-ER]	that, which, when, who, whom; where	relative pronoun; sometimes the verb to be is implied	Strong's #834 BDB #81
Together, ka'ăsher (כְּאֲשֶׁר) [pronounced kah-uh-SHER] means as which, as one who, as, like as, even as, just as, according as; because; according to what manner, in a manner as, when, about when. Back in 1Samuel12:8, I rendered this for example. In Genesis 44:1, I have translated this, as much as.			
tsâvâh (צָוָה) [pronounced tsaw-VAW]	to command, to charge; to lay charge upon, to give charge to, to commission, to mandate, to order; to appoint; to ordain; to instruct [as in, giving an order]	3 rd person masculine singular, Piel perfect	Strong's #6680 BDB #845
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly yohh-WAH]	transliterated variously as Jehovah, Yahweh, Y ^e howah	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217
'êth (אֵת) [pronounced ayth]	generally untranslated; possibly be translated to, toward (s)	mark of a direct object; indicates next word is the object of the verb	Strong's #853 BDB #84
Mosheh (מֹשֶׁה) [pronounced moh-SHEH]	to draw out [of the water] and is transliterated Moses	masculine proper noun	Strong's #4872 BDB #602

Translation: ...he caused the [light of] the lamps to go up just as Y^ehowah commanded Moses.

As a result of God commanding Moses, the lights of the lampstand are lit.

Numbers 8:3 Therefore, Aaron does [this] to the front of the Lampstand: he caused the [light of] the lamps to go up just as Y^ehowah commanded Moses. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

A common objection which I read among atheists is, *if God wants something done, why doesn't He do it?* I don't know if we are to walk away from this objection thinking, "God must not be very powerful if we have to do this stuff." However, God allows us, as believers, to take part in the Angelic Conflict. We are not nonparticipants who

¹⁸ From <https://biblehub.com/hebrew/5927.htm> accessed March 13, 2025.

sit along the sidelines, cheering for our team. We are actually on the field, doing that which God commands. There are those on the sidelines watching, and that would be angels, both elect and fallen. They watch and learn.

God always has a chain of command. God spoke to Moses, Moses spoke to Aaron, and Aaron caused, that is delegated this responsibility, to an unnamed Levite (we know this by the continued use of the Hiphil, or causative, stem in this verse and in the previous verse). It is likely that Aaron went to the head of the partial Levitical tribe and spoke to him and he had one of those under him actually do the placement of the lamps. Notice that God does not go directly to the Levite and tell him what to do. Nor does Moses go directly to that Levite and tell him what to do. There is a clear, specific chain of command which is taught to us in the Hebrew.

Numbers 8:4a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB & Strong #'s
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or וַ) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as; of</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
zeh (זֶה) [pronounced <i>zeh</i>]	<i>here, this, this one; thus; possibly another (sometimes the verb to be is implied)</i>	masculine singular demonstrative adjective with a definite article	Strong's #2088, 2090 (& 2063) BDB #260
ma'ăseh (מַעֲשֵׂה) [pronounced <i>mah-ġa-SEH</i>]	<i>deed, act, action, work, production, that which is done; that which is produced [property, goods, crops]; that which anyone makes or does; a course of action; a business</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #4639 BDB #795
m ^e nôwrâh/m ^e nôrâh (מְנוֹרָה/מְנוֹרָה) [pronounced <i>m^e-noh-RAW</i>]	<i>lampstand, candlestick; transliterated <i>menorah</i></i>	feminine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #4501 BDB #633

Translation: [And this \(is\) the work of the lampstand:...](#)

Ma'ăseh (מַעֲשֵׂה) [pronounced *mah-ġa-SEH*] means *deed, work*; it is a reference to that which has been constructed or made (it comes from the oft used Hebrew verb 'âsâh). I have translated it *craftsmanship*. Strong's #4639 BDB #795. Its verbal cognate does occur in this verse in the Qal perfect with an unnamed subject here. The *he* does not refer to Moses, Aaron or Yahweh but to the person who actually constructed this lampstand, Bezalel (Exodus 37:1, 17–23).

Moses, as the writer of this portion of Scripture, describes the golden lampstand.

Numbers 8:4b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB & Strong #'s
miq ^e shâh (מִקְשָׁה) [pronounced <i>mihk-SHAW</i>]	<i>hammered work, shaped [molded] by hammering; possibly made from one piece</i>	feminine singular noun	Strong's #4749 BDB #904
zâhâb (זָהָב) [pronounced <i>zaw-HAW^{BV}</i>]	<i>gold; a measure of weight [related to gold]; [figuratively used for] brilliance, splendor</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #2091 BDB #262

Numbers 8:4b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB & Strong #'s
ʿad (עד) [pronounced <i>gahd</i>]	<i>as far as, even to, up to, until</i>	preposition of duration or of limits	Strong's #5704 BDB #723
yârek ^e (יָרֵק) [pronounced <i>yaw-REK^e</i>]	<i>thigh, inner thigh; loin, side, base; shaft; uterus, reproductive system</i>	feminine singular noun with the 3 rd person feminine singular suffix	Strong's #3409 BDB #437
ʿad (עד) [pronounced <i>gahd</i>]	<i>as far as, even to, up to, until</i>	preposition of duration or of limits	Strong's #5704 BDB #723
perach (פֶּרַח) [pronounced <i>PEH-rahkh</i>]	<i>bloom, blossom, bud, flower; sprout</i>	masculine singular noun with the 3 rd person feminine singular suffix	sStrong's #6525 BDB #827

Translation: ...[it is] a hammered work [made of] gold, from its base to its bloom [at the top].

The lampstand is made out of gold. It is not placed into a mold and cast (as is virtually every lampstand made today), but it is slowly and skillfully hammered out, shape into this marvelous lampstand. My guess is, a rough model of the lampstand was made by a mold out of gold, and then a very skilled craftsman hammered it until all of the detail work of the lampstand had been done. It does not appear to be pieced together, which would have been an amazing feat in itself. I think of all the component parts and imagine it being made from those parts, but it seems to me that this is done as a work from one piece to begin with.

Numbers 8:4c			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB & Strong #'s
miq ^e shâh (מִקְשָׁה) [pronounced <i>mihk-SHAW</i>]	<i>hammered work, shaped [molded] by hammering; possibly made from one piece</i>	feminine singular noun	Strong's #4749 BDB #904
hîy' (הִיא) [pronounced <i>hee</i>]	<i>she, it; also used as a demonstrative pronoun: that, this (one)</i>	3 rd person feminine singular, personal pronoun; sometimes the verb <i>is</i> , is implied	Strong's #1931 BDB #214
kaph or k ^e (כ) [pronounced <i>k^e</i>]	<i>like, as, just as; according to, after; about, approximately</i>	comparative preposition; resemblance or approximation	No Strong's # BDB #453
mar ^e eh (מַרְאֵה) [pronounced <i>mahr-EH</i>]	<i>the act of seeing, sight, vision; form, appearance, that which is seen; fair of form, handsome, attractive</i>	masculine singular noun with a 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #4758 BDB #909

Bible Hub: Usage: The Hebrew word "mareh" primarily refers to the appearance or form of something as perceived by the eye. It can denote both physical appearance and visionary experiences. In the context of visions, it often describes what is seen in a prophetic or supernatural revelation.¹⁹

¹⁹ From <https://biblehub.com/hebrew/4758.htm> accessed March 13, 2025.

Numbers 8:4c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB & Strong #'s
Many people translated this as <i>pattern</i> for this passage.			
ʾăšher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced <i>uh-SHER</i>]	<i>that, which, when, who, whom; where; in that, in which, in what</i>	relative pronoun; sometimes the verb <i>to be</i> is implied	Strong's #834 BDB #81
râ'âh (רָאָה) [pronounced <i>raw-AWH</i>]	<i>to cause to see, to cause to look; to show; to cause to see [with pleasure]; to cause to know, to cause to learn; to cause to experience [evil or good]</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Hiphil perfect	Strong's #7200 BDB #906
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly <i>yhoh-WAH</i>]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y^ehowah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217
ʾêth (אֵת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i>]	generally untranslated; possibly be translated <i>to, toward (s)</i>	mark of a direct object; indicates next word is the object of the verb	Strong's #853 BDB #84
Mosheh (מֹשֶׁה) [pronounced <i>moh-SHEH</i>]	<i>to draw out [of the water] and is transliterated Moses</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #4872 BDB #602

Translation: It [is] a hammered work like the vision which Y^ehowah caused Moses to see.

Mar^eeh (מַרְאֵה) [pronounced *mahr-EH*] means *vision, appearance, sight, that which is seen*. In previous translations, I stretched things somewhat here to use the word *blueprint*. Strong's #4758 BDB #909. Y^ehowah obviously revealed this to Moses visually and Moses oversaw the work to be certain this is what was constructed.

God caused Moses to see what the end work would look like. However, God did not hand Moses the lampstand and tell him, "Take this and place it into the Tabernacle." God has His people make it. This represents believers in Y^ehowah Elohim participating in the creation of divine good. God allows us to take part in this.

When we have grown spiritually and start functioning along with our gift, we are actually producing divine good, just as the artisans pressed into service made these things.

Remember when Moses had the Ten Commandments written in stone and he came down the mountain and saw the people just flat out, out of control, and he threw the tablets down on the ground to reveal his disgust? Well, no one appreciated what he had just done, least of all, God. Next time, Moses had to spend time producing the tablet, and then, no matter what was taking place, Moses was not going to throw the new tablets down on the ground. It was too much work!

Even under perfect environment, God does not simply give us stuff and we hang around on easy chairs taking it. God had Adam perform a number of tasks. Adam named all of the animals. He tended the garden in Eden, even though he lived in perfect environment.

Many people are not going to grasp this, but working and creating something can be very, very satisfying. I once built a shed (doing things with my hands is not my strong suit); and I was very proud of how it came out. It had a door, windows, shelves, a foundation; and still stands today.

I am doing my best to explain that doing things on behalf of God is rewarding; it is satisfying. It may require a lot of work, but we believers are greatly blessed by doing this.

R. B. Thieme, Jr. developed a marvelous system of theology along with an updated vocabulary and he inspired thousands of believers to pursue the Word of God. This required a workload that few of us could imagine, but I have no doubt that this was rewarding to him, both in time and in eternity.

Working is a good thing; it is not bad.

Numbers 8:4d			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB & Strong #'s
kên (כָּן) [pronounced <i>kane</i>]	<i>so, therefore, thus; then, afterwards; upright, honest; rightly, well; [it is] so, such, so constituted</i>	properly, an active participle; used primarily as an adverb	Strong's #3651 BDB #485
‘âsâh (עָשָׂה) [pronounced <i>gaw-SAWH</i>]	<i>to do, to make, to construct, to produce, to fashion, to form, to prepare, to manufacture; accomplish</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #6213 BDB #793
’êth (אֶת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i>]	generally untranslated; possibly be translated <i>to, toward (s)</i>	mark of a direct object; indicates next word is the object of the verb	Strong's #853 BDB #84
m ^e nôwrâh/m ^e nôrâh (מְנוֹרָה/מְנוֹרָה) [pronounced <i>m^e-noh-RAW</i>]	<i>lampstand, candlestick; transliterated menorah</i>	feminine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #4501 BDB #633
pê (פּ, פַּ, or פֶּ) [pronounced <i>pay</i>]	This appears to be used as a mark of punctuation which seems to indicate the beginning of a paragraph. It is never translated.	the 17 th letter. Also used as a numeral	No Strong's # BDB #802

Translation: So he [Moses] made the lampstand. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Moses did not personally make the lampstand. He oversaw the construction of the Tabernacle and all of its furniture, which included the lampstand. Then God instructed Moses as to how the lampstand was to be used.

Numbers 8:4 And this (is) the work of the lampstand: [it is] a hammered work [made of] gold, from its base to its bloom [at the top]. It [is] a hammered work like the vision which Y^ehowah caused Moses to see. So he [Moses] made the lampstand. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Numbers 8:1–4 Y^ehowah spoke to Moses, saying, “And you will speak to Aaron and you have said to him, ‘When causing to go up the lights in front of the lampstand, to cause to light the seven lamps.’” Therefore, Aaron does [this] to the front of the Lampstand: he caused the [light of] the lamps to go up just as Y^ehowah commanded Moses. And this (is) the work of the lampstand: [it is] a hammered work [made of] gold, from its base to its bloom [at the top]. It [is] a hammered work like the vision which Y^ehowah caused Moses to see. So he [Moses] made the lampstand. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Numbers 8:1–4 Jehovah spoke to Moses, saying to him, “Find Aaron and talk to him about the lighting of the golden lampstand inside of the Tabernacle. ‘Light the seven lamps of the golden lampstand.’” Therefore, Aaron did what Gold told Moses to tell him what needed to be done, and the lampstand cast its light forward after being lit. The lampstand had been hammered from a single figure of gold, carefully crafted from the base all the way

up to the blooms at the top. God gave Moses a vision as to how it should look; and Moses used this vision to explain to his inspired workers what needed to be done. (Kukis paraphrase)

Now let's give a full context to the first four verses of Numbers 8:

Numbers 7:89–8:4 And so when Moses comes unto the Tent of Meeting, and so he hears the voice [of God] speaking to him from the cover which [is] above the Ark of the Testimony. He [God] keeps on speaking to him from between the two cherubim. Y^ehowah spoke to Moses, saying, "And you will speak to Aaron and you have said to him, 'When causing to go up the lights in front of the lampstand, to cause to light the seven lamps.'" Therefore, Aaron does [this] to the front of the Lampstand: he caused the [light of] the lamps to go up just as Y^ehowah commanded Moses. And this [is] the work of the lampstand: [it is] a hammered work [made of] gold, from its base to its bloom [at the top]. It [is] a hammered work like the vision which Y^ehowah caused Moses to see. So he [Moses] made the lampstand. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Numbers 7:89–8:4 On many occasions, Moses would enter into the Tent of Meeting. He heard God's voice come to him from behind the curtain, over the Mercy Seat which was on the Ark of the Covenant. God spoke to Moses on many occasions from between the two cherubim which stood on the top of the Mercy Seat. Jehovah spoke to Moses, saying to him, "Find Aaron and talk to him about the lighting of the golden lampstand inside of the Tabernacle. 'Light the seven lamps of the golden lampstand.'" Therefore, Aaron did what Gold told Moses to tell him what needed to be done, and the lampstand cast its light forward after being lit. The lampstand had been hammered from a single figure of gold, carefully crafted from the base all the way up to the blooms at the top. God gave Moses a vision as to how it should look; and Moses used this vision to explain to his inspired workers what needed to be done. (Kukis paraphrase)

God's instructions to Moses will be vv. 6–19.

And so speaks Y^ehowah unto Moses, to say, "Take the Levites from a midst of sons of Israel and you have cleansed them and thus you will do to them to cleanse them: sprinkle upon them waters of sin, and you have caused to pass a razor upon all their flesh and they have washed their garments and they have cleansed themselves. And they have taken a bull, a son of a herd and his mincah—flour being mixed in fat—and a bull, a second (one), a son of a herd, you will take for a sin.

Numbers
8:5–8

And so Y^ehowah speaks to Moses, saying, "Take the Levites out from the midst of the sons of Israel and you have cleansed them and so [this is what] you will do to them to cleanse them: sprinkle over them the waters of the sin-offering, and they have caused a razor to pass over all their skin and they have [already] washed their clothing and they have [already] cleansed themselves [with water]. And they have taken a young bull and its grain offering (mincah), [which is] fine flour mixed with oil—and a second young bull—you will take for the sin-offering.

Jehovah spoke to Moses, saying, "Separate out the Levites from the other sons of Israel for a ceremonial cleansing. This is exactly what you will do in order to cleanse them: after they have shaved all the hair from their bodies, and washed their clothing and washed themselves, you will sprinkle on them the waters of the sin-offering. They will come to this ceremony each with two young bulls and a bloodless grain offering, which is made from ground flour mixed with oil. These three items you will take for the sin-offering.

Here is how others have translated this passage:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And so speaks Y ^e howah unto Moses, to say, "Take the Levites from a midst of sons of Israel and you have cleansed them and thus you will do to them to cleanse them: sprinkle upon them waters of sin, and you have caused to pass a razor upon all their flesh and they have washed their garments and they have cleansed themselves. And they have taken a bull, a son of a herd and his mincah—flour being mixed in fat—and a bull, a second (one), a son of a herd, you will take for a sin.
Dead Sea Scrolls	.
Jerusalem targum	.
Targum (Onkelos)	.
Targum (Pseudo-Jonathan)	.
Aramaic Targum	.
The Psalms Targum	.
Updated Douay-Rheims	.
Douay-Rheims 1899 (Amer.)	And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying: Take the Levites out of the midst of the children of Israel, and thou shalt purify them, According to this rite: Let them be sprinkled with the water of purification, and let them shave all the hairs of their flesh. And when they shall have washed their garments, and are cleansed, They shall take an ox of the herd, and for the offering thereof fine flour tempered with oil: and thou shalt take another ox of the herd for a sin offering:...
Aramaic ESV of Peshitta	Mar-Yah spoke to Mosha, saying, "Take the Levites from among the B'nai Yisrael, and cleanse them. You shall do this to them, to cleanse them: sprinkle the water of cleansing on them, let them shave their whole bodies with a razor, and let them wash their clothes, and cleanse themselves. Then let them take a young bull, and its meal offering, fine flour mixed with oil; and another young bull you shall take for a sin offering.
Original Aramaic Psalms	.
V. Alexander's Aramaic T.	.
Plain English Aramaic Bible	.
Lamsa's Peshitta (Syriac)	.
Samaritan Pentateuch	And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying Take the Levites from among the children of Israel, and cleanse them. And thus shalt thou do unto them, to cleanse them: Sprinkle water of purifying upon them, and let them shave all their flesh, and let them wash their clothes, and [so] make themselves clean. Then let them take a young bullock with his meat offering, [even] fine flour mingled with oil, and another young bullock shalt thou take for a sin offering.
Updated Brenton (Greek)	And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, Take the Levites out of the midst of the children of Israel, and you shall purify them. And thus shall you perform their purification: you shall sprinkle them with the water of purification, and a razor shall come upon the whole of their body, and they shall wash their garments, and shall be clean. And they shall take one calf of the herd, and its grain offering, fine flour mingled with oil; and you shall take a calf of a year old of the herd for a sin offering.

Significant differences:

Limited Vocabulary Translations:

Bible in Basic English	And the Lord said to Moses, Take the Levites out from among the children of Israel and make them clean.
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And this is how you are to make them clean: let the holy water which takes away sin be put on them, and let the hair all over their bodies be cut off with a sharp blade, and let their clothing be washed and their bodies made clean.

Then let them take a young ox and its meal offering, crushed grain mixed with oil, and take another ox for a sin-offering.

Easy English

Easy-to-Read Version–2008

The LORD said to Moses, "Separate the Levites from the other Israelites. Make these Levites clean. This is what you should do to make them clean: Sprinkle the special water from the sin offering on them. This water will make them clean. Then they must shave their bodies and wash their clothes. This will make their bodies clean.

"They must take a young bull and the grain offering that must be offered with it. This grain offering will be flour mixed with oil. Then take another young bull for a sin offering.

God's Word™

The LORD said to Moses, "Separate the Levites from the rest of the Israelites, and make them clean. This is what you must do to make them clean: Sprinkle them with water to take away their sins. Make them shave their whole bodies and wash their clothes. Then they will be clean. Next, they must take a young bull and the grain offering of flour mixed with olive oil that is offered with it. You must take a second young bull as an offering for sin.

Good News Bible (TEV)

The LORD said to Moses, "Separate the Levites from the rest of the people of Israel and purify them in the following way: sprinkle them with the water of purification and have them shave their whole bodies and have them wash their clothes. Then they will be ritually clean. Then they are to take a young bull and the required grain offering of flour mixed with olive oil; and you are to take another bull for the sin offering.

The Message

Names of God Bible

NIRV

New Simplified Bible

Thought-for-thought translations; dynamic translations; paraphrases:

Casual English Bible

Contemporary English V.

The LORD said to Moses: The Levites must be acceptable to me before they begin working at the sacred tent. So separate them from the rest of the Israelites and sprinkle them with the water that washes away their sins. Then have them shave their entire bodies and wash their clothes. They are to bring a bull and its proper grain sacrifice of flour mixed with olive oil. And they must bring a second bull as a sacrifice for sin.

The Living Bible

New Berkeley Version

New Life Version

New Living Translation

The Passion Translation

Unfolding Bible Simplified

Yahweh also said to Moses, "You must cause the descendants of Levi to be acceptable to me by setting them apart from the other Israelite people. Do that by sprinkling them with water which will symbolize their being freed from the guilt of their sins. Then they must shave off all the hair of their bodies and wash their clothes. Then they must bring one bull and some flour mixed with olive oil. Those things will be burned as sacrifices. They must also bring another bull that will be sacrificed to take away the guilt of their sins.

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible .
 Beck's American Translation .
 Common English Bible .
 New Advent (Knox) Bible .
 Translation for Translators .

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Berean Study Bible .
 Christian Standard Bible .
 Conservapedia Translation .
 Revised Ferrar-Fenton Bible .
 God's Truth (Tyndale) .
 The Heritage Bible .

And Jehovah spoke to Moses, saying,
 Take the Levites from the midst of the children of Israel, and purify them.
 And you shall do like this to them to purify them: Sprinkle water of purifying
 upon them, and let the razor cross over all their flesh, and let them wash their
 clothes, and so make them pure.
 And let them take a bullock, a son of cattle, with its food offering, flour mixed
 with oil, and a second bullock, a son of cattle, you shall take for a sin offering.

International Standard V .
 International Standard V .

Purifying the Descendants of Levi

Then the Lord told Moses, "Take the descendants of Levi from the Israelis and
 purify them. This is what you are to do for them in order to purify them: Sprinkle
 purifying water over them, have them shave their skin, and then have them wash
 their garments, and they will be purified. They are to take a young bull along with
 its meal offering made of flour mixed with oil.
 "Then you are to take a second young bull as a sin offering.

H. C. Leupold .
 Lexham English Bible .
 NIV, ©2011 .
 Unfolding Bible Literal Text .
 Urim-Thummim Version .

YHWH spoke to Moses saying, Take the Levites from among the children of Israel
 and cleanse them. And this you will do for cleansing them. Sprinkle water of
 purification on them and let them shave all their flesh, and let them wash their
 clothes, and so make themselves clean. Then let them take a young bull with a
 Grain-Offering, fine flour mixed with oil, and another young bull take for a Sin-
 Offering.

Wikipedia Bible Project .

Catholic Bibles (those having the imprimatur):

Christian Community (1988) **The Levites are offered to Yahweh**

Yahweh spoke to Moses and said: "Sep arate the Levites from the other Israelites
 and purify them. You shall sprinkle them with the water of purification, and they
 shall shave their bodies all over and wash their clothing. They will then be clean.
 They shall next take a young bull, with the accompanying grain offering of fine flour
 mixed with oil, and you shall take a second young bull for a sacrifice for sin.
 Lev 14:8; Ezk 36:25

New American Bible (2011) .
 The Catholic Bible .
 New Jerusalem Bible .
 NRSV (Anglicized Cath. Ed.) .
 Revised English Bible–1989 .

Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible	.
Eth Cephher Bible	And Yahuah spoke unto Mosheh, saying, Take the Leviyim from among the children of Yashar'el, and cleanse them. And thus shall you do unto them, to cleanse them: Sprinkle water of purifying upon them, and let them shave all their flesh, and let them wash their clothes, and so make themselves clean. Then let them take a young bullock with his oblation, even fine flour mingled with oil, and another young bullock shall you take for a sin offering.
exeGesés companion Bible	.
Hebraic Roots Bible	.
Kaplan Translation	.
The Scriptures—2009	And יהוה spoke to Mosheh, saying, “Take the Lēwites from among the children of Yisra’ēl, and you shall cleanse them, and do this to them to cleanse them: Sprinkle water of sin offering on them, and they shall shave all their body, and shall wash their garments, and cleanse themselves, and shall take a young bull with its grain offering of fine flour mixed with oil, while you take another young bull as a sin offering.
Tree of Life Version	Again Adonai spoke to Moses saying, Take the Levites from among Bnei-Yisrael and ceremonially cleanse them. This is what you must do to them to make them clean: Sprinkle the purifying water on them, then have them shave their whole bodies and wash their clothes, thus purifying themselves. “Then they are to take a young bull with its grain offering of fine flour mixed with oil, plus a second young bull for a sin offering.

Weird English, Old English, Anachronistic English Translations:

Alpha & Omega Bible	AND JESUS SPOKE TO MOSES, SAYING, TAKE THE LEVITES OUT OF THE MIDST OF THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL, AND YOU SHALL PURIFY THEM. AND THUS SHALL YOU PERFORM THEIR PURIFICATION: YOU SHALL SPRINKLE THEM WITH WATER OF PURIFICATION, AND A RAZOR SHALL COME UPON THE WHOLE OF THEIR BODY, AND THEY SHALL WASH THEIR GARMENTS, AND SHALL BE CLEAN. AND THEY SHALL TAKE ONE CALF OF THE HERD, AND ITS MEAT-OFFERING, FINE FLOUR MINGLED WITH OIL: AND YOU SHALL TAKE A CALF OF A YEAR OLD OF THE HERD FOR A SIN-OFFERING.
Awful Scroll Bible	Sustains To Become persists to be the speaker to Moses, to the intent, Be taking the Levites from among the sons of Isra-el, and you is to have purified them. These were you to effect to purify them, spring the water of purification on them, and that in a sheath is to have passed over their flesh, and they are to have washed their garments, even are they to have been purified. They are to have taken a young of the large cattle, even a young bull, with it a tribute offering of fine flour, being mingled with oil, and another young of the large cattle, even a young bull were they to take for their misses of the mark.
Concordant Literal Version	Yahweh spoke to Moses, saying, Take the Levites from the midst of the sons of Israel and cleanse them. Thus shall you do to them to cleanse them: spatter water of purification from sin over them, let them pass a razor over all their flesh, let them rinse their garments and so cleanse themselves. They will take a young bull (a calf of the herd) and its approach present of flour mingled with oil; then you shall take a second young bull (a calf of the herd) for a sin offering.
exeGesés companion Bible	<u>PURIFYING THE LEVIYM</u> And Yah Veh words to Mosheh, saying, Take the Leviym from among the sons of Yisra El

and purify them:
 and work thus to them, to purify them:
 sprinkle water for the sin on them:
 and they pass a razor over all their flesh
 and launder their clothes
 and thus purify themselves.
 And take a bullock son of the oxen and its offering
 and flour mixed with oil:
 and take a second bullock son of the oxen for the sin;...

Orthodox Jewish Bible

And Hashem spoke unto Moshe, saying,
 Take the Levi'im from among the Bnei Yisroel, and make them tahor.
 And thus shalt thou do unto them, to make them tahor: Sprinkle water of purification upon them, and let them cause a razor to pass over their basar, and let them wash their clothes, and so make themselves tahor.
 Then let them take a young bull with its minchah, even fine flour mixed with shemen, and another young bull shalt thou take for a chattat.

Expanded/Embellished Bibles:

The Amplified Bible .
 The Expanded Bible .
 Kretzmann's Commentary
 Lexham English Bible

Moses Consecrates the Levites

Yahweh spoke to Moses, saying, "Take the Levites from the midst of the Israelites [Literally "sons/children of Israel"] and purify them. So you will do to them, to purify them: sprinkle on them waters of purification, and they will shave their whole body [Literally "they will send a razor on all their body"] and wash their garments. And they will take a young bull [Literally "a bull, a son of cattle"] and its grain offering of finely milled flour mixed with oil, and you will take a second young bull [Literally "a bull, a son of cattle"] as a sin offering.

Syndein/Thieme .
 The Voice .

Bible Translations with Many Footnotes:

The Complete Tanach .
 The Geneva Bible .
 Kaplan Translation

Inaugurating the Levites

God spoke to Moses, saying:

Take the Levites from among the Israelites and purify them.

In order to purify them, you must sprinkle the water of the sin offering on them after they have shaved their entire bodies with a razor. They shall then immerse [their bodies] and their clothing and they will be clean.

They shall then take a young bull along with its grain offering consisting of the best grade wheat meal mixed with olive oil. You shall also present a second bull as a sin offering.

water of the sin offering

(Ibn Ezra; see Numbers, 19:19). Or, 'water of purification' (Ibn Ezra; Septuagint).

after

(Ibn Ezra; Chizzkuni). Some say that they did not shave the sides of the head and beard, as delineated in Leviticus 19:27 (Ibn Ezra; Bachya).

immerse...

See Exodus 19:10.

bull

For the burnt offering (Rashi; see Numbers 8:12).

grain offering

Three-tenths of an ephah (6 quarts) as in Numbers 15:19 (Ibn Ezra; Abarbanel).

NET Bible® .

New American Bible (2011) .

New Catholic Bible .

Rotherham's *Emphasized B.* And Yahweh spake unto Moses, saying:

Take the Levites, out of the midst of the sons of Israel,—and thou shalt purify them.

And ||thus|| shalt thou do unto them, to purify them, sprinkle upon them sin-cleansing water,^d—then shall they cause a razor to pass over all their flesh, and shall wash their clothes, and so make themselves pure. Then shall they take a choice young bullock, with the meal-offering thereof, even fine meal overflowed with oil,—and <a second choice young bullock> shalt thou take, as a sin-bearer.

^dOr: water prepared by contact with a “sin-bearer.”

Rotherham's *Emphasized B.* .

Updated ASV .

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

A Faithful Version .

C. Thomson Updated OT .

Charles Thomson OT

Moreover the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, Take the Levites from among the children of Israel, and purify them. And in this manner thou shalt perform their purification. Thou shalt sprinkle them with the water of purification, and a razor shall pass over their whole body, and they shall wash their clothes, and they will be clean. V. 8 will be placed with the next passage for context.

Context Group Version

And YHWH spoke to Moses, saying, Take the Levites from among the sons of Israel, and cleanse them. And thus you shall do to them, to cleanse them: sprinkle the water of expiation on them, and let them cause a razor to pass over all their flesh, and let them wash their clothes, and cleanse themselves. Then let them take a young bull, and its tribute [offerings], fine flour mingled with oil; and another young bull you shall take for a purification-offering.

English Standard Version .

Green's Literal Translation .

Legacy Standard Bible .

Literal Standard Version .

Modern English Version .

Modern Literal Version 2020

And Jehovah spoke to Moses, saying, Take the Levites from among the sons of Israel and cleanse them. And you will do thus to them to cleanse them: sprinkle the water of sin offering upon them and let them cause a razor to pass over all their flesh and let them wash their clothes and cleanse themselves. Then let them take a young bull and its food-offering— fine flour mingled with oil. And you will take another young bull for a sin-offering.

New American Standard B. .

New European Version .

New King James Version .

Niobi Study Bible .

Owen's Translation .

Revised Mechanical Trans.

...and YHWH spoke to Mosheh saying, take the ones of Lewi from the midst of the sons of Yisra'eyl, and you will declare them clean, and in this way you will do for them, to declare them clean, spatter the waters of failure upon them, and they will

make a razor cross over upon all their flesh, and they will wash their garments, and they will be declared clean, and they will take a bull, a son of the cattle, and his deposit of flour mixed in the oil, and a second bull, a son of the cattle, you will take for a failure,...

Updated ASV

Cleansing the Levites, Begin Serving

And Jehovah spoke to Moses, saying, "Take the Levites from among the sons of Israel, and cleanse them. And thus you shall do to them, to cleanse them: sprinkle the water of purification on them and let them go with a razor over all their body and wash their clothes and cleanse themselves. Then let them take a young bull, and its grain offering, fine flour mixed with oil; and another young bull you shall take for a sin offering.

Updated Bible Version 2.17

A Voice in the Wilderness

Webster's Bible Translation

World English Bible

Young's Literal Translation

Young's Updated LT

The gist of this passage:

5-8

Numbers 8:5			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB & Strong #'s
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wāw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
dābar (דָּבַר) [pronounced daw ^b -VAHR]	<i>to speak, to talk [and back with action], to give an opinion, to expound, to make a formal speech, to speak out, to promise, to propose, to speak kindly of, to declare, to proclaim, to announce</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Piel imperfect	Strong's #1696 BDB #180
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly yhoh-WAH]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y^ehowah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217
'el (אֵל) [pronounced eh]	<i>unto; into, among, in; toward, to; against; concerning, regarding; besides, together with; as to</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39
Mosheh (מֹשֶׁה) [pronounced moh-SHEH]	<i>to draw out [of the water] and is transliterated Moses</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #4872 BDB #602
lāmed (ל) [pronounced l ^o]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
'amar (אָמַר) [pronounced aw-MAHR]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think</i>	Qal infinitive construct	Strong's #559 BDB #55

Translation: And so Y^ehowah speaks to Moses, saying,...

Most of the time, we are not told exactly when and where God spoke to Moses. However, there seem to be three specific places where this occurs: (1) when Moses is on Mount Sinai receiving the Law from God; (2) when Moses went into the prototype Tabernacle to commune with God; and (3) when Moses entered into the actual Tabernacle to speak with God, and God spoke to Moses from the Mercy Seat, which sat upon the Ark of the Covenant.

This is #3, given the final verse of Numbers 7, which should have been the first verse of Numbers 8: [And when Moses went into the tent of meeting to speak with the LORD, he heard the voice speaking to him from above the mercy seat that was on the ark of the testimony, from between the two cherubim; and it spoke to him.](#) (Numbers 7:89; ESV)

Now, here is how I see this. Moses—and this is completely unique with him (until we come to David)—walks into the front section of the Tabernacle. Moses oversaw everything that took place when it came to the construction of the Tabernacle and of all the related articles and furniture. Moses knows that God has manifested His Presence inside of the Tabernacle (Exodus 40:34–35 [Then the cloud covered the tent of meeting, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle. And Moses was not able to enter the tent of meeting because the cloud settled on it, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle.](#) —ESV) So, it would never even occur to Moses that he could not enter into the Tabernacle, unless God made that impossible, as He did when He filled the Tabernacle with the Cloud of His Presence (compare this to Exodus 40:36–38).

I don't quite have Moses' motivation in mind yet. Did he simply want to talk to God; was he moved to talk to God? Did God, in some way, draw Moses to the Tabernacle? Or, did Moses simply walk into the Tabernacle and stand there each and every day to become prepared for that day? I believe that, if the latter were true, then there would be a number of Scriptures which would suggest this. Somewhere, we would read something like, *and as was his daily ritual, Moses entered into the Tabernacle.* On the other hand, I don't believe that God the Holy Spirit meant for someone to read the Law of Moses and suddenly decide, "Moses went into the Tabernacle all of the time, so that is what I should be doing." I have been studying the Law of Moses off and on for about 30 years and only today is it clear to me that Moses entering into the Tabernacle was a normal thing for him to do. It was as normal for him to enter into the Tabernacle and it was for 99.99999% of Israel *not* to enter the Tabernacle.

I believe that we may infer from this a super-status for Moses at this point in time. Whether we want to designate this as supergrace or as ultra supergrace; and the key to Moses having both the gift and office of prophet (a distinction which has eluded me personally).

In any case, I don't think it ever occurred to Moses that the Tabernacle was off limits to him; and there is nothing which God says to indicate that God was displeased with this.

There is certainly a double-edged sword here. The more that God entrusts you with, the more that He expects from you and the more discipline that God may bring to you. Moses is an excellent illustration here. Moses will make one mistake—a mistake that nearly all of Christendom does not understand—and that one mistake will keep him from entering into the land of promise. Moses was given great grace and great blessing and great understanding—no one comes close to Moses until David—but God expects so much more from him than from anyone else of his era.

Numbers 8:6a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB & Strong #'s
lâqach (לָקַח) [pronounced law- KAHKH]	<i>take, seize, take away, take in marriage; send for, fetch, bring, receive</i>	2 nd person masculine singular, Qal imperative	Strong's #3947 BDB #542
'êth (אֵת) [pronounced ayth]	generally untranslated; possibly be translated <i>to, toward (s)</i>	mark of a direct object; indicates next word is the object of the verb	Strong's #853 BDB #84

Numbers 8:6a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB & Strong #'s
L ^e vîyyim (לוֹלֵי) [pronounced l ^e -vee-YIM]	<i>joined to, attached; garland, crown; and is transliterated Levites</i>	plural gentilic adjective with the definite article	Strong's #3881 BDB #532
min (מִן) [pronounced mihn]	<i>from, off, out from, out of, away from, on account of, since, than, more than; some of</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
tâvek ^e (תַּוֶּק) [pronounced taw-VEK ^E]	<i>midst, among, middle</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #8432 BDB #1063
With the min preposition, this can mean <i>from the midst [of anything]; out from, out of, from, away from.</i>			
bânîym (בְּנֵי) [pronounced baw-NEEM]	<i>sons, descendants; children; people; sometimes rendered men; young men, youths</i>	masculine plural construct	Strong's #1121 BDB #119
Yis ^e râ'êl (יִשְׂרָאֵל) [pronounced yis-raw-ALE]	<i>God prevails; contender; soldier of God; transliterated Israel</i>	masculine proper noun; God-given name to Jacob; and national name for the Jewish people	Strong's #3478 & #3479 BDB #975

Translation: ...“Take the Levites out from the midst of the sons of Israel...”

The Levites had a special position among the Israelites. They had a part to play in the spiritual development of Israel. This means that they needed to be purified. Now, this is a ritual purification.

All people are made clean by the offering of Jesus Christ on the cross. These ceremonies represent what Jesus would do. These ceremonies are types and Jesus on the cross is the antitype.

Numbers 8:6b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB & Strong #'s
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as; of</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
tâhêr (טָהַר) [pronounced taw-HAIR]	<i>to cleanse [clean] [physically, ceremonially, morally]; to purify; to pronounce [declare] clean; to perform a ritual ceremony of cleansing</i>	2 nd person masculine singular, Piel perfect	Strong's #2891 BDB #372
'êth (אֵת) [pronounced ayth]	<i>them; untranslated mark of a direct object; occasionally to them, toward them</i>	sign of the direct object affixed to a 3 rd person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #853 BDB #84

Translation: ...and you have cleansed them...

The Levites had a number of things done to them to cleanse them prior to the purification ceremony.

Numbers 8:5–6 And so Y^ehowah speaks to Moses, saying, “Take the Levites out from the midst of the sons of Israel and you have cleansed them and so [this is what] you will do to them to cleanse them:... (Kukis mostly literal translation)

In his attempt to be literal, Young translates perfect tense of a verb and translates it as though it is a completed action. So, if you are following along in his translation, it reads *and thou hast cleansed them*. However, the Hebrew does not have a past, present or future tense; the context determines the timing of the verb. The perfect tense examines this as a completed action, not as a series of actions; however, if God is speaking to Moses, He is not telling Moses what he has done but rather what he will do; therefore, I have used the English future tense. I say this on behalf of anyone who knows that I use *Young's Translation* as a guide (as well as Owen's terrific *Analytical Key to the Old Testament*). The Levites have been set apart for service directly to God, to assist Aaron and his sons, and therefore anyone in service to God must be cleansed. No matter how good, kind and nice a person is, they are not in service to God if (1) they are not saved and (2) they are not in fellowship. **If I give all my possessions and if I deliver my body to be burned, but I do not have love [a reference to the filling of the Spirit in this context], [then] it profits me nothing** (1Corinthians 13:3). The ceremonial cleansing speaks of the perfection of Jesus Christ in His, the ultimate work; and on a less important level, of our service as Christians²⁰.

Numbers 8:7a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB & Strong #'s
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as; of</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
kôh (כֹּה) [pronounced <i>koh</i>]	<i>so, thus, here, hence; now; in the meantime</i>	adverb	Strong's #3541 BDB #462
‘âsâh (עָשָׂה) [pronounced <i>gaw-SAWH</i>]	<i>to do, to make, to construct, to produce, to fashion, to form, to prepare, to manufacture; accomplish</i>	2 nd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #6213 BDB #793
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>l</i>]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to</i>	directional/relational preposition; with the 3 rd person masculine plural suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>l</i>]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
ṭâhêr (טָהַר) [pronounced <i>taw-HAIR</i>]	<i>to cleanse [clean] [physically, ceremonially, morally]; to purify; to pronounce [declare] clean; to perform a ritual ceremony of cleansing</i>	Piel infinitive construct; with the 3 rd person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #2891 BDB #372

Translation: ...and so [this is what] you will do to them to cleanse them:...

Almost the entire chapter is given over to the Levites and their being cleansed.

²⁰ Allow me to go off on a tangent here; if you are a new Christian, it is possible that the idea of being involved in Christian service does not appeal to you for any number of reasons. Do not worry about this. Please indulge this analogy; as a 2 year old baby, you might observe a football game in person or on television and it means absolutely nothing to you. As you grown up and join the football team, you would like more than anything to play, instead of sitting the game out. It is similar to our function in the Christian life. We, as young Christians, may have no desire to play any real part in God's plan; or we may want to jump right in without any sort of training or guidance. When we spend time learning His Word, we will eventually have the desire to become involved in His plan for our lives and our involvement will be meaningful.

Numbers 8:7b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB & Strong #'s
nâzâh (נָזַח) [pronounced naw-ZAW]	cause to spurt, make spatter, make sprinkle	2 nd person masculine singular, Hiphil imperative	Strong's #5137 BDB #633
‘al (עַל) [pronounced gah]	upon, beyond, on, against, over above, by, beside; because of, on account of	preposition of relative proximity; with the 3 rd person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #5921 BDB #752
mayim (מַיִם) [pronounced mah-YIHM]	water (s)	masculine plural construct	Strong's #4325 BDB #565
chattâ'th (חַטָּאת) [pronounced khat-TAWTH]	misstep, slip of the foot; sin; sinfulness; a sin-offering; penalty [for sin], calamity, misfortune	feminine singular noun	Strong's #2403 BDB #308
This is also spelled chattâ'âh (חַטָּאתָ) [pronounced khat-taw-AW].			
Several translations refer to this as a <i>purification offering</i> . This is the normal word for <i>sin, misstep</i> .			

Translation: ...sprinkle over them the waters of the sin-offering,...

There is water which is related to the purification of the Levites and to their sin-offering.

I would assume that this is clear, clean freshly drawn water for the ceremony. However, at least here, nothing is said about the water which is used in this ceremony, apart from it being sprinkled upon the Levites.

All of the adult males would take part in this ceremony. I would assume that women and children were not.

Numbers 8:7c			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB & Strong #'s
w ^e (or v ^e) (וְ) (or וּ) [pronounced weh]	and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as; of	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
‘âbar (עָבַר) [pronounced gaw ^b -VAHR]	to cause [make] to pass over, to cause [allow] to pass through, to bring [over, to]; to transmit, to send over; to pass by sin, to cause to pass away, to cause to take away; to remit, to forgive	3 rd person masculine plural, Hiphil perfect	Strong's #5674 BDB #716
ta‘ar (עָרַת) [pronounced TAH-gahr]	razor; sheath, case; sword	masculine singular noun	Strong's #8593 BDB #789
‘al (עַל) [pronounced gah]	upon, beyond, on, against, over above, by, beside; because of, on account of	preposition of relative proximity	Strong's #5921 BDB #752

Numbers 8:7c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB & Strong #'s
kôl (לֹךְ) [pronounced kohl]	<i>every, each, all of, all; any of, any; some have translated, all manner of</i>	masculine singular construct not followed by a definite article	Strong's #3605 BDB #481
bâsâr (בָּשָׂר) [pronounced baw-SAWR]	<i>flesh, skin, epidermis; [soft portions of the] body; animal meat</i>	masculine singular noun with the 3 rd person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #1320 BDB #142

Translation: ...and they have caused a razor to pass over all their skin...

Prior to showing up for the public ceremony, each male Levite would have all of the hair shaved off. I am assuming that this is all body hair. Did it include the beards and the hair on their heads?

Numbers 8:7d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB & Strong #'s
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as; of</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
kâbaç (כִּבַּח) [pronounced kaw-BAHÇ]	<i>to wash [garments, a person]; to make wash</i>	3 rd person masculine plural, Piel perfect	Strong's #3526 BDB #460
b ^e gâdîym (בְּגָדִים) [pronounced b ^e -gaw-DEEM]	<i>garments, clothes, clothing, apparel; possibly blankets</i>	masculine plural noun with the 3 rd person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #899 BDB #93

Translation: ...and they have [already] washed their clothing...

All of these Levites would have come to the Tabernacle wearing freshly washed clothing.

Numbers 8:7e

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB & Strong #'s
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as; of</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
ṭâhêr (טָהַר) [pronounced taw-HAIR]	<i>to cleansed oneself [physically, of disease; ceremonially, of uncleanness]; to purify oneself [ceremonially, morally]; to present oneself for purification [rites]</i>	3 rd person masculine plural, Hithpael perfect	Strong's #2891 BDB #372

You will notice that we have already had this word in a different stem. I specify the different definitions pertinent to the stem used.

Translation: ...and they have [already] cleansed themselves [with water].

Although there are only two words here, I believed that eight English words were necessary to translate them.

The perfect tense speaks of a completed event. Prior to coming to the Tabernacle for this ceremony, every Levite washed himself thoroughly. The Hithpael stem refers to something that one does to himself.

Numbers 8:7 Sprinkle over them the waters of the sin-offering, and they have caused a razor to pass over all their skin and they have [already] washed their clothing and they have [already] cleansed themselves [with water]. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

It is time to look at the translations. If you have a parallel Old Testament, you would read right through this verse and not give it a second thought. If it wasn't for one of my sources, Edersheim, I might have missed this entirely.

<i>The Amplified Bible</i>	And thus you shall do to them to cleanse them: sprinkle the water of purification [water to be used in case of sin] upon them...
<i>The Emphasized Bible</i>	And thus you will do unto them to purify them, sprinkle upon them sin-cleansing water...
KJV	And thus shalt thou do unto them, to cleanse them: Sprinkle water of purifying upon them,...
NASB	And thus you shall do to them, for their cleansing: <i>sprinkle</i> purifying water on them..
NIV	To purify them, do this: Sprinkle the water of cleansing on them;
NRSV	Thus you shall do to them, to cleanse them: sprinkle the water of purification on them,...
Owen's Translation	And thus you shall do to them to cleanse them; sprinkle upon them the water of expiation...
<i>Young's Lit. Translation</i>	And thus thou doest to them to cleanse them: sprinkle upon them waters of atonement,...

Except for *The Emphasized Bible's* translation, a footnote in the NASB and *The Amplified Bible's* rendering, you would miss this entirely. What we find here is water of chaṭṭâ'ṭh (חַטָּאת) [pronounced *khat-TAWTH*] and this is the word for *sin* or *sin-offering*. Strong's #2403 BDB #308.

Maybe if you understood how soap works, then this verse would make more sense. The reason soap works is that it attaches itself to the dirt—the dirt that was attached to you or to your dishes or to your carpet; it acts like a magnet; and when you wash the soap away, the dirt it is attached to also is washed away. The waters of sin is the same. The water attached itself to the sin and as the water flows off the skin, it takes the sin with it. Translating this as waters of purification is fine, if you recognize that it is the water which washes away the sin; it is identified with sin or it attaches itself to sin.

There is little significance to the plural of *water*; throughout the bulk of the Old Testament, *water* is in the plural. It is the way the Hebrews spoke, just as we say *pants* or *trousers*.

You may recognize the shaving of the entire body. This had also occurred back in Leviticus 14:8–9 when a leper was cleansed. This simply symbolizes the cleansing of the entire body.

All of this, of course, is ceremonial; this was a way to illustrate spiritual cleanness; cleanliness before God. For the believer, there are two kinds of cleanness here on earth. We are positionally clean when we believe in Jesus Christ; and we are temporally clean whenever we have named our sins to Him. Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin. For I know my transgressions, and my sin s ever before me. Purify me with hyssop and I will be clean; wash me and I will be whiter than snow (Psalm 51:2–3, 7). However, this is all ceremonial. But when Christ appeared as a high priest of the good things to come through the greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this creation; and not through the blood of goats and calves, but through His own blood, He entered the holy place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption. For if the blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a heifer sprinkling those who have been defiled, sanctify for the cleansing of the flesh, how much more will the blood of Christ, Who, through the eternal Spirit, offered Himself without blemish to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve to living God (Hebrews 9:11–15). The true cleansing is the blood of Jesus Christ—His spiritual death on the cross, His payment for our sins upon the

cross. After that, we are temporally cleansed through rebound, the naming of our sins to God—which is simple and nonmeritorious as the payment for these sins was made on the cross—we merely acknowledge that fact.

Numbers 8:8a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB & Strong #'s
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as; of</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
lâqach (לָקַח) [pronounced <i>law-KAHKH</i>]	<i>to take, to take away, to take in marriage; to receive; to select, to choose; to seize</i>	3 rd person masculine plural, Qal perfect	Strong's #3947 BDB #542
par (פָּר) [pronounced <i>pahr</i>]	<i>bull, [especially a] young bull, steer</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #6499 BDB #830
bên (בֵּן) [pronounced <i>bane</i>]	<i>son, descendant</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #1121 BDB #119
bâqâr (בָּקָר) [pronounced <i>baw-KAWR</i>]	<i>bull, cow, ox, collectively: herd, cattle, oxen</i>	masculine singular collective noun	Strong's #1241 BDB #133

Translation: *And they have taken a young bull...*

These Levites who are being cleansed also show up with a young bull. This literally reads, *a bull, a son of the herd*; but these words together simply mean a young bull.

The age of the bull is indicating that Jesus, when offering Himself for us, was a young man.

Numbers 8:8b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB & Strong #'s
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as; of</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
min ^e châh (מִנְחָה) [pronounced <i>min-HAWH</i>]	<i>tribute offering, gift, present; sacrifice, bloodless offering; [a general term for] offering; cereal or grain offering; transliterated minchah, mincah</i>	feminine singular noun with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #4503 BDB #585
çôleth (תֵּלַח) [pronounced <i>SOH-lehth</i>]	<i>flour or fine flour</i>	feminine singular noun	Strong's #5560 BDB #701
bâlal (לָלַח) [pronounced <i>baw-LAHL</i>]	<i>being pouring (over, together); being mixed, having been mingled; being confused, confounded</i>	feminine singular, Qal passive participle	Strong's #1101 BDB #117
b ^e (ב) [pronounced <i>b^{eh}</i>]	<i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88

Numbers 8:8b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB & Strong #'s
shemen (שמן) [pronounced SHEH-men]	<i>fat, fatness; oil, olive oil; spiced oil, ointment; oil as staple, medicament or unguent; for anointing; fat (of fruitful land, valleys) (metaphorically)</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #8081 BDB #1032

Translation: ...and its grain offering (minchah), [which is] fine flour mixed with oil...

There will be also a grain-offering, also called a minchah, which is offered up with the bull. This grain offering—this fine flour mixed with fat—represents the humanity of Jesus Christ. Jesus, in His Deity, cannot be confined to one place; not can He have anything to do with sin. However, his humanity can be confined to one place at one time, and by His consent, Jesus can come into contact with the punishment for our sins.

You may have heard of the term judicial imputation and that Jesus receive the judicial imputation of our sins. This means (1) there is nothing inherent in Him to which the sins would naturally go and (2) Jesus must consent to taking on the punishment for our sins. He must be a willing recipient. This indicates to us that Jesus took on the sins of all humanity in His body—His human nature—on the Roman cross. These sins were not and could not be poured out upon His Deity.

Numbers 8:8c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB & Strong #'s
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as; of</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
par (פָּר) [pronounced pahr]	<i>bull, [especially a] young bull, steer</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #6499 BDB #830
shênîy (שֵׁנִי) [pronounced shay-NEE]	<i>second, the second; two, both, double, twice; secondly; in addition, again; another. When only two items are named, it can be rendered [the] other, following, next</i>	adjective singular numeral ordinal; masculine form	Strong's #8145 BDB #1041
bên (בֵּן) [pronounced bane]	<i>son, descendant</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #1121 BDB #119
bâqâr (בָּקָר) [pronounced baw-KAWR]	<i>bull, cow, ox, collectively: herd, cattle, oxen</i>	masculine singular collective noun	Strong's #1241 BDB #133

Translation: ...—and a second young bull—...

There is a second bull which is offered.

I believe that the two bulls would represent the two natures of Jesus Christ, even though our sins could not be poured out upon His Deity. Perhaps the two bulls represents His soul and spirit?

Numbers 8:8d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB & Strong #'s
lâqach (לָקַח) [pronounced law- KAHKH]	<i>to take, to take away, to take in marriage; to receive; to select, to choose; to seize</i>	2 nd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #3947 BDB #542
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l ^e]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
chattâ'th (חַטָּאת) [pronounced khat- TAWTH]	<i>misstep, slip of the foot; sin; sinfulness; a sin-offering; penalty [for sin], calamity, misfortune</i>	feminine singular noun	Strong's #2403 BDB #308

Translation: ...you will take for the sin-offering. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

The bulls along with the mincah were taken as an offering for our sins. It would make sense that these three things represent the very nature of the humanity of Jesus Christ: His soul, His spirit and His body. All three aspects of His humanity would have been engaged when He offered up Himself for our sins.

Numbers 8:8 And they have taken a young bull and its grain offering (mincah), [which is] fine flour mixed with oil—and a second young bull—you will take for the sin-offering. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

We continually see the animal taken out from the herd, just as our Lord Jesus Christ was taken out of the population of the Jews and was made sin for us. The flour mixed with oil speaks of the humanity of our Lord filled with the Holy Spirit.

Numbers 8:5–8 And so Y^ehowah speaks to Moses, saying, “Take the Levites out from the midst of the sons of Israel and you have cleansed them and so [this is what] you will do to them to cleanse them: sprinkle over them the waters of the sin-offering, and they have caused a razor to pass over all their skin and they have [already] washed their clothing and they have [already] cleansed themselves [with water]. And they have taken a young bull and its grain offering (mincah), [which is] fine flour mixed with oil—and a second young bull—you will take for the sin-offering. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Numbers 8:5–8 Jehovah spoke to Moses, saying, “Separate out the Levites from the other sons of Israel for a ceremonial cleansing. This is exactly what you will do in order to cleanse them: after they have shaved all the hair from their bodies, and washed their clothing and washed themselves, you will sprinkle on them the waters of the sin-offering. They will come to this ceremony each with two young bulls and a bloodless grain offering, which is made from ground flour mixed with oil. These three items you will take for the sin-offering. (Kukis paraphrase)

And you have caused to bring near the Levites to faces of a Tent of Appointment and you have assembled all a company of sons of Israel. And you have caused to approach the Levites to faces of YHWH; and have rested sons of Israel their hands upon the Levites. And has waved Aaron the Levites [as] a presentation offering to faces of YHWH from with sons of Israel. And they have been to work a work of Y^ehowah.

Numbers
8:9–11

And you have caused to bring the Levites near to the Tent of Meeting and you have [also] assembled all the congregation of the sons of Israel. And you have caused the Levites to approach YHWH. Also, the sons of Israel have rested their hands on the Levites. And Aaron has presented the Levites [as if] a presentation offering before YHWH from with the sons of Israel. And they have been [consecrated] to do the work of Y^ehowah.

You will guide the Levites toward the Tent of Meeting and you will also assemble the congregation of the other tribes of Israel. The Levites will come near to Jehovah and the sons of Israel will place their hands on the Levites. Aaron will present the Levites who have come out of the tribes of Israel, as a presentation offering before Jehovah. They will be ceremonially consecrated to do the work of Jehovah.

Here is how others have translated this passage:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And you have caused to bring near the Levites to faces of a Tent of Appointment and you have assembled all a company of sons of Israel. And you have caused to approach the Levites to faces of YHWH; and have rested sons of Israel their hands upon the Levites. And has waved Aaron the Levites [as] a presentation offering to faces of YHWH from with sons of Israel. And they have been to work a work of Y ^e howah.
Dead Sea Scrolls	.
Jerusalem targum	.
Targum (Onkelos)	.
Targum (Pseudo-Jonathan)	.
Aramaic Targum	.
The Psalms Targum	.
Updated Douay-Rheims	.
Douay-Rheims 1899 (Amer.)	And thou shalt bring the Levites before the tabernacle of the covenant, calling together all the multitude of the children of Israel: And when the Levites are before the Lord, the children of Israel shall put their hands upon them: And Aaron shall offer the Levites, as a gift in the sight of the Lord from the children of Israel, that they may serve in his ministry.
Aramaic ESV of Peshitta	You shall present the Levites before the Tabernacle. You shall assemble the whole congregation of the B'nai Yisrael. You shall present the Levites before Mar-Yah. The B'nai Yisrael shall lay their hands on the Levites, and Aaron shall offer the Levites before Mar-Yah for a wave offering, on the behalf of the B'nai Yisrael, that it may be theirs to do the service of Mar-Yah.
Original Aramaic Psalms	.
V. Alexander's Aramaic T.	.
Plain English Aramaic Bible	.
Lamsa's Peshitta (Syriac)	.
Samaritan Pentateuch	And thou shalt bring the Levites before the tabernacle of the congregation: and thou shalt gather the whole assembly of the children of Israel together: And thou shalt bring the Levites before the LORD: and the children of Israel shall put their hands upon the Levites: And Aaron shall offer the Levites before the LORD [for] an offering of the children of Israel, that they may execute the service of the LORD.
Updated Brenton (Greek)	And you shall bring the Levites before the tabernacle of witness; and you shall assemble all the congregation of the sons of Israel. And you shall bring the Levites before the Lord; and the sons of Israel shall lay their hands upon the Levites. And Aaron shall separate the Levites for a gift before the Lord from the children of Israel; and they shall be prepared to perform the works of the Lord.

Significant differences:

Limited Vocabulary Translations:

Bible in Basic English	And make the Levites come forward in front of the Tent of meeting, and let all the children of Israel come together: And you are to take the Levites before the Lord: and the children of Israel are to put their hands on them: And Aaron is to give the Levites to the Lord as a wave offering from the children of Israel, so that they may do the Lord's work.
Easy English Easy-to-Read Version–2008	. Bring the Levites to the area in front of the Meeting Tent. Then bring all the Israelites together at that place. Bring the Levites before the LORD. The Israelites will put their hands on them. Aaron will give the Levites to the LORD as an offering from the Israelites. Then the Levites will be ready to do their special work for the LORD.
God's Word™	Bring the Levites to the front of the tent of meeting, and assemble the whole community of Israel. Then bring the Levites into the LORD'S presence, and the Israelites will place their hands on them. Aaron will present the Levites to the LORD as an offering from the Israelites. Then they will be ready to do the LORD'S work.
Good News Bible (TEV)	Then assemble the whole community of Israel and have the Levites stand in front of the Tent of my presence. The people of Israel are to place their hands on the heads of the Levites, and then Aaron shall dedicate the Levites to me as a special gift from the Israelites, so that they may do my work.
The Message	.
Names of God Bible	.
NIRV	.
New Simplified Bible	.

Thought-for-thought translations; dynamic translations; paraphrases:

Casual English Bible	.
Contemporary English V.	Then you, Moses, will call together all the people of Israel and have the Levites go to my sacred tent, where the people will place their hands on them. Aaron will present the Levites to me as a gift from the people, so that the Levites will do my work.
The Living Bible	.
New Berkeley Version	.
New Life Version	.
New Living Translation	.
The Passion Translation	.
Unfolding Bible Simplified	Then you must summon all the Israelite people to come together in front of the sacred tent, to gather around the descendants of Levi. Then the Israelite people must lay their hands on the descendants of Levi. Aaron must then present them to me to be a gift from the Israelite people, as if he had lifted them up to me, in order that they can work for me at the sacred tent.

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	.
Beck's American Translation	.
Common English Bible	.
New Advent (Knox) Bible	.
Translation for Translators	.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Berean Study Bible	.	
Christian Standard Bible	.	
Conservapedia Translation	.	
Revised Ferrar-Fenton Bible	.	
God's Truth (Tyndale)	.	
The Heritage Bible	.	And you shall bring the Levites near before the face of the tent of appointed meeting, and you shall assemble the whole congregation of the children of Israel; And you shall bring the Levites near before the face of Jehovah, and the children of Israel shall take hold with their hands upon the Levites; And Aaron shall wave the Levites before the face of Jehovah for a wave offering of the children of Israel; they are to work the work of Jehovah.
International Standard V	.	Assemble the descendants of Levi in front of the appointed place of meeting, and assemble the whole congregation of Israel, too. Bring the descendants of Levi into the Lord's presence and have the Israelis lay their hands on the descendants of Levi. V. 11 will be placed with the next passage for context.
H. C. Leupold	.	
Lexham English Bible	.	
NIV, ©2011	.	
Unfolding Bible Literal Text	.	in front
Urim-Thummim Version	.	
Wikipedia Bible Project	.	

Catholic Bibles (those having the imprimatur):

Christian Community (1988)	.	Then bring the Levites before the Tent of Meeting, and call together the whole community of Israel. When you have brought the Levites before Yahweh, the sons of Israel must lay their hands on them. Aaron shall then offer the Levites, and make the gesture of offering waving them before Yahweh on behalf of the Israelites. From that time, they will be dedicated to the service of Yahweh.
New American Bible (2011)	.	
The Catholic Bible	.	
New Jerusalem Bible	.	
NRSV (Anglicized Cath. Ed.)	.	
Revised English Bible–1989	.	

Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible	.	
Eth Cephher Bible	.	And you shall bring the Leviyym before the Tabernacle of the assembly: and you shall gather the whole assembly of the children of Yashar'el together: And you shall bring the Leviyym before Yahuah : and the children of Yashar'el shall put their hands upon the Leviyym: And Aharon shall offer the Leviyym before Yahuah for an offering of the children of Yashar'el, that they may execute the service of Yahuah .
exeGesés companion Bible	.	
Hebraic Roots Bible	.	
Kaplan Translation	.	
The Scriptures–2009	.	“And you shall bring the Lěwites before the Tent of Appointment, and you shall assemble all the congregation of the children of Yisra'ěl. “And you shall bring the Lěwites before יהוה, and the children of Yisra'ěl shall lay their hands on the Lěwites, and Aharon shall wave the Lěwites before יהוה, a wave offering from the children of Yisra'ěl – so shall they be for doing the service of יהוה.

Tree of Life Version Bring the Levites before the Tent of Meeting, and gather the whole community of Bnei-Yisrael. Bring the Levites before Adonai, Bnei-Yisrael will lay their hands on the Levites, and Aaron will present the Levites before Adonai as a wave offering from Bnei-Yisrael. Then they may go about the work of the service of Adonai.

Weird English, Old English, Anachronistic English Translations:

Alpha & Omega Bible AND YOU SHALL BRING THE LEVITES BEFORE THE TABERNACLE OF WITNESS; AND YOU SHALL ASSEMBLE ALL THE CONGREGATION OF THE SONS OF ISRAEL.

AND YOU SHALL BRING THE LEVITES BEFORE JESUS; AND THE SONS OF ISRAEL SHALL LAY THEIR HANDS UPON THE LEVITES.

AND AARON SHALL SEPARATE THE LEVITES FOR A GIFT BEFORE JESUS FROM THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL: AND THEY SHALL BE PREPARED TO PERFORM THE WORKS OF JESUS.

Awful Scroll Bible You is to have drawn the Levites near, turned before the tent of the appointed place, and you is to gather together the assembly, of the sons of Contends-with-he-mighty

Even is you to have drawn the Levites near, turned before Sustains To Become and the sons of Contends-with-he-mighty are to have rested their hands upon the Levites.

Aaron is to have waved the Levites, turned before Sustains To Become for a wave offering, from the sons of Contends-with-he-mighty that they are to work the service of Sustains To Become.

Concordant Literal Version You will bring near the Levites before the tent of appointment and assemble the whole congregation of the sons of Israel.

When you bring near the Levites before Yahweh, then the sons of Israel will support their hands on the Levites, and Aaron will wave the Levites as a wave offering before Yahweh from the sons of Israel, so that they will come to serve in the service of Yahweh.

exeGesés companion Bible ...and oblate the Leviym
at the face of the tent of the congregation:
and congregate the witness of the sons of Yisra El:
and oblate the Leviym at the face of Yah Veh:

and the sons of Yisra El
prop their hands on the Leviym:
and Aharon waves
the Leviym at the face of Yah Veh
for a wave of the sons of Yisra El,
to serve the service of Yah Veh.

Orthodox Jewish Bible And thou shalt bring the Levi'im before the Ohel Mo'ed: and thou shalt gather Kol Adat Bnei Yisroel together;

And thou shalt bring the Levi'im before Hashem; and the Bnei Yisroel shall lay their hands upon the Levi'im;

And Aharon shall offer the Levi'im before Hashem for a tenuous from the Bnei Yisroel, that they may perform the Avodat Hashem.

Rotherham's *Emphasized B.* .

Expanded/Embellished Bibles:

The Amplified Bible .

The Expanded Bible .

International Standard V .

Kretzmann's Commentary .

Lexham English Bible	You will bring the Levites before [Literally “in the presence of”] the tent of assembly, and you will summon the entire community of the Israelites. [Literally “sons/children of Israel”] And you will bring the Levites before Yahweh, [Literally “in the presence of Yahweh”] and the Israelites [Literally “sons/children of Israel”] will lay their hands on the Levites, and Aaron will offer [Literally “Aaron will wave”] the Levites as a wave offering before Yahweh [Literally “in the presence of Yahweh”] from the Israelites, [Literally “sons/children of Israel”] and they will do the work of Yahweh.
Syndein/Thieme	.
The Voice	.

Bible Translations with Many Footnotes:

The Complete Tanach	.
The Geneva Bible	.
Kaplan Translation	Bring the Levites to the front of the Communion Tent, and assemble the entire Israelite community. Present the Levites before God, and have the Israelites lay their hands on the Levites Aaron shall then designate the Levites as a wave offering to God from the Israelites, and [the Levites] shall become the ones to perform God's service. Israelites Some say that this denoted only the first-born (Chizzkuni). lay their hands Or, 'ordain' (Lekach Tov). designate Literally, 'lift up' (Targum; Rashbam; Abarbanel). Or, 'make them pass by' (Saadia; Lekach Tov); or, 'separate....as a gift' (Septuagint).
NET Bible®	.
New American Bible (2011)	.
New Catholic Bible	.
Rotherham's <i>Emphasized B.</i>	Then shalt thou bring the Levites near before the tent of meeting,—and shalt call together all the assembly of the sons of Israel; and shalt bring the Levites near before Yahweh,—and the sons of Israel shall lean their hands upon the Levites; and Aaron shall offer ^e the Levites as a wave-offering before Yahweh, from among the sons of Israel,—so shall they be for performing the laborious work of Yahweh. ^e Lit.: “wave.”
Updated ASV	And you shall present the Levites before the tent of meeting: and you shall assemble the whole congregation of the sons of Israel. And you shall present the Levites before Jehovah. And the sons of Israel shall lay their hands on the Levites. And Aaron shall offer ^[35] the Levites before Jehovah for a wave offering, on the behalf of the sons of Israel, that they may do the service of Jehovah. ^[35] Lit <i>waved</i> ; that is, caused to move to and fro

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

C. Thomson Updated OT	.
Charles Thomson OT	Then they shall take a young bull from the herd, with his sacrifice, to wit, fine flour mixed up with oil; and thou shalt take a yearling bull from the herd for a sin offering, and bring the Levites before the tabernacle of the testimony, and assemble all the congregation of Israel's sons, and present the Levites before the Lord. And the sons of Israel shall lay their hands on the Levites; and Aaron shall set the Levites apart before the Lord, as a gift from the sons of Israel; and they shall be set apart to perform the works of the Lord. V. 8 is included for context.
Context Group Version	.

- English Standard Version .
- Green’s Literal Translation .
- Legacy Standard Bible .
- Literal Standard Version . And thus you do to them to cleanse them: sprinkle waters of atonement on them, and they have caused a razor to pass over all their flesh, and have washed their garments, and cleansed themselves, and have taken a bullock, a son of the herd, and its present, flour mixed with oil, and you take a second bullock, a son of the herd, for a sin-offering; and you have brought the Levites near before the Tent of Meeting, and you have assembled all the congregation of the sons of Israel, and you have brought the Levites near before YHWH, and the sons of Israel have laid their hands on the Levites, and Aaron has waved the Levites [as] a wave-offering before YHWH, from the sons of Israel, and they have been [consecrated] for doing the service of YHWH. Vv. 7–11 in the LSV.
- Modern English Version .
- Modern Literal Version 2020 . And you will present the Levites before the tent of meeting. And you will assemble the whole congregation of the sons of Israel, and you will present the Levites before Jehovah. And the sons of Israel will lay their hands upon the Levites. And Aaron will offer the Levites before Jehovah for a wave-offering from the sons of Israel, that it may be theirs to do the service of Jehovah.
- New American Standard B. .
- New European Version .
- New King James Version .
- Niobi Study Bible . And you shall bring the Levites before the tabernacle of the congregation, and you shall gather the whole assembly of the children of Israel together. And you shall bring the Levites before the LORD, and the children of Israel shall put their hands upon the Levites. And Aaron shall offer the Levites before the LORD for an offering of the children of Israel, that they may execute the service of the LORD.
- Owen's Translation .
- Revised Mechanical Trans.and you will bring the ones of Lewi near to the face of the appointed tent, and you will assemble all the company of the sons of Yisra'eyl, and you will bring the ones of Lewi near to the face of YHWH, and the sons of Yisra'eyl will support their hands upon the ones of Lewi, and Aharon will wave the ones of Lewi, a waving to the face of YHWH, from the sons of Yisra'eyl, and they will exist to serve the service of YHWH,...
- Updated ASV .
- Updated Bible Version 2.17 .
- A Voice in the Wilderness .
- Webster’s Bible Translation .
- World English Bible .
- Young's Literal Translation .
- Young’s Updated LT .

The gist of this passage:
9-11

Numbers 8:9a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB & Strong #'s
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו, or וי) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as; or</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong’s # BDB #251

Numbers 8:9a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB & Strong #'s
qârab (בָּרַבְּ) [pronounced kaw-RA ^{BV}]	<i>to cause to approach, to bring [draw] near, to bring, to offer; to bring together; to cause to withdraw, to remove</i>	2 nd person masculine singular, Hiphil perfect	Strong #7126 BDB #897
’êth (אֶת) [pronounced ayth]	generally untranslated; possibly be translated <i>to, toward (s)</i>	mark of a direct object; indicates next word is the object of the verb	Strong's #853 BDB #84
L ^e vîyyim (לְוִיִּם) [pronounced ^l -vee-YIM]	<i>joined to, attached; garland, crown; and is transliterated Levites</i>	plural gentilic adjective with the definite article	Strong's #3881 BDB #532
lâmed (ל) [pronounced ^l]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
pânîym (פְּנֵים) [pronounced paw-NEEM]	<i>face, faces, countenance; presence</i>	masculine plural construct (plural acts like English singular)	Strong's #6440 BDB #815
Together, they mean <i>upon the face of, before, before the face of, in the presence of, in the sight of, in front of, which faces</i> . When used with God, it can take on the more figurative meaning <i>in the judgment of</i> . This can also mean <i>forwards; the front part</i> [or, the edge of a sword]. L ^e pânîym (לְפָנַיִם) can take on a temporal sense as well: <i>before, of old, formerly, in the past, in past times</i> . Literally, this means <i>to faces of</i> .			
’ohel (אֹהֶל) [pronounced OH-heh]	<i>tent, tabernacle, house, temporary dwelling</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #168 BDB #13
môw’êd (מוֹעֵד) [pronounced moh-ÇADE]	<i>a specific (set, pre-determined, appointed) time; a point in time; a sacred season, a set feast; an appointed meeting; an appointed place [where people meet]; a specific sign or signal; an assembly, a convocation</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #4150 BDB #417

Translation: [And you have caused to bring the Levites near to the Tent of Meeting...](#)

God is speaking to Moses. We have three sets of directions in this chapter. This second set of directions is all about consecrating the Levites for service to God.

Male Levites of the proper age are brought to the Tent of Meeting (the Tabernacle). Maybe Moses brought in some younger ones as this responsibility would fall upon them as well.

The purpose of them coming to the Tabernacle is for their consecration (that is, for them being set apart for service to God).

Numbers 8:9b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB & Strong #'s
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as; of</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251

Numbers 8:9b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB & Strong #'s
qâhal (קָהַל) [pronounced kaw-HAHL]	<i>to assemble, to call together, to summon an assembly [for war, judgement or a religious purpose]</i>	2 nd person masculine singular, Hiphil perfect	Strong's #6950 BDB #874
'êth (אֶת) [pronounced ayth]	generally untranslated; possibly be translated <i>to, toward (s)</i>	mark of a direct object; indicates next word is the object of the verb	Strong's #853 BDB #84
kôl (כֹּל) [pronounced kohl]	<i>every, each, all of, all; any of, any; some have translated, all manner of</i>	masculine singular construct not followed by a definite article	Strong's #3605 BDB #481
'êdâh (עֵדָה) [pronounced gâ-DAWH]	<i>company, congregation, assembly, meeting; a company of people assembled together by appointment, a group of people acting together</i>	feminine singular construct	Strong's #5712 BDB #417
bânîym (בְּנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל) [pronounced baw-NEEM]	<i>sons, descendants; children; people; sometimes rendered men; young men, youths</i>	masculine plural construct	Strong's #1121 BDB #119
Yis ^e râ'êl (יִשְׂרָאֵל) [pronounced yis-raw-ALE]	<i>God prevails; contender; soldier of God; transliterated Israel</i>	masculine proper noun; God-given name to Jacob; and national name for the Jewish people	Strong's #3478 & #3479 BDB #975

Translation: ...and you have [also] assembled all the congregation of the sons of Israel.

Men from the other tribes would be assembled here as well, as witnesses to the consecration of the Levites.

Numbers 8:9 *And you have caused to bring the Levites near to the Tent of Meeting and you have [also] assembled all the congregation of the sons of Israel.* (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Even though the twelve tribes + one were camped around the Tabernacle, this would suggest that there is quite a bit of space between the camps of the tribes and the Tabernacle itself.

Moses is the *you* in this verse. He is the one who will approach the tent of meeting with the Levites and he will be the one to assemble the entire congregation of Israel. The Hiphil stem is causative, so Moses caused the Levites to approach.

Numbers 8:10a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB & Strong #'s
w ^e (or v ^e) (וְ) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as; of</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251

Numbers 8:10a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB & Strong #'s
qârab (בָּרַב) [pronounced kaw-RA ^{BV}]	<i>to cause to approach, to bring [draw] near, to bring, to offer; to bring together; to cause to withdraw, to remove</i>	2 nd person masculine singular, Hiphil perfect	Strong #7126 BDB #897
'êth (אֶת) [pronounced ayth]	generally untranslated; possibly be translated <i>to, toward (s)</i>	mark of a direct object; indicates next word is the object of the verb	Strong's #853 BDB #84
L ^e vîyyim (לְוִיִּם) [pronounced ^l -vee-YIM]	<i>joined to, attached; garland, crown; and is transliterated Levites</i>	plural gentilic adjective with the definite article	Strong's #3881 BDB #532
lâmed (ל) [pronounced ^l]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
pânîym (פָּנִים) [pronounced paw-NEEM]	<i>face, faces, countenance; presence</i>	masculine plural construct (plural acts like English singular)	Strong's #6440 BDB #815

Together, they mean *upon the face of, before, before the face of, in the presence of, in the sight of, in front of, which faces*. When used with God, it can take on the more figurative meaning *in the judgment of*. This can also mean *forwards; the front part [or, the edge of a sword]*. L^epânîym (לְפָנַיִם) can take on a temporal sense as well: *before, of old, formerly, in the past, in past times*. Literally, this means *to faces of*.

YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly y ^h oh-WAH]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y^ehowah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3069 BDB #217
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Generally speaking, we find the Tetragrammaton [YHWH (יהוה)] with no vowel points. I do not recall seeing it in any other way using Owens' work (which I have used on virtually everything except for Leviticus and Numbers, when I began to use Bible Hub (but my Owens' volume is always open).

In Numbers 2:33 6:2 8:10, Owens simply has the Tetragrammaton.

On [Bible Hub](#), in Numbers 8:10–11, the spelling given is y^ehowâh (יהוה) [pronounced y^ehoh-WAW]. I inserted the *o*, because there needs to be a vowel there. Bible Hub gives the incorrect English equivalent *Yahweh* [pronounced *Yah-weh*] (incorrect, because it does not match what they have in the Hebrew).

My Strong's and Strong's Exhaustive Concordance (enhanced) and BDB from e-sword all have the spelling: Y^ehōvîh (יהוה) [pronounced *yeh-ho-VEE*]. Again, this is not the spelling in my hard copy BDB. However, this is probably the closest Hebrew approximation of *Jehovah*. Strong's #3069.

My BHSEk++, which is the Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia (Enhanced; BHS+English+Strong's no.; KJV versification) is identical to Bible Hub. This is probably not independent verification.

Although one source suggests that this alternative spelling (that is יהוה) is used for constructions like Lord YHWH, but that is not what we have here. This is not necessarily an alternate spelling, but simply the Tetragrammaton with vowel points included; and we do not have *Lord* in front of it. Is this the true pronunciation of YHWH? Is this an alternate pronunciation of YHWH? It would be difficult to make an argument one way or the other, given the contradictory information which exists. I would assume that the vowel points found on Bible Hub are the actual vowel points found in the *original* manuscripts.²¹

²¹ I use italics here, because the vowel points were added long after the fact.

Translation: And you have caused the Levites to approach YHWH.

The Levites are being brought before God. This same sort of verbiage is used when an animal sacrifice is being brought before God to be offered up.

Numbers 8:10b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB & Strong #'s
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as; of</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
çâmak ^e (סָמַךְ:) [pronounced <i>saw-MAHK^e</i>]	<i>to lean, to rest; to uphold, to support, to sustain, to aid; to place, to lay [something upon something else]; to approach</i>	3 rd person masculine plural, Qal perfect	Strong's #5564 BDB #701
bânîym (בָּנִים) [pronounced <i>baw-NEEM</i>]	<i>sons, descendants; children; people; sometimes rendered men; young men, youths</i>	masculine plural construct	Strong's #1121 BDB #119
Yis ^e râ'êl (יִשְׂרָאֵל) [pronounced <i>yis-raw-ALE</i>]	<i>God prevails; contender; soldier of God; transliterated Israel</i>	masculine proper noun; God-given name to Jacob; and national name for the Jewish people	Strong's #3478 & #3479 BDB #975
'êth (אֶת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i>]	generally untranslated; possibly be translated <i>to, toward (s)</i>	mark of a direct object; indicates next word is the object of the verb	Strong's #853 BDB #84
yâdayim (יָדַיִם) [pronounced <i>yaw-dah-YIHM</i>]	<i>[two] hands; both hands figuratively for strength, power, control of a particular person</i>	feminine dual noun with the 3 rd person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #3027 BDB #388
'al (עַל) [pronounced <i>gahl</i>]	<i>upon, beyond, on, against, over above, by, beside; because of, on account of</i>	preposition of relative proximity	Strong's #5921 BDB #752
L ^e vîyyim (לְוִיִּים) [pronounced <i>l^e-vee-YIM</i>]	<i>joined to, attached; garland, crown; and is transliterated Levites</i>	plural gentilic adjective with the definite article	Strong's #3881 BDB #532

Translation: Also, the sons of Israel have rested their hands on the Levites.

Generally speaking, when a person puts his hands upon the head of an animal, his sins are being transferred to the innocent animal, and that innocent animal will be slaughtered.

As we will find out, the debt owed by every Israelites to God will be shifted to the Levites, who will assume this debt. The firstborn of every family belongs to God. Instead, all of the Levites will be taken as belonging to God.

Numbers 8:10 And you have caused the Levites to approach YHWH. Also, the sons of Israel have rested their hands on the Levites. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

The laying on of hands has three separate connotations: (1) It is a way of identifying. The Levites are set apart to God and the Israelites are identified with the Levites. (2) The laying on of hands often is a means of conferring, and the spiritual vocation of the Levites is recognized by the sons of Israel conferred upon them. (3) Finally, the

laying on of hands indicates a substitution has taken place. The sinner often was instructed to lay his hands on the animal sacrifice before it was slaughtered; here, the Levites are substituted for the first-born of Israel.

Numbers 8:11a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB & Strong #'s
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as; of</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
nûwph (נוּף) [pronounced <i>noof</i>]	<i>to wave, to shake [e.g., the hand to beckon someone]; to scatter, to shake forth [rain]</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Hiphil perfect	Strong's #5130 BDB #631
'Ahârôn (אַהֲרֹן) [pronounced <i>ah-huh-ROHN</i>]	transliterated <i>Aaron</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #175 BDB #14
'êth (אֶת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i>]	generally untranslated; possibly be translated <i>to, toward (s)</i>	mark of a direct object; indicates next word is the object of the verb	Strong's #853 BDB #84
L ^e vîyyim (לְוִיִּים) [pronounced <i>l^e-vee-YIM</i>]	<i>joined to, attached; garland, crown; and is transliterated <i>Levites</i></i>	plural gentilic adjective with the definite article	Strong's #3881 BDB #532
t ^e nûwphâh (תְּנוּפְחָהּ) [pronounced <i>t'noo-PHAWH</i>]	<i>presentation offering, wave-offering; offering [gold or brass]; swinging, waving, brandishing [of God's hand, weapons]</i>	feminine singular noun	Strong's #8573 BDB #632
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>l^e</i>]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
pânîym (פְּנֵים) [pronounced <i>paw-NEEM</i>]	<i>face, faces, countenance; presence</i>	masculine plural construct (plural acts like English singular)	Strong's #6440 BDB #815

Together, they mean *upon the face of, before, before the face of, in the presence of, in the sight of, in front of, which faces*. When used with God, it can take on the more figurative meaning *in the judgment of*. This can also mean *forwards; the front part [or, the edge of a sword]*. L^epânîym (לְפָנַיִם) can take on a temporal sense as well: *before, of old, formerly, in the past, in past times*. Literally, this means *to faces of*.

YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly <i>yhoh-WAH</i>]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y^ehowah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3069 BDB #217
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Generally speaking, we find the Tetragrammaton [YHWH (יהוה)] with no vowel points. I do not recall seeing it in any other way using Owens' work (which I have used on virtually everything except for Leviticus and Numbers, when I began to use Bible Hub (but my Owens' volume is always open).

In Numbers 2:33 6:2 8:10, Owens simply has the Tetragrammaton.

On [Bible Hub](#), in Numbers 8:10–11, the spelling given is y^ehowâh (יהוה) [pronounced *y^ehoh-WAW*]. I inserted the o, because there needs to be a vowel there. Bible Hub gives the incorrect English equivalent *Yahweh* [pronounced *Yah-weh*] (incorrect, because it does not match what they have in the Hebrew).

Numbers 8:11a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB & Strong #'s
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My Strong's and Strong's Exhaustive Concordance (enhanced) and BDB from e-sword all have the spelling: Y^ehōvih (יְהוֹיָה) [pronounced *yeh-ho-VEE*]. Again, this is not the spelling in my hard copy BDB. However, this is probably the closest Hebrew approximation of *Jehovah*. Strong's #3069.

My BHSEk++, which is the Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia (Enhanced; BHS+English+Strong's no.; KJV versification) is identical to Bible Hub. This is probably not independent verification.

Although one source suggests that this alternative spelling (that is יהוי) is used for constructions like Lord YHWH, but that is not what we have here. This is not necessarily an alternate spelling, but simply the Tetragrammaton with vowel points included; and we do not have *Lord* in front of it. Is this the true pronunciation of YHWH? Is this an alternate pronunciation of YHWH? It would be difficult to make an argument one way or the other, given the contradictory information which exists. I would assume that the vowel points found on Bible Hub are the actual vowel points found in the *original* manuscripts.²²

min (מִן) [pronounced <i>mihn</i>]	<i>from, off, out from, out of, away from, on account of, since, than, more than; some of</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
ʿêth (אֶת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i>]	<i>with, at, near, by, among, directly from</i>	preposition (which is identical to the sign of the direct object)	Strong's #854 BDB #85

Together, min ʿêth mean *from proximity with, from with, from close proximity to, to proceed from someone*. A good up-to-date rendering might be *directly from*. The idea is, the person that these prepositions refer to is supposed to directly be involved in the action or in whatever is being requested.

Bible Hub lists this as the sign of the direct object, but the two words are identical. Owen lists this as the preposition.

bânîym (בְּנֵי) [pronounced <i>baw-NEEM</i>]	<i>sons, descendants; children; people; sometimes rendered men; young men, youths</i>	masculine plural construct	Strong's #1121 BDB #119
Yis ^e rāʾêl (יִסְרָאֵל) [pronounced <i>yis-raw-ALE</i>]	<i>God prevails; contender; soldier of God; transliterated Israel</i>	masculine proper noun; God-given name to Jacob; and national name for the Jewish people	Strong's #3478 & #3479 BDB #975

Translation: And Aaron has presented the Levites [as if] a presentation offering before YHWH from with the sons of Israel.

This is the first portion of this verse:

<i>The Amplified Bible</i>	And Aaron shall present the Levites before the LORD...
<i>The Emphasized Bible</i>	and Aaron shall offer the Levites as a wave-offering before Yahweh...
KJV	And Aaron shall offer the Levites before the LORD...
NIV	Aaron is to present the Levites before the LORD as a wave offering...
NRSV	And Aaron shall present the Levites before the LORD as an elevation offering...
<i>Young's Lit. Translation</i>	and Aaron hath waved the Levites—a wave-offering before Jehovah,...

²² I use italics here, because the vowel points were added long after the fact.

This verse does begin with a conjunction and the subject is Aaron. The verb is the Hiphil perfect of *nûwph* (נוף) [pronounced *noof*]. According to BDB, the technical use of this word is that priest would take an offering and lift it up toward the altar and then move it away, back to himself, as it were, to represent that this is being offered to Yahweh and Yahweh has given it back to them. Strong's #5130 BDB #631. So, in this verse, Aaron presents the Levites to Yahweh, but then receives them back as a present to himself and his sons.

T^enûwphâh (תְּנוּפְחָהּ) [pronounced *t'noo-PHAWH*] is obviously closely related to *nûwph*. Strong's #8573 BDB #632. Often, in the Hebrew, a noun is formed from the verb by adding an *âh* ending. Here, it is preceded by a *t* as well. This is a *wave-offering* for want of a better term. This is the offering which the priest brings toward the altar and then takes it away, signifying that the offering is given to God and then received back to them. The Levites are offered to Yahweh, given wholly over to Him; and God the presents them to Aaron and his sons for their service to Him.

The verb found here is the Hiphil perfect of *nûwph* (נוף) [pronounced *noof*], which means, *to wave, to shake*. Strong's #5130 BDB #631. This is generally the verb used for a wave offering, meaning the offering is lifted up in the air before God and waved around so that God can see the offering (essentially, everyone around is able to see that this offering is being offered to God). It is less clear how this is actually done when the offering are the sons of Levi. Whatever the actual movements were of Aaron, the Levites were seen to be his presentation offering to God. These Levites come out of the tribes of Israel (or out of the sons of Israel).

Numbers 8:11b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB & Strong #'s
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as; of</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
hâyâh (הָיָה) [pronounced <i>haw-YAW</i>]	<i>to be, is, was, are; to become, to come into being; to come to pass</i>	3 rd person masculine plural, Qal perfect	Strong's #1961 BDB #224
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>l^e</i>]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
‘âbad (עָבַד) [pronounced <i>ġaw^b-VAHD</i>]	<i>to work, to serve, to labor; to be a slave to</i>	Qal infinitive construct	Strong's #5647 BDB #712
This verb also means: <i>to serve as subjects; to serve (God); to serve (with Levitical service)</i> .			
’êth (אֵת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i>]	generally untranslated; possibly be translated <i>to, toward (s)</i>	mark of a direct object; indicates next word is the object of the verb	Strong's #853 BDB #84
‘ăbôdâh (עֲבֹדָה) [pronounced <i>ġu^b-vo-DAWH</i>]	<i>labour, work, service, function; possibly: bondage; enslavement; service of [to] God</i>	feminine singular construct	Strong's #5656 & #5647 BDB #715
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly <i>yhoh-WAH</i>]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y^ehowah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217

Translation: *And they have been [consecrated] to do the work of Y^ehowah.* (Kukis mostly literal translation)

By this offerings, the sons of Levi are set aside or consecrated or ceremonially certified to do the *religious* work required by Y^ehowah.

The second portion of this verse appears to be generally as poorly dealt with as the first. Owen's reads: *from the people of Israel that it may be theirs to do the service of Yahweh*; the NASB: *from the sons of Israel, that they may qualify [footnoted as lit., be able] to perform the service of the LORD*; and *Young's Translation* is equally abstruse: *from the sons of Israel, and they have been—for doing the service of Jehovah*. This is not difficult. There are two prepositions, *mîn* (separation is implied) and *'êth* (אֶת) [pronounced *ayth*] and it simply means *with, among*. This is a little tricky as this same word is often untranslated and used to designate a direct object. The context here tells us how this is to be used. Strong's #854 BDB #85.

The we have the simple verb *to be* in the Qal perfect with a masculine plural subject, mysteriously rendered by Owen (and the RSV) as *that it may be theirs*. Hello! This is simply *they are*. This is followed by the preposition *to* (the prefixed *lâmed*) and the Qal infinitive construct of *to serve, to work*; that is, the verb *'âbad* (עָבַד) [pronounced *gaw^b-VAHD*]; from this verb is built the words for *servant, service (work), and labor*. Strong's #5647 BDB #712. The noun cognate is found immediately afterward. The meaning is simple; they Levites are dedicated to God, set apart to Yahweh, offered to their Lord; and then Yahweh returned them to Aaron for service to Aaron and his sons to do the work of Yahweh. Why this was not simply literally rendered by these translations, I do not know.

We have a similar situation back in Leviticus 7:30–34: the breast of the wave offering was brought before God. It was likely brought toward the altar, but not burned, and then taken away. When it is *brought* before Yahweh, *brought* is in the imperfect and not perfect tense, as though we have a process and not a completed action. Therefore, it is possible that this was brought to the altar and taken away and then this may have been repeated several times. In any case, this portion of the peace-offering—the breast and the thigh—was given to Aaron and his sons (Leviticus 8:31–32).

Numbers 8:11 *And Aaron has presented the Levites [as if] a presentation offering before YHWH from with the sons of Israel. And they have been [consecrated] to do the work of Y^ehowah.* (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Exactly what is physically done here is not clear; but the Levites are presented to God as an offering, as those who are set aside to do God's work.

Numbers 8:9–11 *And you have caused to bring the Levites near to the Tent of Meeting and you have [also] assembled all the congregation of the sons of Israel. And you have caused the Levites to approach YHWH. Also, the sons of Israel have rested their hands on the Levites. And Aaron has presented the Levites [as if] a presentation offering before YHWH from with the sons of Israel. And they have been [consecrated] to do the work of Y^ehowah.* (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Numbers 8:9–11 *You will guide the Levites toward the Tent of Meeting and you will also assemble the congregation of the other tribes of Israel. The Levites will come near to Jehovah and the sons of Israel will place their hands on the Levites. Aaron will present the Levites who have come out of the tribes of Israel, as a presentation offering before Jehovah. They will be ceremonially consecrated to do the work of Jehovah.* (Kukis paraphrase)

Vv. 9–19 appears to be a literary unit. However, I try to keep my passages between 2–4 verses whenever possible. Translations will differ as to how the verses are divided up in this overall unit.

And the Levites rested their (two) hands upon a head of the bulls, and so you will make the one a sin-offering and the [other] one a burnt offering to Y^ehowah to cover over the Levites. And you have caused to stand the Levites to faces of Aaron and to faces of his sons; and you have waved them [as] a presentation offering to Y^ehowah. And you have separated the Levites from a midst of sons of Israel. And have been to Me the Levites.

Numbers
8:12–14

And the Levites laid their (two) hands upon the head of the bulls, and you will make one a sin-offering and the [other] one a burnt offering to Y^ehowah to make an atonement for the Levites. And you will have the Levites stand before Aaron and before his sons; and you will present them [as if] a presentation offering to Y^ehowah. [By doing all of this,] you have separated the Levites out from the sons of Israel. The Levites are Mine!

The Levites will place their hands upon the heads of the two bulls and thus be identified with them. One bull will be offered as a sin-offering and the other bull is offered up as a burnt offering to Jehovah, thus covering over the sins of the Levites. The Levites will all stand before Aaron and his sons, and they are presented as if a presentation offering to Jehovah. By these ceremonies, the Levites are separated out from the rest of Israel to serve God. The Levites are Mine!

Here is how others have translated this passage:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text (Hebrew)

And the Levites rested their (two) hands upon a head of the bulls, and so you will make the one a sin-offering and the [other] one a burnt offering to Y^ehowah to cover over the Levites. And you have caused to stand the Levites to faces of Aaron and to faces of his sons; and you have waved them [as] a presentation offering to Y^ehowah. And you have separated the Levites from a midst of sons of Israel. And have been to Me the Levites.

Dead Sea Scrolls

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Jerusalem targum

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Targum (Onkelos)

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Targum (Pseudo-Jonathan)

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Aramaic Targum

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The Psalms Targum

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Updated Douay-Rheims

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Douay-Rheims 1899 (Amer.)

The Levites also shall put their hands upon the heads of the oxen, of which thou shalt sacrifice one for sin, and the other for a holocaust to the Lord, to pray for them.

And thou shalt set the Levites in the sight of Aaron and of his, and shalt consecrate them being offered to the Lord,

And shalt separate them from the midst of the children of Israel, to be mine.

Aramaic ESV of Peshitta

"The Levites shall lay their hands on the heads of the bulls, and you shall offer the one for a sin offering, and the other for a burnt offering to Mar-Yah, to make atonement for the Levites.

You shall set the Levites before Aaron, and before his sons, and offer them as a wave offering to Mar-Yah.

Thus you shall separate the Levites from among the B'nai Yisrael, and the Levites shall be mine.

Original Aramaic Psalms

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V. Alexander's Aramaic T.

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Plain English Aramaic Bible

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Lamsa's Peshitta (Syriac)

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Samaritan Pentateuch	<p>And the Levites shall lay their hands upon the heads of the bullocks: and thou shalt offer the one [for] a sin offering, and the other [for] a burnt offering, unto the LORD, to make an atonement for the Levites.</p> <p>And thou shalt set the Levites before Aaron, and before his sons, and offer them [for] an offering unto the LORD.</p> <p>Thus shalt thou separate the Levites from among the children of Israel: and the Levites shall be mine.</p>
Updated Brenton (Greek)	<p>And the Levites shall lay their hands on the heads of the calves; and you shall offer one for a sin offering, and the other for a whole burnt offering to the Lord, to make atonement for them.</p> <p>And you shall set the Levites before the Lord, and before Aaron, and before his sons; and you shall give them as a gift before the Lord.</p> <p>And you shall separate the Levites from the midst of the sons of Israel, and they shall be Mine.</p>

Significant differences:

Limited Vocabulary Translations:

Bible in Basic English	<p>And the Levites are to put their hands on the heads of the oxen, and one of the oxen is to be offered for a sin-offering and the other for a burned offering to the Lord to take away the sin of the Levites.</p> <p>Then the Levites are to be put before Aaron and his sons, to be offered as a wave offering to the Lord.</p> <p>So you are to make the Levites separate from the children of Israel, and the Levites will be mine.</p>
Easy English Easy-to-Read Version–2008	<p>.</p> <p>"Tell the Levites to put their hands on the heads of the bulls. One bull will be a sin offering and the other bull will be used as a burnt offering to the LORD. These offerings will make the Levites pure. Tell the Levites to stand in front of Aaron and his sons. Then give the Levites to the LORD. They will be like an offering. This will make the Levites holy. They will be different from the other Israelites. The Levites will belong to me. [Kukis: Note the quotation mark beginning this section. The ERV and many other translations understood these verses to stand together as a single paragraph. However, that is not the case with every translation.]</p>
<i>God's Word™</i>	<p>"The Levites will place their hands on the heads of the young bulls. Sacrifice one of them as an offering for sin and the other one as a burnt offering to the LORD. These sacrifices will make peace with the LORD for the Levites. Make the Levites stand in front of Aaron and his sons, and present them as an offering to the LORD. In this way you will separate the Levites from the other Israelites, and the Levites will be mine.</p>
Good News Bible (TEV)	<p>The people of Israel are to place their hands on the heads of the Levites, and then Aaron shall dedicate the Levites to me as a special gift from the Israelites, so that they may do my work. The Levites shall then put their hands on the heads of the two bulls; one is to be offered as a sin offering and the other as a burnt offering, in order to perform the ritual of purification for the Levites.</p> <p>"Dedicate the Levites as a special gift to me, and put Aaron and his sons in charge of them. Separate the Levites in this way from the rest of the Israelites, so that they will belong to me. [Kukis: The GNB sees vv. 6–12 and 13–19 as two separate, but related, literary units.] vv. 10–11 are included for context.</p>
<i>The Message</i>	.
Names of God Bible	.
NIRV	.
New Simplified Bible	.

Thought-for-thought translations; dynamic translations; paraphrases:

Casual English Bible	.
Contemporary English V.	After this, the Levites are to place their hands on the heads of the bulls. Then one of the bulls will be sacrificed for the forgiveness of sin, and the other to make sure that I am pleased. The Levites will stand at my altar in front of Aaron and his sons, who will then dedicate the Levites to me. This ceremony will show that the Levites are different from the other Israelites and belong to me in a special way.
The Living Bible	.
New Berkeley Version	.
New Life Version	.
New Living Translation	.
The Passion Translation	.
Unfolding Bible Simplified	After that, the descendants of Levi must place their hands on the heads of the two bulls. Then the bulls will be killed and burned on the altar. One will be an offering to take away the guilt of their sins, and the other will be completely burned to please me. The descendants of Levi must stand at the altar in front of Aaron and his sons, and you must then dedicate them to me, as if you had lifted them up to me. This ritual will show that the descendants of Levi are set apart from the other Israelites and that they belong to me.

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	.
Beck's American Translation	.
Common English Bible	.
New Advent (Knox) Bible	.
Translation for Translators	.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Berean Study Bible	.
Christian Standard Bible	.
Conservapedia Translation	.
Revised Ferrar-Fenton Bible	.
God's Truth (Tyndale)	.
The Heritage Bible	And the Levites shall take hold with their hands upon the heads of the bullocks, and you shall make the one a sin offering, and the other a burnt offering, to Jehovah, to make a covering for the Levites. And you shall stand the Levites before the face of Aaron, and before the faces of his sons, and wave them as a wave offering to Jehovah. You shall separate the Levites from the midst of the children of Israel; the Levites are mine.
International Standard V	"Then Aaron is to present the descendants of Levi as a wave offering before the Lord from the Israelis, because they are to work in the service of the Lord. The descendants of Levi are then to lay their hands on the head of the bulls, offering one for a sin offering and the other one for a burnt offering to the Lord to atone for the descendants of Levi. "You are to make the descendants of Levi stand in the presence of Aaron and his sons. Then you are to wave them as wave offerings to the Lord. This is how you are to separate the descendants of Levi from among the Israelis. The descendants of Levi belong to me. Vv. 11–14 in the ISV.
H. C. Leupold	.
Lexham English Bible	.

NIV, ©2011 .
 Unfolding Bible Literal Text .
 Urim-Thummim Version .
 Then the Levites will lay their hands on the heads of the bulls and you will offer one for a Sin- Offering, and the other for a whole Burnt-Offering to YHWH, to make a Propitiatory-Covering for the Levites. You will set the Levites before Aaron and before his sons, and wave them for a Wave-Offering to YHWH. Thus you will separate the Levites from among the children of Israel and the Levites will be Mine.

Wikipedia Bible Project .

Catholic Bibles (those having the imprimatur):

Christian Community (1988) .
 The Levites must then lay their hands on the heads of the bulls, one of which you are to offer as a sacrifice for sin, and the other as a burnt offering to Yahweh; this is the rite of atonement for the Levites. Having brought the Levites before Aaron and his sons, you will present them to Yahweh and wave them before him. So you shall set the Levites apart from the rest of the sons of Israel, so that they may be mine.

New American Bible (2011) .
 The Catholic Bible .
 New Jerusalem Bible .
 NRSV (Anglicized Cath. Ed.) .
 Revised English Bible–1989 .

Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible .
 Eth Cephher Bible .
 And the Leviyim shall lay their hands upon the heads of the bullocks: and you shall offer the one for a sin offering, and the other for an ascending smoke offering, unto Yahuah, to make an atonement for the Leviyim. And you shall set the Leviyim before Aharon, and before his sons, and offer them for an offering unto Yahuah. Thus shall you separate the Leviyim from among the children of Yashar'el: and the Leviyim shall be mine.

exeGesés companion Bible .
 Hebraic Roots Bible .
 Kaplan Translation .
 The Levites shall then lay their hands on the heads of the bulls, and you shall prepare one [bull] as a sin offering and one as a burnt offering to God, to atone for the Levites.
 You shall stand the Levites before Aaron and his sons and designate them as a wave offering to God.
 In this manner you will separate the Levites from the other Israelites, and the Levites shall become Mine.

The Scriptures–2009 .
 And the Lěwites shall lay their hands on the heads of the young bulls. And one shall be prepared as a sin offering and the other as an ascending offering to יהוה, to make atonement for the Lěwites.
 “And you shall have the Lěwites stand before Aharon and his sons, and then wave them, a wave offering to יהוה.
 “Thus you shall separate the Lěwites from among the children of Yisra'ěl, and the Lěwites shall be Mine.

Tree of Life Version .
 The Levites are to lay their hands on the heads of the bulls. Use one for a sin offering and the other for a burnt offering to Adonai to make atonement for the Levites. Have the Levites stand before Aaron and his sons and present them as a wave offering to Adonai. In this way you are to set apart the Levites from Bnei-Yisrael to be Mine.

Weird English, Old English, Anachronistic English Translations:

Alpha & Omega Bible	<p>AND THE LEVITES SHALL LAY THEIR HANDS ON THE HEADS OF THE CALVES; AND YOU SHALL OFFER ONE FOR A SIN-OFFERING, AND THE OTHER FOR A WHOLE BURNT OFFERING TO JESUS, TO MAKE ATONEMENT FOR THEM.</p> <p>AND YOU SHALL SET THE LEVITES BEFORE JESUS, AND BEFORE AARON, AND BEFORE HIS SONS; AND YOU SHALL GIVE THEM AS A GIFT BEFORE JESUS.</p> <p>AND YOU SHALL SEPARATE THE LEVITES FROM THE MIDST OF THE SONS OF ISRAEL, AND THEY SHALL BE MINE.</p>
Awful Scroll Bible	<p>The Levites were to rest their hands, upon the heads of the young bulls, even was he to prepare one for their misses of the mark, and the other for a whole burnt offering to Sustains To Become to cover over for the Levites.</p> <p>You is to have stationed the Levites, turned before Aaron and turned before his sons, and is to have waved them as a wave offering to Sustains To Become</p> <p>You is to have set the Levites apart, there is to be distinguishment, from the sons of Contends-with-he-mighty and the Levites.</p>
Concordant Literal Version exeGesese companion Bible	<p>.</p> <p>And the Leviym prop their hands on the heads of the bullocks: and you work the one for the sin and the one for a holocaust to Yah Veh, to kapar/atone for the Leviym: and stand the Leviym at the face of Aharon and at the face of his sons and wave them for a wave to Yah Veh. Thus you separate the Leviym from among the sons of Yisra El: and the Leviym become mine.</p>
Orthodox Jewish Bible	<p>And the Levi'im shall lay their hands upon the rosh of the bulls; and thou shalt offer the one for a chattat, and the other for an olah, unto Hashem, to make kapporah for the Levi'im.</p> <p>And thou shalt set the Levi'im before Aharon, and before his Banim, and offer them for a tenufah unto Hashem.</p> <p>Thus shalt thou set apart as separate the Levi'im from among the Bnei Yisroel; and the Levi'im shall be Mine.</p>
Rotherham's <i>Emphasized B.</i>	<p>.</p>

Expanded/Embellished Bibles:

<i>The Amplified Bible</i>	.
The Expanded Bible	.
International Standard V	.
Kretzmann's Commentary	.
Lexham English Bible	<p>And the Levites will lay their hands on the head of the one bull and offer it as a sin offering and the other one as a burnt offering to Yahweh, to make atonement for the Levites. And you will present the Levites before [Literally "in the presence of"] Aaron and before [Literally "in the presence of"] his sons, and he will offer [Literally "Aaron will wave"] them as a wave offering to Yahweh. V. 14 will be placed with the next passage for context.</p>
Syndein/Thieme	.
The Voice	.

Bible Translations with Many Footnotes:

The Complete Tanach	.
The Geneva Bible	.
Kaplan Translation	.
NET Bible®	.
New American Bible (2011)	.
New Catholic Bible	.
Rotherham's <i>Emphasized B.</i>	And the Levites shall lean their hands upon the head of the bullocks; then make thou of the one a sin-bearer, and of the other an ascending-sacrifice unto Yahweh to put a propitiatory-covering over the Levites. Thus shalt thou cause the Levites to stand before Aaron, and before his sons,—thus shalt thou offer them as a wave-offering unto ^f Yahweh; thus shalt thou separate the Levites out of the midst of the sons of Israel,—thus shall the Levites become mine ^l . ^f Some cod. (w. Onk., Jon., and Sam.) have: “before”—G.n.
Updated ASV	And the Levites shall lay their hands on the heads of the bulls: and you shall offer the one for a sin offering, and the other for a burnt offering, to Jehovah, to make atonement for the Levites. And you shall set the Levites before Aaron, and before his sons, and offer ^[36] them for a wave offering to Jehovah. V. 14 will be placed with the next passage for context. ^[36] Lit <i>waved</i> ; that is, caused to move to and fro

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

A Faithful Version	.
C. Thomson Updated OT	.
Charles Thomson OT	. Whole
Context Group Version	And the Levites shall lay their hands on the heads of the bullocks: and he [Aaron] shall make of one of them a purification-offering, and the other for an ascension [offering], to YHWH, to make atonement for the Levites. And you shall set the Levites before Aaron, and before his sons, and offer them for a wave-offering to YHWH. Thus you shall separate the Levites from among the sons of Israel; and the Levites shall be mine.
English Standard Version	.
Green's Literal Translation	.
Legacy Standard Bible	.
Literal Standard Version	And the Levites lay their hands on the head of the bullocks, and make one a sin-offering and one a burnt-offering to YHWH, to atone for the Levites. And you have caused the Levites to stand before Aaron, and before his sons, and have waved them [as] a wave-offering to YHWH; and you have separated the Levites from the midst of the sons of Israel, and the Levites have become Mine; and afterward the Levites come in to serve the Tent of Meeting, and you have cleansed them, and have waved them [as] a wave-offering. V. 15 is included for context.
Modern English Version	.
Modern Literal Version 2020	And the Levites will lay their hands upon the heads of the bullocks and offer you the one for a sin-offering and the other for a burnt-offering, to Jehovah, to make atonement for the Levites. And you will set the Levites before Aaron and before his sons and offer them for a wave-offering to Jehovah. And you will separate the Levites from among the sons of Israel and the Levites will be mine. And after that the Levites will go in to do the service of the tent of meeting. And you will cleanse them and offer them for a wave-offering. V. 15 is included for context.
New American Standard B.	.
New European Version	.
New King James Version	.

Niobi Study Bible .
 Owen's Translation .
 Revised Mechanical Trans. ...

...and the ones of Lewi will support their hands upon the head of the bulls, and do the one of failure, and the one of an ascension offering, to YHWH to make a covering upon the ones of Lewi, and you will make the ones of Lewi stand to the face of Aharon and to the faces of his sons, and you will wave them, a waving to YHWH, and you will make the ones of Lewi separate from the midst of the sons of Yisra'eyl, and the ones of Lewi will exist for me,...

Updated ASV .
 Updated Bible Version 2.17 .
 A Voice in the Wilderness .
 Webster's Bible Translation .
 World English Bible .
 Young's Literal Translation .
 Young's Updated LT .

The gist of this passage:
 12-14

Numbers 8:12a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB & Strong #'s
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as; or</i>	simple wāw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
L ^e vīyyim (לְוִיִּים) [pronounced l ^e -vee-YIM]	<i>joined to, attached; garland, crown; and is transliterated Levites</i>	plural gentilic adjective with the definite article	Strong's #3881 BDB #532
çâmak ^e (סָמַךְ) [pronounced saw-MAHK ^e]	<i>to lean, to rest; to uphold, to support, to sustain, to aid; to place, to lay [something upon something else]; to approach</i>	3 rd person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #5564 BDB #701
'êth (אֶת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i>]	generally untranslated; possibly be translated <i>to, toward (s)</i>	mark of a direct object; indicates next word is the object of the verb	Strong's #853 BDB #84
yâdayim (יָדַיִם) [pronounced yaw-dah-YIHM]	<i>[two] hands; both hands figuratively for strength, power, control of a particular person</i>	feminine dual noun with the 3 rd person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #3027 BDB #388
'al (לְ) [pronounced <i>gahl</i>]	<i>upon, beyond, on, against, over above, by, beside; because of, on account of</i>	preposition of relative proximity	Strong's #5921 BDB #752
rôsh (רֹאשׁ) [pronounced <i>rohsh</i>]	<i>head [of a man, city, state, nation, place, family, priest], top [of a mountain]; chief, prince, officer; front, choicest, best; first; height [of stars]; head count, sum, census</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #7218 BDB #910
parīym (פָּרִים) [pronounced <i>pahr-EEM</i>]	<i>bulls, [especially a] young bulls, steers</i>	masculine plural noun with the definite article	Strong's #6499 BDB #830

Translation: And the Levites laid their (two) hands upon the head of the bulls,...

Each Levite has two young bulls and they put their hands on the heads of the two bulls. I picture this as happening at the same time, one hand one on bull, and the other hand on the other bull. Possibly this was done in succession. In any case, the sins of the Levites are transferred to the bulls.

In the same way, our sins were transferred to Jesus Christ.

Numbers 8:12b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB & Strong #'s
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
ʿâsâh (עָשָׂה) [pronounced gaw-SAWH]	<i>to do, to make, to construct, to produce, to fashion, to form, to prepare, to manufacture; accomplish</i>	2 nd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #6213 BDB #793
ʿêth (אֶת) [pronounced ayth]	generally untranslated; possibly be translated <i>to, toward (s)</i>	mark of a direct object; indicates next word is the object of the verb	Strong's #853 BDB #84
ʿechâd (אֶחָד) [pronounced eh-KHAWD]	<i>one, first, certain, only; each, every; but it can also mean a composite unity; possibly particular; anyone; same</i>	masculine singular numeral adjective with the definite article	Strong's #259 BDB #25
chattâ'ath (חַטָּאת) [pronounced khat-TAWTH]	<i>misstep, slip of the foot; sin; sinfulness; a sin-offering; penalty [for sin], calamity, misfortune</i>	feminine singular noun	Strong's #2403 BDB #308
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, וַ) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as; of</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
ʿêth (אֶת) [pronounced ayth]	generally untranslated; possibly be translated <i>to, toward (s)</i>	mark of a direct object; indicates next word is the object of the verb	Strong's #853 BDB #84
ʿechâd (אֶחָד) [pronounced eh-KHAWD]	<i>one, first, certain, only; each, every; but it can also mean a composite unity; possibly particular; anyone; same</i>	masculine singular numeral adjective with the definite article	Strong's #259 BDB #25
ʿôlâh (עֹלָה) [pronounced go-LAW]	<i>burnt offering, ascending offering</i>	feminine singular noun	Strong #5930 BDB #750
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l ^e]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly yohh-WAH]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y^ehowah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217

Translation: ...and you will make one a sin-offering and the [other] one a burnt offering to Y^ehowah...

One bull is for a sin-offering and the other bull is for a burnt offering. The sin offering means that the bull is identified with the sins of the Levite and killed for those sins. The burnt offering means the other is offered upon the altar and over the fire, as if being judged for the sins of the Levite.

Both bulls would have been offered on the altar, but one is a sin-offering and the other is a burnt offering. Logically, Jesus is first identified with our sins (**He is made sin for us**) and then the penalty for our sins is poured out upon Him.

Numbers 8:12c			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB & Strong #'s
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>l</i>]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
kâphar (כַּפַּר) [pronounced <i>kaw-FAHR</i>]	<i>to cover, to cover over [with], to be covered [with]; to spread over; to appease, to placate, to pacify; to pardon, to expiate; to atone, to make an atonement [for]; to obtain forgiveness; to free an offender of a charge</i>	Piel infinitive construct	Strong's #3722 BDB #497
'al (עַל) [pronounced <i>gah</i>]	<i>upon, beyond, on, against, over above, by, beside; because of, on account of</i>	preposition of relative proximity	Strong's #5921 BDB #752
BDB gives the following meanings for this preposition: 1) <i>upon, on the ground of, according to, on account of, on behalf of, concerning, beside, in addition to, together with, beyond, above, over, by, on to, towards, to, against (preposition); 1a) upon, on the ground of, on the basis of, on account of, because of, therefore, on behalf of, for the sake of, for, with, in spite of, notwithstanding, concerning, in the matter of, as regards; 1b) above, beyond, over (of excess); 1c) above, over (of elevation or pre-eminence); 1d) upon, to, over to, unto, in addition to, together with, with (of addition); 1e) over (of suspension or extension); 1f) by, adjoining, next, at, over, around (of contiguity or proximity); 1g) down upon, upon, on, from, up upon, up to, towards, over towards, to, against (with verbs of motion); 1h) to (as a dative); 2) because that, because, notwithstanding, although (conjunction).</i>			
L ^e vîyyim (לְוִיִּים) [pronounced <i>l^e-vee-YIM</i>]	<i>joined to, attached; garland, crown; and is transliterated Levites</i>	plural gentilic adjective with the definite article	Strong's #3881 BDB #532

Translation: ...to make an atonement for the Levites.

By the offering of these two bulls, an atonement or a covering over has been made for the Levites. Their sins are not truly forgiven because of the sacrifice of the two bulls. Their sins are just covered over temporarily until the true Sacrifice comes in their stead.

Interestingly enough, the bull is not mentioned in the New Testament, but the bull represents the power and strength of Jesus Christ, dying for our sins.

Numbers 8:12 **And the Levites laid their (two) hands upon the head of the bulls, and you will make one a sin-offering and the [other] one a burnt offering to Y^ehowah to make an atonement for the Levites.** (Kukis mostly literal translation)

In this verse we have a clear case of epanadiplosis [pronounced *EP-an-a-di-PLO-sis*] where a sentence begins and ends with the same word. A complete circle or completeness is implied in a verse like this; there has been

a statement of complete truth and its beginning and end are both marked. The identification with the bulls and their sacrifice as a sin-offering and as a burnt-offering is a complete offering, just as what our Lord did on the cross was completely efficacious on our behalf; that is, His work, His death, completely blotted out the list of sins and ordinances against us.

The laying on of hands is identification and the Levites identified themselves with the bulls. The bulls stood for Jesus Christ being judged (burnt) for our sins (the sin-offering). How this was done, whether a few did this as representing the Levite tribe, it is not revealed to us here. There could have been a procession, but that is not implied here either.

The two young bulls are offered up to make atonement for each Levite.

Numbers 8:13a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB & Strong #'s
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as; of</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
ʿâmad (עמד) [pronounced <i>gaw-MAHD</i>]	<i>to cause to stand [firm], to maintain; to station, to cause to set up [place, raise up, erect], to establish, to preserve; to decree, to impose [a law, mandate]; to ordain, to appoint, to destine; to stand still; to present [one] before [a king, God]</i>	2 nd person masculine singular, Hiphil perfect	Strong's #5975 BDB #763
ʾêth (אֶת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i>]	generally untranslated; possibly be translated <i>to, toward (s)</i>	mark of a direct object; indicates next word is the object of the verb	Strong's #853 BDB #84
L ^e vîyyim (לְוִיִּים) [pronounced <i>l^e-vee-YIM</i>]	<i>joined to, attached; garland, crown; and is transliterated Levites</i>	plural gentilic adjective with the definite article	Strong's #3881 BDB #532
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>l^e</i>]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
pânîym (פָּנִים) [pronounced <i>paw-NEEM</i>]	<i>face, faces, countenance; presence</i>	masculine plural construct (plural acts like English singular)	Strong's #6440 BDB #815
<p>Together, they mean <i>upon the face of, before, before the face of, in the presence of, in the sight of, in front of, which faces</i>. When used with God, it can take on the more figurative meaning <i>in the judgment of</i>. This can also mean <i>forwards; the front part [or, the edge of a sword]</i>. L^epânîym (לְפָנָיו) can take on a temporal sense as well: <i>before, of old, formerly, in the past, in past times</i>. Literally, this means <i>to faces of</i>.</p>			
ʾAhârôn (אַהֲרֹן) [pronounced <i>ah-huh-ROHN</i>]	transliterated <i>Aaron</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #175 BDB #14
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as; of</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>l^e</i>]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510

Numbers 8:13a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB & Strong #'s
pânîym (פָּנִים) [pronounced paw-NEEM]	face, faces, countenance; presence	masculine plural construct (plural acts like English singular)	Strong's #6440 BDB #815
Together, they mean <i>upon the face of, before, before the face of, in the presence of, in the sight of, in front of, which faces</i> . When used with God, it can take on the more figurative meaning <i>in the judgment of</i> . This can also mean <i>forwards; the front part</i> [or, the edge of a sword]. L ^e pânîym (לְפָנַיִם) can take on a temporal sense as well: <i>before, of old, formerly, in the past, in past times</i> . Literally, this means <i>to faces of</i> .			
bânîym (בָּנִים) [pronounced baw-NEEM]	sons, descendants; children; people; sometimes rendered <i>men; young men, youths</i>	masculine plural noun with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #1121 BDB #119

Translation: And you will have the Levites stand before Aaron and before his sons;...

Moses oversees all that is taking place. He does not physically take each Levite and bring him before Aaron, but he instructs this to take place. Hence the use of the Hiphil (causative) stem.

Moses is acting as a type of God the Father, acting in such a way so that Jesus is brought before Himself to die for our sins. Jesus, of course, does this from His Own free will.

When our sins are poured out upon Jesus Christ, this is a judicial imputation. That means, there is no real or natural target for the sins to go to. They have to be judicially imputed and Jesus Christ must accept these sins by His Own volition.

A natural or real imputation would be, Adam's original sin being imputed to our sin nature at birth. That is a natural or a real place for Adam's sin to go. There is a natural affinity between our sin nature and Adam's original sin.

Numbers 8:13b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB & Strong #'s
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced weh]	and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as; of	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
nûwph (נוּפַח) [pronounced noof]	to wave, to shake [e.g., the hand to beckon someone]; to present (to, before); to scatter, to shake forth [rain]	2 nd person masculine singular, Hiphil perfect	Strong's #5130 BDB #631
'êth (אֵת) [pronounced ayth]	them; untranslated mark of a direct object; occasionally to them, toward them	sign of the direct object affixed to a 3 rd person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #853 BDB #84
t ^e nûwphâh (תְּנוּפְחָהּ) [pronounced t'noo-PHAWH]	presentation offering, wave-offering; offering [gold or brass]; swinging, waving, brandishing [of God's hand, weapons]	feminine singular noun	Strong's #8573 BDB #632

Numbers 8:13b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB & Strong #'s
lâmed (ל) [pronounced ^l]]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly <i>yhoh-WAH</i>]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah</i> , <i>Yahweh</i> , <i>Y^ehowah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217

Translation: ...and you will present them [as if] a presentation offering to Y^ehowah.

The verb and the object of the verb are cognates of one another. My translation takes cognizance of this.

It seems unclear. Are the Levites being presented as presentation offerings or are the bulls? The context suggests that it is the Levites. Exactly how this looks would require some imagination. Do the priests look up to God or look toward the Tabernacle and somehow present each Levite? Obviously, they will not be lifted up and shaken. Just as obviously, what exactly was done is understood by Moses and by Aaron.

Numbers 8:13 *And you will have the Levites stand before Aaron and before his sons; and you will present them [as if] a presentation offering to Y^ehowah.* (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Furthermore, it is not revealed whether the Levites moved forward toward the altar and back again; with the use of these verbs and the fact that the Jews were very demonstrative, it would seem as though these movements were done.

Numbers 8:14a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB & Strong #'s
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as; of</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
bâdal (בָּדַל) [pronounced <i>baw-DAHL</i>]	<i>to separate, [disjoin, sever]; to divide into parts; to distinguish, to make a distinction, to show a difference; to select [out from a group]; to divide into parts; to shut out</i>	2 nd person masculine singular, Hiphil perfect	Strong's #914 BDB #95
'êth (אֶת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i>]	generally untranslated; possibly be translated <i>to, toward (s)</i>	mark of a direct object; indicates next word is the object of the verb	Strong's #853 BDB #84
L ^e vîyyim (לְוִיִּים) [pronounced ^l -vee-YIM]	<i>joined to, attached; garland, crown; and is transliterated Levites</i>	plural gentilic adjective with the definite article	Strong's #3881 BDB #532
min (מִן) [pronounced <i>mihn</i>]	<i>from, off, out from, out of, away from, on account of, since, than, more than; some of</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
tâvek ^e (תְּוֶקֶ) [pronounced <i>taw-VEK^E</i>]	<i>midst, among, middle</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #8432 BDB #1063

With the min preposition, this can mean *from the midst [of anything]; out from, out of, from, away from.*

Numbers 8:14a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB & Strong #'s
bânîym (בְּנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל) [pronounced <i>baw-NEEM</i>]	<i>sons, descendants; children; people; sometimes rendered men; young men, youths</i>	masculine plural construct	Strong's #1121 BDB #119
Yis ^e râ'êl (יִשְׂרָאֵל) [pronounced <i>yis-raw-ALE</i>]	<i>God prevails; contender; soldier of God; transliterated Israel</i>	masculine proper noun; God-given name to Jacob; and national name for the Jewish people	Strong's #3478 & #3479 BDB #975

Translation: [By doing all of this,] you have separated the Levites out from the sons of Israel.

The Levites are separated out by this ceremony from the rest of Israel. God sees them as a separate group. Hence, often when the twelve tribes of Israel are spoken of, this excludes the Levites.

Numbers 8:14b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB & Strong #'s
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as; of</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
hâyâh (הָיָה) [pronounced <i>haw-YAW</i>]	<i>to be, is, was, are; to become, to come into being; to come to pass</i>	3 rd person masculine plural, Qal perfect	Strong's #1961 BDB #224
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>leh</i>]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition; with the 1 st person singular suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510
L ^e vîyyim (לְוִיִּים) [pronounced <i>leh-vee-YIM</i>]	<i>joined to, attached; garland, crown; and is transliterated Levites</i>	plural gentilic adjective with the definite article	Strong's #3881 BDB #532

Translation: The Levites are Mine! (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Literally, this reads, *And the Levites are to Me!* The Levites are separated out from all Israel and they will serve God in particular. This is analogous to the place of the Israelites. They are separated out from all the tribes of the world and they will serve God.

Numbers 8:14 [By doing all of this,] you have separated the Levites out from the sons of Israel. The Levites are Mine! (Kukis mostly literal translation)

It is in the book of Numbers that we have the specific duties of the Levites and their calling out, as opposed to the book having their name, Leviticus.

Numbers 8:12–14 And the Levites laid their (two) hands upon the head of the bulls, and you will make one a sin-offering and the [other] one a burnt offering to Y^ehowah to make an atonement for the Levites. And you will have the Levites stand before Aaron and before his sons; and you will present them [as if] a presentation offering to Y^ehowah. [By doing all of this,] you have separated the Levites out from the sons of Israel. The Levites are Mine! (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Logically, after a great service like that, all of the people who were there would have joined into a massive barbeque. The Levites now belonged to God. What happened as a result will be discussed later (that is, what the Levites were to do). But after any sacrifice, people ate of the sacrifice. This spoke of them believing in the God of Israel. Eating and drinking was often portrayed as being analogous to faith. **Jesus said, "I tell you the truth. You must eat the flesh of the Son of Man. And you must drink his blood. If you don't do this, then you won't have real life in you.** (John 6:53; International Children's Bible) Jesus was not tell His disciples that He is putting together a movement of vampires.

In fact, why not take a look at the entire passage:

It is written in the Prophets: **'They will all be taught by God.'** [Isaiah 54:13] **Everyone who has heard the Father and learned from him comes to me. No one has seen the Father except the one who is from God; only he has seen the Father. Very truly I tell you, the one who believes has eternal life. I am the bread of life. Your ancestors ate the manna in the wilderness, yet they died. But here is the bread that comes down from heaven, which anyone may eat and not die. I am the living bread that came down from heaven. Whoever eats this bread will live forever. This bread is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world."** (John 6:45–51)

Then the Jews began to argue sharply among themselves, **"How can this man give us his flesh to eat?"** (John 6:52)

Jesus said to them, **"Very truly I tell you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you. Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise them up at the last day. For my flesh is real food and my blood is real drink. Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me, and I in them. Just as the living Father sent me and I live because of the Father, so the one who feeds on me will live because of me. This is the bread that came down from heaven. Your ancestors ate manna and died, but whoever feeds on this bread will live forever."** He said this while teaching in the synagogue in Capernaum. (John 6:53–59; NIV) After this, His disciples said, **"What the hell are you talking about?"** and Jesus explained. Nevertheless, some disciples stopped following Him after this. See John 6:60–66.

Anyway, when people ate these animal sacrifices, this was an expression of their faith in the God of Israel (ideally speaking).

Numbers 8:12–14 **The Levites will place their hands upon the heads of the two bulls and thus be identified with them. One bull will be offered as a sin-offering and the other bull is offered up as a burnt offering to Jehovah, thus covering over the sins of the Levites. The Levites will all stand before Aaron and his sons, and they are presented as if a presentation offering to Jehovah. By these ceremonies, the Levites are separated out from the rest of Israel to serve God. The Levites are Mine!** (Kukis paraphrase)

In this passage, it is explained why God has the authority over this group of Israelites. He takes the Levites as His Own rather than the firstborn of every son of Israel.

And afterwards, therefore, come in the Levites to serve the Tent of Appointment and you have cleansed them. And you have presented them [as] a presentation offering, for the ones being given to, the ones being given to, they [are] to Me from a midst of sons of Israel instead of that which opens a womb; firstborn of all sons of Israel. I will take them to Me, for to Me [is] every firstborn in sons of Israel, in the man and in the beast in a day of My striking down every firstborn in a land of Egypt. I regard as holy them to Me. And so I will take the Levites instead of every firstborn in sons of Israel.

Numbers
8:15–18

And after that, therefore, the Levites will come in to serve the Tent of Meeting and you have cleansed them. And you have presented them [as] a presentation offering, for they [are] certainly the ones being given to Me out from the sons of Israel instead of the one who opens the womb, [that is,] the firstborn of all the sons of Israel. [I said] I will take them [the firstborn of Israel] to Me, for every firstborn of the sons of Israel, both man and beast, [belongs] to Me in the day of My striking down every firstborn in the land of Egypt. I regard them as set apart to Me. And so I will take the Levites [to Me] instead of every firstborn in the sons of Israel.

After these cleansing ceremonies, the Levites will be available to serve Me in the Tabernacle. You have presented them to Me as a presentation offering and they are given to Me instead of the firstborn of all Israel. Recall that I told you that I would take the firstborn of Israel to me—meaning the firstborn of man and of beast. They belong to Me because I struck down the firstborn in Egypt of anyone who was not under the blood of the Passover. From that day, I regarded the firstborn of Israel as belonging to Me. However, from this point forward, the Levites will belong to Me instead of the firstborn from the sons of Israel.

Here is how others have translated this passage:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text (Hebrew)

And afterwards, therefore, come in the Levites to serve the Tent of Appointment and you have cleansed them. And you have presented them [as] a presentation offering, for the ones being given to, the ones being given to, they [are] to Me from a midst of sons of Israel instead of that which opens a womb; firstborn of all sons of Israel. I will take them to Me, for to Me [is] every firstborn in sons of Israel, in the man and in the beast in a day of My striking down every firstborn in a land of Egypt. I regard as holy them to Me. And so I will take the Levites instead of every firstborn in sons of Israel.

Dead Sea Scrolls

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Jerusalem targum

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Targum (Onkelos)

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Targum (Pseudo-Jonathan)

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Aramaic Targum

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The Psalms Targum

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Updated Douay-Rheims

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Douay-Rheims 1899 (Amer.)

And afterwards they shall enter into the tabernacle of the covenant, to serve me. And thus shalt thou purify and consecrate them for an oblation of the Lord: for as a gift they were given me by the children of Israel.

I have taken them instead of the firstborn that open every womb in Israel,

For all the firstborn of the children of Israel, both of men and of beasts, are mine.

From the day that I slew every firstborn in the land of Egypt, have I sanctified them to myself:

And I have taken the Levites for all the firstborn of the children of Israel:...

Aramaic ESV of Peshitta

"After that, the Levites shall go in to do the service of the Tabernacle: and you shall cleanse them, and offer them as a wave offering.

For they are wholly given to me from among the B'nai Yisrael; instead of all who open the womb, even the firstborn of all the B'nai Yisrael, I have taken them to me. For all the firstborn among the B'nai Yisrael are mine, both man and animal. On the day that I struck all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, I sanctified them for myself. I have taken the Levites instead of all the firstborn among the B'nai Yisrael.

Original Aramaic Psalms
V. Alexander's Aramaic T.
Plain English Aramaic Bible
Lamsa's Peshitta (Syriac)
Samaritan Pentateuch

And after that shall the Levites go in to do the service of the services of the tabernacle of the congregation: and thou shalt cleanse them, and offer them [for] an offering.

For they [are] wholly given unto me from among the children of Israel; instead of such as open every womb, in [even instead of] the firstborn of all the children of Israel, have I taken them unto me.

For all the firstborn of the children of Israel [are] mine, [both] man and beast: on the day that I smote every firstborn in the land of Egypt I sanctified them for myself.

And I have taken the Levites for all the firstborn of the children of Israel.

Updated Brenton (Greek)

And afterwards the Levites shall go in to perform the works of the tabernacle of witness; and you shall purify them, and present them before the Lord.

For these are given to Me for a present out of the midst of the children of Israel: I have taken them to Myself instead of all the firstborn of the sons of Israel that open every womb.

For every firstborn among the children of Israel is Mine, whether of man or beast: in the day in which I struck every firstborn in the land of Egypt, I sanctified them to Myself.

And I took the Levites in the place of every firstborn among the children of Israel.

Significant differences:

Limited Vocabulary Translations:

Bible in Basic English

After that, the Levites will go in to do whatever has to be done in the Tent of meeting; you are to make them clean and give them as a wave offering.

For they have been given to me from among the children of Israel; in place of every mother's first son, the first to come to birth in Israel, I have taken them for myself.

For every mother's first son among the children of Israel is mine, the first male birth of man or beast: on the day when I sent death on all the first sons in the land of Egypt, I made them mine.

And in place of the first sons among the children of Israel, I have taken the Levites.

Easy English

Easy-to-Read Version--2008

"So make the Levites pure and give them to the Lord as a special offering. After you do this, they can come and do their work at the Meeting Tent. The Israelites will give me the Levites. They will belong to me. In the past I told every Israelite family to give me their firstborn son. But now I am taking the Levites in place of these firstborn sons from the other families in Israel. Every firstborn in Israel--man or animal--is mine, because I killed all the firstborn children and animals in Egypt. And I chose to take the firstborn sons to belong to me. But now I will take the Levites in their place. I will take the Levites in place of all the firstborn sons from the other families in Israel.

God's Word™

"Once you have made them clean and presented them as an offering, the Levites may come and do their work at the tent of meeting. They will be the only Israelites given to me. I have taken them to be mine as substitutes for every firstborn male offspring of the Israelites. Every firstborn in Israel, whether human or animal, is

Good News Bible (TEV)	mine. The day I killed every firstborn male in Egypt, I set them apart as holy to me. So I have taken the Levites as substitutes for all the firstborn sons of the Israelites After you have purified and dedicated the Levites, they will be qualified to work in the Tent. I have claimed them in the place of all the first-born sons of the Israelites, and they belong to me alone. When I killed all the first-born in Egypt, I consecrated as my own the oldest son of each Israelite family and the first-born of every animal. V. 18 will be placed with the next passage for context.
<i>The Message</i>	.
Names of God Bible	.
NIRV	.
New Simplified Bible	.

Thought-for-thought translations; dynamic translations; paraphrases:

Casual English Bible	.
Contemporary English V.	After they have been made acceptable and have been dedicated, they will be allowed to work at my sacred tent. They are mine and will take the place of the first-born Israelite sons. When I killed the oldest sons of the Egyptians, I decided that the first-born sons in each Israelite family would be mine, as well as every first-born male from their flocks and herds. V. 18 will be placed with the next passage for context.
The Living Bible	.
New Berkeley Version	.
New Life Version	.
New Living Translation	.
The Passion Translation	.
Unfolding Bible Simplified	After the descendants of Levi have been made acceptable to me, and presented to me like a special offering as if they had been lifted up to me, they may start to work at the sacred tent. They will belong to me. They will work for me as substitutes for the firstborn males of all the Israelites, who also belong to me. All the firstborn males in Israel, both the people and the animals, are mine. When I caused all the firstborn sons of the people of Egypt to die, I set them apart for myself. But I spared the firstborn of all males of the Israelites, of people and animals, because they are mine. But now I have chosen the descendants of Levi to take the places of the firstborn male sons of the other Israelites.

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	.
Beck's American Translation	.
Common English Bible	.
New Advent (Knox) Bible	.
Translation for Translators	.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Berean Study Bible	.
Christian Standard Bible	.
Conservapedia Translation	.
Revised Ferrar-Fenton Bible	.
God's Truth (Tyndale)	.
The Heritage Bible	After that the Levites shall go in to work the tent of appointed meeting, and you shall purify them, and wave them as a wave offering,

Because they are wholly given to me from the midst of the children of Israel; I have taken them to myself instead of those who open every womb, instead of the firstborn of all the children of Israel,

Because all the firstborn of the children of Israel are mine, man and animal; I sanctified them for myself on the day that I struck every firstborn in the land of Egypt.

And I have taken the Levites instead of all the firstborn of the children of Israel.

International Standard V

“After this, the descendants of Levi are to come to serve at the appointed place of meeting, after you have purified them and presented them as wave offerings, since they’ve been set apart for me from among the Israelis.

“I’ve taken them for myself instead of the first to open the womb—every firstborn of the Israelis, since every firstborn of Israel belongs to me, from human beings to livestock.

“On the same day that I destroyed all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, I consecrated them to myself, taking the descendants of Levi instead of every firstborn of the Israelis. [Kukis: Rotherham proclaims v. 16 nearly unintelligible. The ISV combines these four verses in a fascinating way, which may possibly be the key to being understandable.]

H. C. Leupold

Lexham English Bible

NIV, ©2011

Unfolding Bible Literal Text

After that, the Levites must go in to serve in the tent of meeting. You must purify them. You must offer them as a wave offering. Do this, because they are entirely mine from among the people of Israel. They will take the place of each male child who opens the womb, the firstborn of all the descendants of Israel. I have taken the Levites for myself. All the firstborn from among the people of Israel are mine, both of people and of animals. On the day that I took the lives of all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, I set them apart for myself. I have taken the Levites from among the people of Israel instead of all the firstborn.

Urim-Thummim Version

And after that the Levites will go in to do the service of the Tabernacle at the Appointed Place, and you will cleanse them and wave them for a Wave- Offering. Because they are completely given to me from among the children of Israel instead of all that open the womb (the firstborn of all the children of Israel), I have taken them for myself. For all the firstborn of the children of Israel are mine, both man and animal, on the day that I killed every firstborn in the land of Egypt I consecrated them for myself. I have taken the Levites for all the firstborn of the children of Israel.

Wikipedia Bible Project

Catholic Bibles (those having the imprimatur):

Christian Community (1988) The Levites may begin their ministry in the Tent of Meeting when you have purified them and offered them with the gesture of offering. They are given me from among all the sons of Israel. They are to replace all the first-born of all the sons of Israel. I have taken them for my own. For all the first-born among the sons of Israel, man and beast, belong to me: the day I struck all the first-born in the land of Egypt, I consecrated them to myself, and now, in place of all the first-born among the sons of Israel, I have taken the Levites. 3:13; 13:2

New American Bible (2011)

The Catholic Bible

New Jerusalem Bible

NRSV (Anglicized Cath. Ed.)

Revised English Bible–1989

Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible
Eth Cephher Bible

.
And after that shall the Leviyim go in to do the service of the Tabernacle of the assembly: and you shall cleanse them, and offer them *for* an offering. For they are wholly given unto me from among the children of Yashar'el; instead of such as open every womb, *even instead of* the firstborn of all the children of Yashar'el, have I taken them unto me.
For all the firstborn of the children of Yashar'el *are* mine, *both* man and beast: on the day that I smote every firstborn in the land of Mitsrayim I sanctified them for myself.
And I have taken the Leviyim for all the firstborn of the children of Yashar'el.

exeGesés companion Bible
Hebraic Roots Bible
Kaplan Translation

.
After you have purified them and designated them as a wave offering, the Levites shall come to perform the service in the Communion Tent.
They are given to Me from among the Israelites in place of the first-born (that initiate the womb) of all the Israelites. I have taken them for Myself.
This is because all first-born of the Israelites are Mine, man and beast alike. I sanctified them for Myself on the day that I killed all the first-born in Egypt.
I have now taken the Levites in place of all the first-born Israelites.

The Scriptures—2009

“Then after that the Lēwites shall go in to do service in the Tent of Appointment, when you have cleansed them and waved them as a wave offering.
“For they are given ones, given to Me from among the children of Yisra'ël. I have taken them for Myself instead of all who open the womb, the first-born of all the children of Yisra'ël.
“For all the first-born among the children of Yisra'ël are Mine, both man and beast. On the day that I struck all the first-born in the land of Mitsrayim I set them apart unto Myself.

Tree of Life Version

“And I have taken the Lēwites instead of all the first-born of the children of Yisra'ël. After you have purified them and presented them as a wave offering, the Levites will come to do their work at the Tent of Meeting. For they are the ones from among Bnei-Yisrael given to Me in place of all the first from the wombs of Bnei-Yisrael. I have taken them for Myself.
“For every firstborn among Bnei-Yisrael is Mine, whether human or animal. On the day I struck down the firstborn of the land of Egypt, I sanctified them for Myself.
V. 18 will be placed with the next passage for context.

Weird English, 𐤀𐤋𐤁 English, Anachronistic English Translations:

Alpha & Omega Bible

AND AFTERWARDS THE LEVITES SHALL GO IN TO PERFORM THE WORKS OF THE TABERNACLE OF WITNESS; AND YOU SHALL PURIFY THEM, AND PRESENT THEM BEFORE JESUS.
FOR THESE ARE GIVEN TO ME FOR A PRESENT OUT OF THE MIDST OF THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL: I HAVE TAKEN THEM TO MYSELF INSTEAD OF ALL THE FIRST-BORN OF THE SONS OF ISRAEL THAT OPEN EVERY WOMB.
FOR EVERY FIRST-BORN AMONG THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL IS MINE, WHETHER OF MAN OR BEAST: IN THE DAY IN WHICH I SMOTE EVERY FIRST-BORN IN THE LAND OF EGYPT, I SANCTIFIED THEM TO MYSELF.
AND I TOOK THE LEVITES IN THE PLACE OF EVERY FIRST-BORN AMONG THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL.

Awful Scroll Bible

Afterwards the Levites were to go in, to serve the tent of the appointed place, even was you to purify them, and is to have waved them as a wave offering. They are being rendered distinguished, from the sons of Contends-with-he-mighty for they

that are first to open the womb, indeed for they that are first born, of the sons of Contends-with-he-mighty even am I to have taken them. For they that are first born of the sons, of Contends-with-he-mighty of the humans and dumb beasts, on the day I am to smite the first born of the solid grounds of Egypt, I am to have set them apart. Surely was I to take the Levites, for they that are first born of the sons, of Contends-with-he-mighty.

Concordant Literal Version And afterward the Levites shall come to serve in the service of the tent of appointment when you have cleansed them and waved them as a wave offering. For they are the ones being given, yea given to Me from the midst of the sons of Israel; instead of everyone opening up the womb, every firstborn of the sons of Israel, I have taken them for Myself;"

for Mine is every firstborn among the sons of Israel among human and among beast. On the day I smote every firstborn in the land of Egypt I sanctified them for Myself. V. 18 will be placed with the next passage for context.

exeGeses companion Bible And afterward the Leviym go in to serve the service of the tent of the congregation: and you purify them and wave them for a wave.

For in giving, they are given to me from among the sons of Yisra El: instead of every burster of the womb of the firstbirths of all the sons of Yisra El, I take them to me.

For all the firstbirth of the sons of Yisra El are mine, - human and animal:

on the day I smote every firstbirth in the land of Misrayim

I hallow them for myself:

Num 8:18 and I take the Leviym

instead of all the firstbirths of the sons of Yisra El:..

Orthodox Jewish Bible And after that shall the Levi'im go in to do the service of the Ohel Mo'ed; and thou shalt make them tahor and offer them for a tenufah.

For they are wholly given unto Me from among the Bnei Yisroel; instead of such as open every womb, even instead of the Bechor Kol Bnei Yisroel, have I taken them unto Me.

For Kol Bechor Bnei Yisroel are Mine, both adam and behemah; on the day that I struck down kol bechor in Eretz Mitzrayim I set them apart as kodesh for Myself.

And I have taken the Levi'im tachat (instead of) Kol Bechor Bnei Yisroel.

Rotherham's *Emphasized B.* .

Expanded/Embellished Bibles:

The Amplified Bible .

The Expanded Bible .

International Standard V .

Kretzmann's Commentary

Lexham English Bible

And after this the Levites will come to serve at the tent of assembly, and you will purify them, and you will offer [Literally "Aaron will wave"] them as a wave offering. For they are given to me exclusively from the midst of the Israelites. [Literally "sons/children of Israel"] I have taken them for myself in place of the firstborn of every womb, every firstborn from the Israelites. [Literally "sons/children of Israel"] For every firstborn among the Israelites [Literally "sons/children of Israel"] is mine, both humankind and animal. On the day I destroyed every firstborn in the land of Egypt I consecrated

them to me, and I have taken the Levites in the place of every firstborn among the Israelites. [Literally “sons/children of Israel”]

Syndein/Thieme
The Voice

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Bible Translations with Many Footnotes:

The Complete Tanach

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The Geneva Bible

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Kaplan Translation

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NET Bible®

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New American Bible (2011)

.

New Catholic Bible

.

Rotherham’s *Emphasized B.*

And <after that> shall the Levites enter to do the labour^g of the tent of meeting,—so shalt thou purify them, and offer them as a wave-offering. For <given\ given> they are’ [unto me], out of the midst of the sons of Israel,—<instead of every firstborn that a mother beareth^h from among the sons of Israel> have I taken them’ unto me. For <mine> is every firstborn\ among the sons of Israel, among men\ and among beasts,—<on the day when I smote every firstborn in the land of Egypt> did I hallow them’ unto me. V. 18 will be placed with the next passage for context.

^gSome cod. (w. Sam., Onk., Jon., and Sep.) have: “to perform the laborious work” [as in ver. 11.]—G.n.

^hMI.: “every firstborn bursting open a matrix.” So it should be—G.n. [M.C.T. scarcely intelligible.—Tr.]

Updated ASV

And after that shall the Levites go in to serve at the tent of meeting: and you shall cleanse them and offer[37] them for a wave offering. For they are wholly given to me from among the sons of Israel; instead of all who open the womb, the firstborn of all the sons of Israel, I have taken them to me. For all the first born among the sons of Israel are mine, both man and beast: on the day that I struck down all the firstborn in the land of Egypt I sanctified them for myself. And I have taken the Levites instead of all the firstborn among the sons of Israel.

[37] Lit *waved*; that is, caused to move to and fro

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

A Faithful Version

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C. Thomson Updated OT

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Charles Thomson OT

And after this, the Levites shall go in to do the works of the tabernacle of the testimony, when thou hast purified them, and given them up before the Lord. Because they are solemnly given up to me from among the children of Israel; I have taken them for myself from among the children of Israel, instead of all the males who are the first born of their mothers. Because every first born among the children of Israel, whether of man or beast, belongeth to me (on the day when I smote all the first born in the land of Egypt, I hallowed them for myself) and I have taken the Levites instead of all the first born among the children of Israel, and have given the Levites as a gift to Aaron and his sons, from among the children of Israel, to do the works of the children of Israel at the tabernacle of the testimony, and to make atonement for the children of Israel; therefore none among the children of Israel shall come near the Holies. V. 19 is included for context.

Context Group Version

And after that the Levites shall go in to do the service of the tent of meeting: and you shall cleanse them, and offer them for a wave-offering. For they are wholly given to me from among the sons of Israel; instead of all that opens the womb, even the first-born of all the sons of Israel, I have taken them to me. For all the first-born among the sons of Israel are mine, both man and beast: on the day that I struck all

the first-born in the land of Egypt I made special them for myself. And I have taken the Levites instead of all the first-born among the sons of Israel.

- English Standard Version .
- Green’s Literal Translation .
- Legacy Standard Bible .
- Literal Standard Version .
- Modern English Version .
- Modern Literal Version 2020 .

And after that the Levites will go in to do the service of the tent of meeting. And you will cleanse them and offer them for a wave-offering.

Because they are entirely given to me from among the sons of Israel; instead of all who open the womb, even the firstborn of all the sons of Israel, I have taken them to me. Because all the firstborn among the sons of Israel are mine, both man and beast. On the day that I struck all the firstborn in the land of Egypt I made them holy for myself. And I have taken the Levites instead of all the firstborn among the sons of Israel.

- New American Standard B. .
- New European Version .
- New King James Version .
- Niobi Study Bible .
- Owen's Translation .
- Revised Mechanical Trans. .

...and after this, the ones of Lewi will come to serve the appointed tent, and you will declare them clean, and you will make them wave a waving, given that each of them were certainly given to me from the midst of the sons of Yisra'eyl, in place of the bursting of all the bowels[871] of the firstborn from all the sons of Yisra'eyl, I will take them for me, given that all the firstborn in the sons of Yisra'eyl belong to me, among the human and among the beast, in the day I hit the firstborn in the land of Mits'rayim, I set them apart for me, and I took the ones of Lewi in place of all the firstborn in the sons of Yisra'eyl,...

871. The phrase “bursting bowels” means “give birth.”

- Updated ASV .
- Updated Bible Version 2.17 .
- A Voice in the Wilderness .
- Webster’s Bible Translation .
- World English Bible .
- Young's Literal Translation .
- Young’s Updated LT .

The gist of this passage:
15-18

Numbers 8:15a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB & Strong #'s
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as; or</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong’s # BDB #251
’achârêy (אַחֲרָי) [pronounced <i>ah-kuh-RAY</i>]	<i>behind, after; following; after that, afterwards; hinder parts</i>	preposition; plural form	Strong’s #310 BDB #29
kên (כֵּן) [pronounced <i>kane</i>]	<i>so, therefore, thus; then, afterwards; upright, honest; rightly, well; [it is] so, such, so constituted</i>	properly, an active participle; used primarily as an adverb	Strong's #3651 BDB #485

Numbers 8:15a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB & Strong #'s
These two words together literally mean <i>after so</i> ; however, they appear to mean <i>afterward, afterwards, after these things, after this, [and] after that</i> . See Genesis 15:14 23:19 25:26 Leviticus 14:36 Deuteronomy 21:13 1Samuel10:5.			
bôw' (בּוֹ) [pronounced boh]	<i>to come in, to come, to go in, to go, to enter, to advance; to attain</i>	3 rd person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #935 BDB #97
L ^e vîyyim (לְוִיִּים) [pronounced ^l -vee-YIM]	<i>joined to, attached; garland, crown, and is transliterated Levites</i>	plural gentilic adjective with the definite article	Strong's #3881 BDB #532
lâmed (ל) [pronounced ^l]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
'âbad (עָבַד) [pronounced ^{gaw} -VAHD]	<i>to work, to serve, to labor; to be a slave to</i>	Qal infinitive construct	Strong's #5647 BDB #712
'êth (אֶת) [pronounced ayth]	generally untranslated; possibly be translated <i>to, toward (s)</i>	mark of a direct object; indicates next word is the object of the verb	Strong's #853 BDB #84
'ohel (אֹהֶל) [pronounced OH-hel]	<i>tent, tabernacle, house, temporary dwelling</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #168 BDB #13
môw'êd (מוֹעֵד) [pronounced moh-GADE]	<i>a specific (set, pre-determined, appointed) time; a point in time; a sacred season, a set feast; an appointed meeting; an appointed place [where people meet]; a specific sign or signal; an assembly, a convocation</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #4150 BDB #417

Translation: [And after that, therefore, the Levites will come in to serve the Tent of Meeting...](#)

What happened previous to this is, the Levites were ceremonially cleansed at the Tent of Meeting by Aaron and his sons (vv. 6–14). Moses was given the directions in v. 5, but he would have overseen all that was done. He would not have personally gathered together any animals or slaughtered them.

This is not saying, “Hey, now let’s all go into the Tabernacle and mill around.” This simply meant that, from the point forward, the Levites were available for service to the Tabernacle. They had been cleansed for this service.

Numbers 8:15b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB & Strong #'s
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as; of</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
tâhêr (טָהַר) [pronounced taw-HAIR]	<i>to cleanse [clean] [physically, ceremonially, morally]; to purify; to pronounce [declare] clean; to perform a ritual ceremony of cleansing</i>	2 nd person masculine singular, Piel perfect	Strong's #2891 BDB #372

Numbers 8:15b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB & Strong #'s
'êth (אֵת) [pronounced ayth]	<i>them</i> ; untranslated mark of a direct object; occasionally <i>to them, toward them</i>	sign of the direct object affixed to a 3 rd person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #853 BDB #84

Translation: ...and you have cleansed them.

This cleansing is what took place in vv. 6–14.

Numbers 8:15a-b **And after that, therefore, the Levites will come in to serve the Tent of Meeting and you have cleansed them.** (Kukis mostly literal translation)

As before, the tenses given these verbs are reasonable, given the context. Not recalling my English, it sounds as though I have used a perfective future here (or something like that) to refer to a completed action in future time. When they go in to serve the tent of meeting (an event future from Yahweh speaking to Moses), this will follow Moses having presented them to God, an action future from the time of speaking, but past with regards to their dedicated service.

Having ceremonially cleansed the Levites, they are now fit for service.

Numbers 8:15c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB & Strong #'s
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as; of</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
nûwph (נִוַּף) [pronounced noof]	<i>to wave, to shake [e.g., the hand to beckon someone]; to present (to, before); to scatter, to shake forth [rain]</i>	2 nd person masculine singular, Hiphil perfect	Strong's #5130 BDB #631
'êth (אֵת) [pronounced ayth]	<i>them</i> ; untranslated mark of a direct object; occasionally <i>to them, toward them</i>	sign of the direct object affixed to a 3 rd person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #853 BDB #84
t ^e nûwphâh (תְּנוּפְחָהּ) [pronounced t'noo-PHAWH]	<i>presentation offering, wave-offering; offering [gold or brass]; swinging, waving, brandishing [of God's hand, weapons]</i>	feminine singular noun	Strong's #8573 BDB #632

Translation: And you have presented them [as] a presentation offering,...

The Levites themselves are presented to God as a presentation offering.

Numbers 8:16a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB & Strong #'s
kîy (כי) [pronounced <i>kee</i>]	<i>for, that, because; when, at that time, which, what time</i>	explanatory or temporal conjunction; preposition	Strong's #3588 BDB #471
nâthan (נָתַן) [pronounced <i>naw-THAHN</i>]	<i>the givers, the ones being given to; those granting [placing, putting, setting]; those receiving (being placed, put or set) those being made</i>	masculine plural, Qal passive participle	Strong's #5414 BDB #678
nâthan (נָתַן) [pronounced <i>naw-THAHN</i>]	<i>the givers, the ones being given to; those granting [placing, putting, setting]; those receiving (being placed, put or set) those being made</i>	masculine plural, Qal passive participle	Strong's #5414 BDB #678
hêmmâh (הֵמָּה) [pronounced <i>haym-mawh</i>]	<i>they, those; them, themselves; these [with the definite article]</i>	3 rd person masculine plural personal pronoun	Strong's #1992 BDB #241
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>l'</i>]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition with the 1 st person singular suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510
min (מִן) [pronounced <i>mihn</i>]	<i>from, off, out from, out of, away from, on account of, since, than, more than; some of</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
tâvek ^e (בְּתוֹכָם) [pronounced <i>taw-VEK^E</i>]	<i>midst, among, middle</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #8432 BDB #1063
<i>With the min preposition, this can mean from the midst [of anything]; out from, out of, from, away from.</i>			
bânîym (בְּנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל) [pronounced <i>baw-NEEM</i>]	<i>sons, descendants; children; people; sometimes rendered men; young men, youths</i>	masculine plural construct	Strong's #1121 BDB #119
Yis ^e râ'êl (יִשְׂרָאֵל) [pronounced <i>yis-raw-ALE</i>]	<i>God prevails; contender; soldier of God; transliterated Israel</i>	masculine proper noun; God-given name to Jacob; and national name for the Jewish people	Strong's #3478 & #3479 BDB #975

Translation: ...for they [are] certainly the ones being given to Me out from the sons of Israel...

The Levites are taken by God as His from among the sons of Israel. They belong to Him and they will do the spiritual tasks which God requires of them.

Numbers 8:16b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB & Strong #'s
tachath (תַּחַת) [pronounced TAH-khahth]	<i>underneath, below, under, beneath; instead of, in lieu of; in the place [in which one stands]; in exchange for; on the basis of</i>	preposition of location or foundation	Strong's #8478 BDB #1065
piṭṭerâh (פִּיטְרָה) [pronounced piht-RAW]; also spelled peṭer (פֶּטֶר) [pronounced PEH-tehr]	<i>that which separates, that which first opens, firstborn, firstling; opens; fissure</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #6363 BDB #809
kôl (לֵךְ) [pronounced kohl]	<i>every, each, all of, all; any of, any; some have translated, all manner of</i>	masculine singular construct not followed by a definite article	Strong's #3605 BDB #481
rechem (רֶחֶם) [pronounced REH-khem]	<i>womb; inner parts; poetically used to mean a girl, a woman</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #7358 (and #7356) BDB #933
b ^e kôwr (רִוְכָב) [pronounced b ^e KOHR]	<i>firstborn; metaphorically used for anything which is chief or first of its kind</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #1060 BDB #114
kôl (לֵךְ) [pronounced kohl]	<i>with a plural noun, it is rendered all of, all; any of</i>	masculine singular construct with a masculine plural noun	Strong's #3605 BDB #481
bânîym (בְּנֵי) [pronounced baw-NEEM]	<i>sons, descendants; children; people; sometimes rendered men; young men, youths</i>	masculine plural construct	Strong's #1121 BDB #119
Yis ^e râ'el (יִשְׂרָאֵל) [pronounced yis-raw-ALE]	<i>God prevails; contender; soldier of God; transliterated Israel</i>	masculine proper noun; God-given name to Jacob; and national name for the Jewish people	Strong's #3478 & #3479 BDB #975

Translation: ...instead of the one who opens the womb, [that is,] the firstborn of all the sons of Israel.

The Levites are taken by God instead of the firstborn (also called those who open up the womb for the first time).

Numbers 8:15c–16b *And you have presented them [as] a presentation offering, for they [are] certainly the ones being given to Me out from the sons of Israel instead of the one who opens the womb, [that is,] the firstborn of all the sons of Israel.* (Kukis mostly literal translation)

The firstborn of Israel belong to God. He paid for them. He bought them from the slave market of sin, so to speak. Exactly what this means will be explained in the verses which follow.

God had purchased the first-born of Israel with the first-born of Egypt; "Set apart to Me every first-born, the first offspring of every womb from among the sons of Israel, both of man and beast; it belongs to Me." (Exodus 13:2). Here, He has exchanged or substituted the Levites for the first-born. This fits in with the great themes of the Old Testament: atonement (or, covering) of sin, sacrifice, redemption, slavery, cleansing, substitution, the first-born. Every major theme in the Old Testament is a shadow of the good things to come.

Numbers 8:16c			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB & Strong #'s
lâqach (לָקַח) [pronounced law- KAHKH]	<i>to take, to take away, to take in marriage; to receive; to select, to choose; to seize</i>	1 st person singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #3947 BDB #542
'êth (אֵת) [pronounced ayth]	<i>them; untranslated mark of a direct object; occasionally to them, toward them</i>	sign of the direct object affixed to a 3 rd person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #853 BDB #84
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l ^e]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition with the 1 st person singular suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510

Translation: [I said] I will take them [the firstborn of Israel] to Me,...

God made originally a claim on all of the firstborn.

Numbers 8:17a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB & Strong #'s
kîy (כִּי) [pronounced kee]	<i>for, that, because; when, at that time, which, what time</i>	explanatory or temporal conjunction; preposition	Strong's #3588 BDB #471
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l ^e]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition with the 1 st person singular suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510
kôl (כֹּל) [pronounced kohl]	<i>every, each, all of, all; any of, any; some have translated, all manner of</i>	masculine singular construct not followed by a definite article	Strong's #3605 BDB #481
b ^e kôwr (רִאשֹׁנִים) [pronounced b ^e KOHR]	<i>firstborn; metaphorically used for anything which is chief or first of its kind</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #1060 BDB #114
b ^e (ב) [pronounced b ^{eh}]	<i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
bânîym (בָּנִים) [pronounced baw- NEEM]	<i>sons, descendants; children; people; sometimes rendered men; young men, youths</i>	masculine plural construct	Strong's #1121 BDB #119
Yis ^e râ'êl (יִשְׂרָאֵל) [pronounced yis-raw- ALE]	<i>God prevails; contender; soldier of God; transliterated Israel</i>	masculine proper noun; God-given name to Jacob; and national name for the Jewish people	Strong's #3478 & #3479 BDB #975

Numbers 8:17a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB & Strong #'s
b ^e (ב) [pronounced b ^{eh}]	<i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
'âdâm (אָדָם) [pronounced aw-DAWM]	<i>a man, a human being, mankind; transliterated Adam</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #120 & #121 BDB #9
The word <i>the Adam</i> can mean <i>man, mankind, humankind, men, human beings</i> .			
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו, or ו) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as; of</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
b ^e (ב) [pronounced b ^{eh}]	<i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
The b ^e preposition + the wâw conjunction + the b ^e preposition are translated (in Numbers 8:17), <i>both...and..., among...and among..., whether...or..., ...and..., from...to...</i> Literally, this reads, <i>...in...and in..., ...with...and with...</i>			
b ^e hêmâh (הַמְּחָה) [pronounced b ^e hay-MAW]	<i>beasts [a collective of all animals]; mammal (s), beast, animal, cattle, livestock [domesticated animals]; wild beasts</i>	feminine singular noun often used in the collective sense; with the definite article	Strong's #929 BDB #96

Translation: ...for every firstborn of the sons of Israel, both man and beast, [belongs] to Me...

God tells Moses, "Every firstborn male, of man and beast, belongs to Me."

God will remind Moses (and all Israel) why this is the case:

Numbers 8:17b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB & Strong #'s
b ^e (ב) [pronounced b ^{eh}]	<i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
yôwm (יוֹם) [pronounced yohm]	<i>day; time; today (with a definite article)</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #3117 BDB #398
Together, these are literally translated <i>in a day of</i> ; it is various translated: <i>in the day, on the day [that], in the day [when], the day, since the day; when</i> . Translations are taken from Leviticus 7:35.			
nâkâh (נָכַח) [pronounced naw-KAWH]	<i>to smite, to assault, to hit, to strike, to strike [something or someone] down, to defeat, to conquer, to subjugate</i>	Hiphil infinitive construct with the 1 st person singular suffix	Strong #5221 BDB #645

Numbers 8:17b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB & Strong #'s
kôl (לָךְ) [pronounced kohl]	<i>every, each, all of, all; any of, any; some have translated, all manner of</i>	masculine singular construct not followed by a definite article	Strong's #3605 BDB #481
b ^e kôwr (בְּכֹרֶת) [pronounced b ^e KOHR]	<i>firstborn; metaphorically used for anything which is chief or first of its kind</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #1060 BDB #114
b ^e (ב) [pronounced b ^e h]	<i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
'erets (אֶרֶץ) [pronounced EH-rets]	<i>earth (all or a portion thereof), land, territory, country, continent; ground, soil; under the ground [Sheol]</i>	feminine singular construct	Strong's #776 BDB #75
Mits ^e rayim (מִצְרַיִם) [pronounced mits-RAH-yim]	<i>double straights; transliterated Mizraim; also Egypt, Egyptians</i>	masculine singular, proper noun	Strong's #4714 BDB #595

Translation: ...in the day of My striking down every firstborn in the land of Egypt.

In order for God to free all Israel from being in bondage to Egypt, He had to strike down all of firstborn in Egypt. This was any house which was not covered by the blood. If a house did what God required, they were passed over. If a house did not do as God required, the firstborn of that house—man and animals—died.

The tenth and final plague was given in Exodus 11. So Moses said, "Thus says the LORD: 'About midnight I will go out in the midst of Egypt, and every firstborn in the land of Egypt shall die, from the firstborn of Pharaoh who sits on his throne, even to the firstborn of the slave girl who is behind the handmill, and all the firstborn of the cattle. There shall be a great cry throughout all the land of Egypt, such as there has never been, nor ever will be again. (Exodus 11:4–6; ESV)

Prior to that night, the Israelites were to do this. Then Moses called all the elders of Israel and said to them, "Go and select lambs for yourselves according to your clans, and kill the Passover lamb. Take a bunch of hyssop and dip it in the blood that is in the basin, and touch the lintel and the two doorposts with the blood that is in the basin. None of you shall go out of the door of his house until the morning. For the LORD will pass through to strike the Egyptians, and when he sees the blood on the lintel and on the two doorposts, the LORD will pass over the door and will not allow the destroyer to enter your houses to strike you. You shall observe this rite as a statute for you and for your sons forever. And when you come to the land that the LORD will give you, as He has promised, you shall keep this service. (Exodus 12:21–25; ESV; capitalized)

God also told the Israelites that they were to commit to this service every year at this time, and He told them what to tell their children when they are asked about it. Exodus 12:1–9, 26–28, 43–49. So, this was something that the Israelites were to do for the very first Passover (while they were still in Egypt) and what they were to do every single year after this time to commemorate the Passover.

On the first Passover, God went throughout the land of Egypt and He struck down the firstborn of every family (Exodus 12:29–30).

Because of all this, God made a claim on the firstborn of all Israel (because he passed over every house where the firstborn of Israel was, provided that they had blood around the sides and top of their door. That the firstborn of all Israel belong to God is recorded in Exodus 13:2, 12–15 Numbers 3:13.

What God is doing here is setting aside a particular tribe as His. The Levites will belong to Him instead of the firstborn of all tribes.

Numbers 8:17c			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB & Strong #'s
qâdash (קָדַשׁ) [pronounced kaw- DAHSH]	<i>to regard [treat] as holy, to declare holy or sacred; to consecrate [to God]; to dedicate [to God]</i>	1 st person singular, Hiphil perfect	Strong's #6942 BDB #872
’êth (אֶת) [pronounced ayth]	<i>them; untranslated mark of a direct object; occasionally to them, toward them</i>	sign of the direct object affixed to a 3 rd person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #853 BDB #84
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l’]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition with the 1 st person singular suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510

Translation: I regard them as set apart to Me.

Sanctified, recall, is the verb qâdash (קָדַשׁ) [pronounced kaw-DAHSH] and it means *consecrate, sanctify, dedicate, hallow*. Strong's #6942 BDB #872. There are a whole set of words which we have examined which mean *holy, sacred, apart from, set apart to*, etc. The entire concept is that God purchased these in Israel through the death of the first-born, through the sacrifice of the first-born when God judged and struck down the first-born. Similarly, he would purchase all of us through the judgment and striking down of His first-born and we would be thereby set apart to Him. **You were bought with a price; do not become the slaves of men** (1Corinthians 7:23).

God tells Moses, “I regard the firstborn of all Israel as set apart to Me.”

Numbers 8:16c–17 [I said] I will take them [the firstborn of Israel] to Me, for every firstborn of the sons of Israel, both man and beast, [belongs] to Me in the day of My striking down every firstborn in the land of Egypt. I regard them as set apart to Me. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Numbers 8:18			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB & Strong #'s
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
lâqach (לָקַח) [pronounced law- KAHKH]	<i>to take, to take away, to take in marriage; to receive; to select, to choose; to seize</i>	1 st person singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #3947 BDB #542
’êth (אֶת) [pronounced ayth]	generally untranslated; possibly be translated <i>to, toward (s)</i>	mark of a direct object; indicates next word is the object of the verb	Strong's #853 BDB #84

Numbers 8:18			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB & Strong #'s
L ^e vîyyim (לְוִיִּים) [pronounced l ^e -vee-YIM]	<i>joined to, attached; garland, crown; and is transliterated Levites</i>	plural gentilic adjective with the definite article	Strong's #3881 BDB #532
tachath (תַּחַת) [pronounced TAH-khahth]	<i>underneath, below, under, beneath; instead of, in lieu of; in the place [in which one stands]; in exchange for; on the basis of</i>	preposition of location or foundation	Strong's #8478 BDB #1065
kôl (כֹּל) [pronounced kohl]	<i>every, each, all of, all; any of, any; some have translated, all manner of</i>	masculine singular construct not followed by a definite article	Strong's #3605 BDB #481
b ^e kôwr (בְּכוֹר) [pronounced b ^e KOHR]	<i>firstborn; metaphorically used for anything which is chief or first of its kind</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #1060 BDB #114
b ^e (ב) [pronounced b ^{eh}]	<i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
bânîym (בְּנֵי) [pronounced baw-NEEM]	<i>sons, descendants; children; people; sometimes rendered men; young men, youths</i>	masculine plural construct	Strong's #1121 BDB #119
Yis ^e râ'êl (יִסְרָאֵל) [pronounced yis-raw-ALE]	<i>God prevails; contender; soldier of God; transliterated Israel</i>	masculine proper noun; God-given name to Jacob; and national name for the Jewish people	Strong's #3478 & #3479 BDB #975

Translation: And so I will take the Levites [to Me] instead of every firstborn in the sons of Israel. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

However, God will take the Levites instead as belonging to Him. They will be substituted for the firstborn.

Numbers 8:18 And so I will take the Levites [to Me] instead of every firstborn in the sons of Israel. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Again, we have the great theme of substitution. Just as God's Son will be our substitute for judgement, so the Levites were substituted for the first-born.

Numbers 8:15–18 And after that, therefore, the Levites will come in to serve the Tent of Meeting and you have cleansed them. And you have presented them [as] a presentation offering, for they [are] certainly the ones being given to Me out from the sons of Israel instead of the one who opens the womb, [that is,] the firstborn of all the sons of Israel. [I said] I will take them [the firstborn of Israel] to Me, for every firstborn of the sons of Israel, both man and beast, [belongs] to Me in the day of My striking down every firstborn in the land of Egypt. I regard them as set apart to Me. And so I will take the Levites [to Me] instead of every firstborn in the sons of Israel. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

The firstborn from every tribe of Israel belongs to God, because of what He did during the exodus. However, God will have Moses oversee the cleansing of the tribe of Levites and they will be taken instead of the firstborn. They will be substituted for the firstborn.

Numbers 8:15–18 After these cleansing ceremonies, the Levites will be available to serve Me in the Tabernacle. You have presented them to Me as a presentation offering and they are given to Me instead of the firstborn of all Israel. Recall that I told you that I would take the firstborn of Israel to me—meaning the firstborn of man and of beast. They belong to Me because I struck down the firstborn in Egypt of anyone who was not under the blood of the Passover. From that day, I regarded the firstborn of Israel as belonging to Me. However, from this point forward, the Levites will belong to Me instead of the firstborn from the sons of Israel. (Kukis paraphrase)

And so I give the Levites—those being given to Aaron and to his sons—from a midst of sons of Israel, to work a work of sons of Israel in a Tent of Appointment and to cover over sons of Israel. And he is not in sons of Israel a blow in a coming near unto the holy place.”

Numbers
8:19

And so I give the Levites—the ones being given to Aaron and his sons—out from the sons of Israel, to labor in the work of the sons of Israel in the Tent of Meeting and [also] to atone for the sons of Israel, that [there] be no plague among the sons of Israel by coming near to the holy place.”

I give the Levites to Aaron and his sons in place of the firstborn of Israel. They will be the ones taken out from the sons of Israel. They will do a variety of chores around the Tabernacle and they will stand in for the firstborn; however, God will not bring a plague upon them for being near the holy place.”

Here is how others have translated this passage:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And so I give the Levites—those being given to Aaron and to his sons—from a midst of sons of Israel, to work a work of sons of Israel in a Tent of Appointment and to cover over sons of Israel. And he is not in sons of Israel a blow in a coming near unto the holy place.”
Dead Sea Scrolls	.
Jerusalem targum	.
Targum (Onkelos)	.
Targum (Pseudo-Jonathan)	.
Aramaic Targum	.
The Psalms Targum	.
Updated Douay-Rheims	.
Douay-Rheims 1899 (Amer.)	And have delivered them for a gift to Aaron and his sons out of the midst of the people, to serve me for Israel in the tabernacle of the covenant, and to pray for them, lest there should be a plague among the people, if they should presume to approach unto my sanctuary.
Aramaic ESV of Peshitta	I have given the Levites as a gift to Aaron and to his sons from among the B'nai Yisrael, to do the service of the B'nai Yisrael in the Tabernacle, and to make atonement for the B'nai Yisrael; that there be no plague among the B'nai Yisrael, when the B'nai Yisrael come near to the sanctuary."
Original Aramaic Psalms	.
V. Alexander's Aramaic T.	.
Plain English Aramaic Bible	.
Lamsa's Peshitta (Syriac)	.
Samaritan Pentateuch	And I have given the Levites [as] a gift to Aaron and to his sons from among the children of Israel, to do the service of the children of Israel in the tabernacle of the congregation, and to make an atonement for the children of Israel: that there be no plague among the children of Israel, when the children of Israel come nigh unto the sanctuary.

Updated Brenton (Greek) And I gave the Levites presented as a gift to Aaron and his sons out of the midst of the children of Israel, to do the service of the children of Israel in the tabernacle of witness, and to make atonement for the children of Israel; thus there shall be none among the sons of Israel to draw near to the holy things.

Significant differences:

Limited Vocabulary Translations:

Bible in Basic English And I have given them to Aaron and to his sons, from among the children of Israel, to undertake for them all the work of the Tent of meeting, and to take away sin from the children of Israel so that no evil may come on them when they come near the holy place.

Easy English .

Easy-to-Read Version–2008 I chose the Levites from among all the Israelites. And I give them as gifts to Aaron and his sons. I want them to do the work at the Meeting Tent. They will serve for all the Israelites. They will help make the sacrifices that make the Israelites pure. Then no great sickness or trouble will come to the Israelites when they come near the holy place."

God's Word™

The Levites will be the only Israelites I give to Aaron and his sons. They will work for the Israelites at the tent of meeting. They will make peace with the LORD for the Israelites. Then no plague will strike the Israelites when they come near the holy place."

Good News Bible (TEV)

I am now taking the Levites instead of all the first-born of the Israelites, and I assign the Levites to Aaron and his sons, as a gift from the Israelites, to work in the Tent for the people of Israel and to protect the Israelites from the disaster that would strike them if they came too near the Holy Place." V. 18 is included for context.

The Message .

Names of God Bible .

NIRV .

New Simplified Bible .

Thought-for-thought translations; dynamic translations; paraphrases:

Casual English Bible .

Contemporary English V.

But now I have chosen these Levites as substitutes for the first-born sons, and I have given them as gifts to Aaron and his sons to serve at the sacred tent. I will hold them responsible for what happens to anyone who gets too close to the sacred tent. V. 18 is included for context.

The Living Bible .

New Berkeley Version .

New Life Version .

New Living Translation .

The Passion Translation .

Unfolding Bible Simplified

I have appointed the descendants of Levi to help Aaron and his sons at the sacred tent, as Aaron and his sons offer the sacrifices to take away the guilt of the Israelite people's sins, and to prevent the Israelites from coming close to the tent with the result that a plague would cause many of them to become sick and die."

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible .

Beck's American Translation .

Common English Bible .

New Advent (Knox) Bible .
 Translation for Translators .

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Berean Study Bible .
 Christian Standard Bible .
 Conservapedia Translation .
 Revised Ferrar-Fenton Bible .
 God's Truth (Tyndale) .
 The Heritage Bible .
 And I have given the Levites, a gift to Aaron, and to his sons from the midst of the children of Israel, to work the work of the children of Israel in the tent of appointed meeting, and to make a covering for the children of Israel, that there will not be a plague among the children of Israel, when the children of Israel come near to the sanctuary.

International Standard V .
 H. C. Leupold .
 Lexham English Bible .
 NIV, ©2011 .
 Unfolding Bible Literal Text .
 Urim-Thummim Version .
 And I have given the Levites as a gift to Aaron and to his sons from among the children of Israel, to do the service of the children of Israel in the Tabernacle at the Appointed Place. And to make a Propitiatory-Covering for the children of Israel so that there is no plague among the children of Israel, when the children of Israel approach the Holy Place.

Wikipedia Bible Project .

Catholic Bibles (those having the imprimatur):

Christian Community (1988) .
 But now I give them to Aaron and his sons from among the sons of Israel and they will minister in the Tent of Meeting on behalf of the sons of Israel, and perform the rite of atonement over them, so that none of the sons of Israel may be struck down for approaching the sanctuary.”

New American Bible (2011) .
 The Catholic Bible .
 New Jerusalem Bible .
 NRSV (Anglicized Cath. Ed.) .
 Revised English Bible–1989 .

Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible .
 Eth Cephher Bible .
 And I have given the Leviyim as a gift to Aharon and to his sons from among the children of Yashar'el, to do the service of the children of Yashar'el in the Tabernacle of the assembly, and to make an atonement for the children of Yashar'el: that there be no plague among the children of Yashar'el, when the children of Yashar'el come nigh unto the sanctuary.

exeGesés companion Bible .
 Hebraic Roots Bible .
 Kaplan Translation .
 I have now taken the Levites in place of all the first-born Israelites and I have given the Levites as a gift from the Israelites to Aaron and his descendants. They shall [henceforth] perform the service for the Israelites in the Communion Tent and atone for the Israelites. The Israelites will then not be subject to divine wrath when they approach the sanctuary. V. 18 is included for context.

The Scriptures—2009	“And I have given the Lēwites as a gift to Aharon and his sons from among the children of Yisra’ēl, to do the service of the children of Yisra’ēl in the Tent of Appointment, and to make atonement for the children of Yisra’ēl, that there be no plague among the children of Yisra’ēl when the children of Yisra’ēl come near the set-apart place.”
Tree of Life Version	So I am taking the Levites in place of the firstborn of Bnei-Yisrael, and I am giving the Levites as a gift to Aaron and his sons from among Bnei-Yisrael, to do the work on behalf of Bnei-Yisrael in the Tent of Meeting, and to make atonement for them—so that there would be no plague among them for coming too close to the Sanctuary.” V. 18 is included for context.

Weird English, Old English, Anachronistic English Translations:

Alpha & Omega Bible	. HOLY THINGS
Awful Scroll Bible	I was to grant the Levites as being given to Aaron and his sons, from among of the sons of Contends-with-he-mighty to work the service of the sons of Contends-with-he-mighty in the tent of the appointed place, and to cover over for the sons of Contends-with-he-mighty - is there to be a strike on the sons of Contends-with-he-mighty as the sons of Contends-with-he-mighty are to draw near to that set apart?
Concordant Literal Version	So I shall take the Levites instead of every firstborn among the sons of Israel, and give the Levites from the midst of the sons of Israel as a gift to Aaron and to his sons to serve in the service on behalf of the sons of Israel in the tent of appointment and to make a separating shelter for the sons of Israel so that no stroke may come among the sons of Israel when the sons of Israel come close to the holy place. V. 18 is included for context.
exeGesés companion Bible	...and I give the Leviym - give to Aharon and to his sons from among the sons of Yisra El, to serve the service of the sons of Yisra El in the tent of the congregation; and to kapar/atone for the sons of Yisra El: that there be no plague among the sons of Yisra El when the sons of Yisra El approach the holies.
Orthodox Jewish Bible	And I have given the Levi'im as a gift to Aharon and to his Banim from among the Bnei Yisroel, to do the Avodat Bnei Yisroel in the Ohel Mo'ed, and to make kapporah for the Bnei Yisroel; so that there be no plague among the Bnei Yisroel, when the Bnei Yisroel come near unto HaKodesh.
Rotherham's <i>Emphasized B.</i>	Therefore have I taken the Levites,—instead of every firstborn among the sons of Israel; therefore have I given the Levites, as a gift unto Aaron and unto his sons, out of the midst of the sons of Israel, to do the laborious work of the sons of Israel, in the tent of meeting, and to put a propitiatory-covering over the sons of Israel,—so shall there be, among the sons of Israel, no plague, by the coming nigh of the sons of Israel unto the sanctuary. V. 18 is included for context.

Expanded/Embellished Bibles:

<i>The Amplified Bible</i>	.
The Expanded Bible	.
International Standard V	.
Kretzmann's Commentary	.
Lexham English Bible	.
Syndein/Thieme	.
The Voice	.

Bible Translations with Many Footnotes:

The Complete Tanach	.
The Geneva Bible	.
Kaplan Translation	.
NET Bible®	.
New American Bible (2011)	.
New Catholic Bible	.
Rotherham's <i>Emphasized B.</i>	.
Updated ASV	.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

A Faithful Version	.
C. Thomson Updated OT	.
Charles Thomson OT	.
Context Group Version	And I have given the Levites as a gift to Aaron and to his sons from among the sons of Israel, to do the service of the sons of Israel in the tent of meeting, and to make atonement for the sons of Israel; that there will be no plague among the sons of Israel, when the sons of Israel come near to the special place.
English Standard Version	.
Green's Literal Translation	.
Legacy Standard Bible	.
Literal Standard Version	.
Modern English Version	.
Modern Literal Version 2020	And I have given the Levites as a gift to Aaron and to his sons from among the sons of Israel, to do the service of the sons of Israel in the tent of meeting and to make atonement for the sons of Israel, that no plague is among the sons of Israel, when the sons of Israel come near to the sanctuary.
New American Standard B.	.
New European Version	.
New King James Version	.
Niobi Study Bible	.
Owen's Translation	.
Revised Mechanical Trans.	...and I gave the ones of Lewi, given to Aharon and to his sons from the midst of the sons of Yisra'eyl, to serve the service of the sons of Yisra'eyl in the appointed tent, and to make a covering upon the sons of Yisra'eyl, and a striking[872] will not exist in the sons of Yisra'eyl with the sons of Yisra'eyl drawing near to the special place,...
Updated ASV	And I have given the Levites as a gift to Aaron and to his sons from among the sons of Israel, to do the service of the sons of Israel in the tent of meeting, and to make atonement for the sons of Israel; that there be no plague among the sons of Israel, when the sons of Israel come near to the sanctuary."
Updated Bible Version 2.17	.
A Voice in the Wilderness	.
Webster's Bible Translation	.
World English Bible	.
Young's Literal Translation	.
Young's Updated LT	.

The gist of this passage:

Numbers 8:19a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB & Strong #'s
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
nâthan (נָתַן) [pronounced naw-THAHN]	<i>to give, to grant, to place, to put, to set; to make</i>	1 st person singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #5414 BDB #678
Bible Hub shows a 3 rd person feminine singular suffix. However, Owens shows no such suffix. Also, elsewhere, Bible Hub indicates that there is no suffix. Furthermore, adding in a feminine singular suffix makes it very hard to translate this into English, as there appears to be two direct objects.			
'êth (אֵת) [pronounced ayth]	generally untranslated; possibly be translated <i>to, toward (s)</i>	mark of a direct object; indicates next word is the object of the verb	Strong's #853 BDB #84
L ^e vîyyim (לְוִיִּים) [pronounced ^l -vee-YIM]	<i>joined to, attached; garland, crown; and is transliterated Levites</i>	plural gentilic adjective with the definite article	Strong's #3881 BDB #532
nâthan (נָתַן) [pronounced naw-THAHN]	<i>the givers, the ones being given to; those granting [placing, putting, setting]; those receiving (being placed, put or set) those being made</i>	masculine plural, Qal passive participle	Strong's #5414 BDB #678
lâmed (ל) [pronounced ^l]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
'Ahârôn (אֲהָרֹן) [pronounced ah-huh-ROHN]	transliterated Aaron	masculine proper noun	Strong's #175 BDB #14
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as; or</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
lâmed (ל) [pronounced ^l]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
bânîym (בָּנִיִּים) [pronounced baw-NEEM]	<i>sons, descendants; children; people; sometimes rendered men; young men, youths</i>	masculine plural noun with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #1121 BDB #119
min (מִן) [pronounced mihn]	<i>from, off, out from, out of, away from, on account of, since, than, more than; some of</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
tâvek ^e (בְּתוֹכָם) [pronounced taw-VEK ^e]	<i>midst, among, middle</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #8432 BDB #1063
With the min preposition, this can mean <i>from the midst [of anything]; out from, out of, from, away from.</i>			
bânîym (בָּנִיִּים) [pronounced baw-NEEM]	<i>sons, descendants; children; people; sometimes rendered men; young men, youths</i>	masculine plural construct	Strong's #1121 BDB #119

Numbers 8:19a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB & Strong #'s
Yis ^e râ'êl (יִשְׂרָאֵל) [pronounced <i>yis-raw-ALE</i>]	<i>God prevails; contender; soldier of God; transliterated Israel</i>	masculine proper noun; God-given name to Jacob; and national name for the Jewish people	Strong's #3478 & #3479 BDB #975

Translation: And so I give the Levites—the ones being given to Aaron and his sons—out from the sons of Israel,...

God is speaking and He is giving the Levites to Aaron and his sons, essentially as their assistants. The Levites are taken out of the sons of Israel.

Numbers 8:19b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB & Strong #'s
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>l'</i>]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
'âbad (עָבַד) [pronounced <i>gaw^b-VAHD</i>]	<i>to work, to serve, to labor; to be a slave to</i>	Qal infinitive construct	Strong's #5647 BDB #712
'êth (אֶת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i>]	generally untranslated; possibly be translated <i>to, toward (s)</i>	mark of a direct object; indicates next word is the object of the verb	Strong's #853 BDB #84
'ăbôdâh (עֲבֹדָה) [pronounced <i>gaw^b-vo-DAWH</i>]	<i>labour, work, service, function; possibly: bondage; enslavement; service of [to] God</i>	feminine singular construct	Strong's #5656 & #5647 BDB #715
bânîym (בָּנִים) [pronounced <i>baw-NEEM</i>]	<i>sons, descendants; children; people; sometimes rendered men; young men, youths</i>	masculine plural construct	Strong's #1121 BDB #119
Yis ^e râ'êl (יִשְׂרָאֵל) [pronounced <i>yis-raw-ALE</i>]	<i>God prevails; contender; soldier of God; transliterated Israel</i>	masculine proper noun; God-given name to Jacob; and national name for the Jewish people	Strong's #3478 & #3479 BDB #975
b ^e (ב) [pronounced <i>b^{eh}</i>]	<i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
'ohel (אֹהֶל) [pronounced <i>OH-hel</i>]	<i>tent, tabernacle, house, temporary dwelling</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #168 BDB #13

Numbers 8:19b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB & Strong #'s
môw'êd (מוֹעֵד) [pronounced moh- GADE]	<i>a specific (set, pre-determined, appointed) time; a point in time; a sacred season, a set feast; an appointed meeting; an appointed place [where people meet]; a specific sign or signal; an assembly, a convocation</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #4150 BDB #417

Translation: ...to labor in the work of the sons of Israel in the Tent of Meeting...

There are two infinitive constructs given here, to indicate the purpose of the Levites being give to Aaron. There is much work required to keep up the Tent of Meeting, particularly after a worship day. Remember, there may be a hundred animals offered on any given day; or there might be two hundred or more.

If you held a bbq for tens of thousands of people, there would be a lot to clean up. In some ways, that is what is taking place here (the meat of the animals is not simply burned up).

Numbers 8:19c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB & Strong #'s
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as; of</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l ^e]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
kâphar (כַּפַּר) [pronounced kaw-FAHR]	<i>to cover, to cover over [with], to be covered [with]; to spread over; to appease, to placate, to pacify; to pardon, to expiate; to atone, to make an atonement [for]; to obtain forgiveness; to free an offender of a charge</i>	Piel infinitive construct	Strong's #3722 BDB #497
'al (עַל) [pronounced gah]	<i>upon, beyond, on, against, over above, by, beside; because of, on account of</i>	preposition of relative proximity	Strong's #5921 BDB #752

BDB gives the following meanings for this preposition: 1) upon, on the ground of, according to, on account of, on behalf of, concerning, beside, in addition to, together with, beyond, above, over, by, on to, towards, to, against (preposition); 1a) upon, on the ground of, on the basis of, on account of, because of, therefore, on behalf of, for the sake of, for, with, in spite of, notwithstanding, concerning, in the matter of, as regards; 1b) above, beyond, over (of excess); 1c) above, over (of elevation or pre-eminence); 1d) upon, to, over to, unto, in addition to, together with, with (of addition); 1e) over (of suspension or extension); 1f) by, adjoining, next, at, over, around (of contiguity or proximity); 1g) down upon, upon, on, from, up upon, up to, towards, over towards, to, against (with verbs of motion); 1h) to (as a dative); 2) because that, because, notwithstanding, although (conjunction).

Numbers 8:19c			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB & Strong #'s
bânîym (בְּנֵי) [pronounced <i>baw-NEEM</i>]	<i>sons, descendants; children; people; sometimes rendered men; young men, youths</i>	masculine plural construct	Strong's #1121 BDB #119
Yis ^e râ'êl (יִשְׂרָאֵל) [pronounced <i>yis-raw-ALE</i>]	<i>God prevails; contender; soldier of God; transliterated Israel</i>	masculine proper noun; God-given name to Jacob; and national name for the Jewish people	Strong's #3478 & #3479 BDB #975

Translation: ...and [also] to atone for the sons of Israel,...

The Levites are also put in the place of the firstborn from all the sons of Israel, so the sons of Israel are covered over or atoned for, for their sins and transgressions.

Numbers 8:19d			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB & Strong #'s
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as; of</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
lô' (לֹא or אֵין) [pronounced <i>low</i>]	<i>not, no</i>	negates the word or action that follows; the absolute negation	Strong's #3808 BDB #518
hâyâh (הָיָה) [pronounced <i>haw-YAW</i>]	<i>to be, is, was, are; to become, to come into being; to come to pass</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #1961 BDB #224
b ^e (ב) [pronounced <i>b^{eh}</i>]	<i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
bânîym (בְּנֵי) [pronounced <i>baw-NEEM</i>]	<i>sons, descendants; children; people; sometimes rendered men; young men, youths</i>	masculine plural construct	Strong's #1121 BDB #119
Yis ^e râ'êl (יִשְׂרָאֵל) [pronounced <i>yis-raw-ALE</i>]	<i>God prevails; contender; soldier of God; transliterated Israel</i>	masculine proper noun; God-given name to Jacob; and national name for the Jewish people	Strong's #3478 & #3479 BDB #975
negeph (נֶגַף) [pronounced <i>NEH-geht</i>]	<i>a blow, a striking; a plague [fatal]; the infliction of a disease</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #5063 BDB #620
b ^e (ב) [pronounced <i>b^{eh}</i>]	<i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
nâgash (נָגַשׁ) [pronounced <i>naw-GASH</i>]	<i>to come near, to draw near, to approach, to come hither</i>	Qal infinitive construct	Strong's #5066 BDB #620

Numbers 8:19d			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB & Strong #'s
bânîym (בְּנֵי) [pronounced <i>baw-NEEM</i>]	sons, descendants; children; people; sometimes rendered <i>men</i> ; <i>young men</i> , <i>youths</i>	masculine plural construct	Strong's #1121 BDB #119
Yis ^e râ'êl (יִשְׂרָאֵל) [pronounced <i>yis-raw-ALE</i>]	God prevails; contender; soldier of God; transliterated <i>Israel</i>	masculine proper noun; God-given name to Jacob; and national name for the Jewish people	Strong's #3478 & #3479 BDB #975
'el (אֶל) [pronounced <i>ehl</i>]	unto; into, among, in; toward, to; against; concerning, regarding; besides, together with; as to	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39
qôdesh (קֹדֶשׁ) [pronounced <i>koh-DESH</i>]	holiness, sacredness, apartness, that which is holy, a most holy thing; possibly, a sacred [holy, set apart] place, the sanctuary	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #6944 BDB #871

With the definite article, this means, *the holy place, the sacred place, the sanctuary.*

Translation: ...that [there] be no plague among the sons of Israel by coming near to the holy place.” (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Generally speaking, the only people allowed to come near to the Tabernacle are the priests with specific assignments given to them. Other people were not to come near. However, this indicates that the Levites can come near to the Tabernacle without worrying about being struck by a plague.

Numbers 8:19 And so I give the Levites—the ones being given to Aaron and his sons—out from the sons of Israel, to labor in the work of the sons of Israel in the Tent of Meeting and [also] to atone for the sons of Israel, that [there] be no plague among the sons of Israel by coming near to the holy place.” (Kukis mostly literal translation)

This gives us a better idea of what a wave offering is. The Levites are presented before God for His service and God gives them to Aaron for service to Aaron and his sons. Giving is a process of receiving blessings from God and returned some of those blessings to Him and having Him return these blessings to you. Our service to God is similar—God has given His Son for our salvation and we give ourselves to Him in service and He gives to us great spiritual and material blessings. The idea of a *wave* offering is not so much like *waving your hand* but more like the *waves of the ocean*, which move backward and forward.

God has a plan for every believer in every dispensation. No one is unimportant. In the church age, this is even more true, as everyone has been baptized with the Spirit and everyone has received at least one spiritual gift. Now concerning spiritual [gifts], brothers, I do not want you to be ignorant...there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are varieties of effects, but the same God who works all things in all. But to each one is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. For one is given the word of wisdom through the Spirit, and to another the word of knowledge according to the same Spirit; to another, faith by the same Spirit, and to another, gifts of healing by the one Spirit, and to another the effecting of works of power [i.e., miracles]²³ and to another prophecy, and to another the distinguishing of spirits and to another [the ability to speak] various foreign

²³ Recall that this passage is from the first portion of the church age when there were healings, miracles and people spoke in foreign languages that they did not know in order to evangelize the Jews as a fulfillment of Isaiah 28:10–13.

languages, and to another the interpretation of [these] languages. But one and the same Spirit work all these things, distributing to each one individually, just as He wills. For even as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though they are many, are one body, so also is Christ. For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and we were all made to drink of one Spirit. For the body is not one member, but many. If the foot should say, "Because I am not a hand, I am not of the body," it is not for this reason any the less of the body. And if the ear should say, "Because I am not an eye, I am not of the body," it is not for this reason any the less of the body. If the whole body were an eye, where would the hearing be? If the whole were hearing, where would the sense of smell be? But now God has placed the members, each one of them, in the body just as He desired. And if they were all one member, where would the body be? But now, there are many members, but one body. And the eye cannot say to the hand, "I have no need of you"; or again, the head to the feet, "I have no need of you." On the contrary, it is much truer that members of the body which seem to be weaker are necessary (1Corinthians 12:1, 3–21). In fact, if anything, there is a much greater importance placed upon the believer who is inconspicuous. The older widow who prays two hours a day, the wealthy benefactor who quietly gives to a church without strings, the person who might spend three or four hours a day studying. As I have mentioned, there are believers whose shoulders I stand upon that you have never heard of who faithfully did work in the original languages, an absolutely necessary but thankless job that some Christians actually denigrate because it is complicated and does not always support their own viewpoints.

The Levites also act as a protective barrier, a hedge against attack from God. They are to be the salt of the land—those in service to God, those whose presence in Israel will keep Israel safe from God's wrath and His plagues. Believers today in a nation also protect that nation from God's wrath. The United States is a decadent nation, but it has prospered and been blessed due to a small pivot of mature believers. Because I know how some of you think, you mind is thinking, I'll just make the best use of the great blessing given by God and I will allow someone else to be the mature pivot. We are all sons of God, and as such are subject to discipline. So even though we live in a nation of great material wealth and blessing, we who try God's patience will be severely disciplined. **Have you forgotten the exhortation which is addressed to you as sons?** "My son, do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord nor faint when you are reprov'd by Him. for those whom the Lord loves, He disciplines and He scourges every son whom He receiveth." **It is for discipline that you endure; God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom his father does not discipline? But if you are without discipline, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate children and not sons. Furthermore, we had earthly fathers to discipline us, and we respected them; shall we not much rather be subject to the Father of spirits and live? for they disciplined us for a short time as seemed best to them, but He disciplines us for good, that we may share His holiness. All discipline for the moment seems not to be joyful, but sorrowful; yet, to those who have been trained by it, afterwards it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness** (Hebrews 12:5–11 Proverbs 3:11–12).

Numbers 8:19 **I give the Levites to Aaron and his sons in place of the firstborn of Israel. They will be the ones taken out from the sons of Israel. They will do a variety of chores around the Tabernacle and they will stand in for the firstborn; however, God will not bring a plague upon them for being near the holy place.**" (Kukis paraphrase)

And so does Moses and Aaron and all a company of sons of Israel to the Levites as all that commanded Y^ehowah Moses to Levites, so did to them sons of Israel. And so cleansed themselves the Levites and so they washed their garments. And so presented Aaron them a presentation offering to faces of Y^ehowah. And so covers over Aaron to cleanse them. And after, therefore, went in the Levites to work their work in a Tent of Appointment to faces of Aaron and to faces of his sons. As that commanded Y^ehowah Moses upon the Levites, so they did to them.

Numbers
8:20–22

And so Moses and Aaron and all the congregation of the sons of Israel did to the Levites, according to all that Y^ehowah commanded Moses regarding Levites. So the sons of Israel did to them. And so the Levites cleansed themselves and so they washed their garments. And so Aaron presented them [as] a presentation offering before Y^ehowah. And so Aaron atoned for them and cleansed them. And after this, the Levites went in to serve their service in the Tent of Meeting before Aaron and before his sons. Just as Y^ehowah commanded Moses concerning the Levites, so they did to them.

God gave a number of directives to Moses regarding the Levites, and he oversaw the cleansing process which took place, which involved Aaron and his sons, and the rest of Israel watched. What God required, Israel did. The Levites did all that was necessary in order for them to cleanse themselves, including washing their clothing. Aaron presented the Levites as though a presentation offering to Jehovah. Ceremonially, Aaron saw to it that their sins were covered over and that they were cleansed. After all this, the Levites went right to work serving the Tabernacle (there was a lot to do!). Aaron and his sons oversaw their duties. So, just as Jehovah commanded Moses concerning the Levites, so the proper ceremonies and responsibilities took place.

Here is how others have translated this passage:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text (Hebrew)

And so does Moses and Aaron and all a company of sons of Israel to the Levites as all that commanded Y^ehowah Moses to Levites, so did to them sons of Israel. And so cleansed themselves the Levites and so they washed their garments. And so presented Aaron them a presentation offering to faces of Y^ehowah. And so covers over Aaron to cleanse them. And after, therefore, went in the Levites to work their work in a Tent of Appointment to faces of Aaron and to faces of his sons. As that commanded Y^ehowah Moses upon the Levites, so they did to them.

Dead Sea Scrolls

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Jerusalem targum

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Targum (Onkelos)

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Targum (Pseudo-Jonathan)

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Aramaic Targum

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The Psalms Targum

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Updated Douay-Rheims

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Douay-Rheims 1899 (Amer.)

And Moses and Aaron and all the multitude of the children of Israel did with the Levites all that the Lord had commanded Moses
And they were purified, and washed their garments. And Aaron lifted them up in the sight of the Lord, and prayed for them,
That being purified they might go into the tabernacle of the covenant to do their services before Aaron and his sons. As the Lord had commanded Moses touching the Levites, so was it done.

Aramaic ESV of Peshitta

Mosha, and Aaron, and all the congregation of the B'nai Yisrael did so to the Levites. According to all that Mar-Yah commanded Mosha concerning the Levites, so the B'nai Yisrael did to them.

The Levites purified themselves from sin, and they washed their clothes; and Aaron offered them for a wave offering before Mar-Yah; and Aaron made atonement for them to cleanse them.

After that, the Levites went in to do their service in the Tabernacle before Aaron, and before his sons: as Mar-Yah had commanded Moshah concerning the Levites, so they did to them.

Original Aramaic Psalms
V. Alexander's Aramaic T.
Plain English Aramaic Bible
Lamsa's Peshitta (Syriac)
Samaritan Pentateuch

And Moses, and Aaron, and all the congregation of the children of Israel, did to the Levites according unto all that the LORD commanded Moses concerning the Levites, so did the children of Israel unto them.

And the Levites were purified, and they washed their clothes; and Aaron offered them [as] an offering before the LORD; and Aaron made an atonement for them to cleanse them.

And after that went the Levites in to do their service in the tabernacle of the congregation before Aaron, and before his sons: as the LORD had commanded Moses concerning the Levites, so did they unto them.

Updated Brenton (Greek)

And Moses and Aaron, and all the congregation of the children of Israel did to the Levites as the Lord commanded Moses concerning the Levites, so the sons of Israel did to them.

So the Levites purified themselves and washed their garments, and Aaron presented them as a gift before the Lord, and Aaron made atonement for them, to purify them.

And afterwards the Levites went in to minister in their service in the tabernacle of witness before Aaron, and before his sons; as the Lord appointed Moses concerning the Levites, so they did to them.

Significant differences:

Limited Vocabulary Translations:

Bible in Basic English

All these things Moses and Aaron and the children of Israel did to the Levites; as the Lord gave orders to Moses about the Levites, so the children of Israel did.

And the Levites were made clean from sin, and their clothing was washed, and Aaron gave them for a wave offering before the Lord; and Aaron took away their sin and made them clean.

And then the Levites went in to do their work in the Tent of meeting before Aaron and his sons: all the orders which the Lord had given Moses about the Levites were put into effect.

Easy English

Easy-to-Read Version—2008

So Moses, Aaron, and all the Israelites obeyed the LORD. They did with the Levites everything that the Lord commanded Moses. The Levites washed themselves and their clothes. Then Aaron gave them to the LORD as special offerings. Aaron gave the offerings that covered their sins and made them pure. After that the Levites came to the Meeting Tent to do their work. Aaron and his sons watched them. They were responsible for the work of the Levites. Aaron and his sons did what the LORD commanded Moses.

God's Word™

Moses, Aaron, and the whole community of Israel did what the LORD commanded Moses to do to the Levites. The Levites performed the ceremonies to take away their sins and washed their clothes. Aaron presented them as an offering to the LORD and made peace with the LORD for them in order to make them clean. After

	that, the Levites came and did their work at the tent of meeting in the presence of Aaron and his sons. They did as the LORD had commanded Moses.
Good News Bible (TEV)	So Moses, Aaron, and all the people of Israel dedicated the Levites, as the LORD commanded Moses. The Levites purified themselves and washed their clothes, and Aaron dedicated them as a special gift to the LORD. He also performed the ritual of purification for them. The people did everything the LORD had commanded Moses concerning the Levites. And so the Levites were qualified to work in the Tent under Aaron and his sons.
<i>The Message</i>	.
Names of God Bible	.
NIRV	.
New Simplified Bible	.

Thought-for-thought translations; dynamic translations; paraphrases:

Casual English Bible	.
Contemporary English V.	Moses, Aaron, and the other Israelites made sure that the Levites did everything the LORD had commanded. The Levites sprinkled themselves with the water of forgiveness and washed their clothes. Then Aaron brought them to the altar and offered sacrifices to forgive their sins and make them acceptable to the LORD. After this, the Levites worked at the sacred tent as assistants to Aaron and his sons, just as the LORD had commanded.
The Living Bible	.
New Berkeley Version	.
New Life Version	.
New Living Translation	.
The Passion Translation	.
Unfolding Bible Simplified	Aaron and Moses and the other Israelites helped the descendants of Levi to do everything that Yahweh had commanded. The descendants of Levi sprinkled themselves with water to symbolize that they had been freed from the guilt of their sins, and they washed their clothes. Then Aaron brought them to the altar to present them to Yahweh, just as if he had lifted them up to him, and he offered sacrifices to take away the guilt of their sins and cause them to become acceptable to Yahweh. After that, the descendants of Levi started to work at the sacred tent to assist Aaron and his sons. They did that just as Yahweh had commanded Moses.

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	.
Beck's American Translation	.
Common English Bible	.
New Advent (Knox) Bible	.
Translation for Translators	.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Berean Study Bible	.
Christian Standard Bible	.
Conservapedia Translation	.
Revised Ferrar-Fenton Bible	.
God's Truth (Tyndale)	.
The Heritage Bible	.
International Standard V	So Moses and Aaron and the Israelis did this on behalf of the descendants of Levi. The Israelis did everything that the Lord commanded concerning the

descendants of Levi. The descendants of Levi therefore purified themselves, washed their clothes, and then Aaron presented them as wave offerings to the Lord. Aaron provided atonement for them to purify them.

After this, the descendants of Levi entered into their work of service at the appointed place, in the presence of Aaron and his sons. They did everything that the Lord commanded Moses concerning the descendants of Levi.

H. C. Leupold
Lexham English Bible
NIV, ©2011
Unfolding Bible Literal Text
Urim-Thummim Version

Then Moses, Aaron, and all the company of the children of Israel, instituted the Levites according to all that YHWH commanded Moses concerning the Levites, so the children of Israel instituted them for service. And the Levites were purified, and they washed their clothes and Aaron waved them as a Wave- Offering before YHWH, and Aaron made a Propitiatory-Covering for them to cleanse them. And after that the Levites went in to do their service in the Tabernacle at the Appointed Place before Aaron, and before his sons as YHWH had commanded Moses concerning the Levites, so they have done to them.

Wikipedia Bible Project

Catholic Bibles (those having the imprimatur):

Christian Community (1988) Moses, Aaron and the whole community of the sons of Israel dealt with the Levites exactly as Yahweh had ordered Moses; this is what the sons of Israel did with them. The Levites purified themselves and washed their clothes, and Aaron presented them and waved them before Yahweh. Then he performed the rite of atonement over them. The Levites were then allowed to perform their ministry in the Tent of Meeting in the presence of Aaron and his sons. As Yahweh had ordered Moses concerning the Levites, so it was done to them.

New American Bible (2011)
The Catholic Bible
New Jerusalem Bible
NRSV (Anglicized Cath. Ed.)
Revised English Bible—1989

Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible
Eth Cephher Bible

And Mosheh, and Aharon, and all the assembly of the children of Yashar'el, did to the Leviyym according unto all that Yahuah commanded Mosheh concerning the Leviyym, so did the children of Yashar'el unto them. And the Leviyym were purified, and they washed their clothes; and Aharon offered them as an offering before Yahuah; and Aharon made an atonement for them to cleanse them. And after that went the Leviyym in to do their service in the Tabernacle of the assembly before Aharon, and before his sons: as Yahuah had commanded Mosheh concerning the Leviyym, so did they unto them.

exeGeses companion Bible
Hebraic Roots Bible
Kaplan Translation
The Scriptures—2009

Thus Mosheh and Aharon and all the congregation of the children of Yisra'el did to the Lēwites according to all that הוה commanded Mosheh concerning the Lēwites, so the children of Yisra'el did to them. And the Lēwites cleansed themselves and washed their garments, and Aharon waved them, a wave offering before הוה, and Aharon made atonement for them to cleanse them. Then after that the Lēwites

went in to do their service in the Tent of Appointment before Aharon and his sons as הוהי commanded Mosheh concerning the Lēwites, so they did to them. So Moses, Aaron and the entire community of Bnei-Yisrael did so with the Levites. All that Adonai had commanded Moses regarding the Levites, so Bnei-Yisrael did to them. The Levites also purified themselves from sin and washed their clothes. Aaron presented them as a wave offering before Adonai, and, he made atonement for them to purify them. After that, the Levites came to do their tasks before Aaron and his sons in the Tent of Meeting, just as Adonai had commanded Moses concerning the Levites.

Weird English, ©lde English, Anachronistic English Translations:

Alpha & Omega Bible AND MOSES AND AARON, AND ALL THE CONGREGATION OF THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL, DID TO THE LEVITES AS JESUS COMMANDED MOSES CONCERNING THE LEVITES, SO THE SONS OF ISRAEL DID TO THEM. SO THE LEVITES PURIFIED THEMSELVES AND WASHED THEIR GARMENTS; AND AARON PRESENTED THEM AS A GIFT BEFORE JESUS, AND AARON MADE ATONEMENT FOR THEM TO PURIFY THEM. AND AFTERWARDS THE LEVITES WENT IN TO MINISTER IN THEIR SERVICE IN THE TABERNACLE OF WITNESS BEFORE AARON, AND BEFORE HIS SONS; AS JESUS APPOINTED MOSES CONCERNING THE LEVITES, SO THEY DID TO THEM.

Awful Scroll Bible Moses and Aaron, and the assembly of the sons of Contends-with-he-mighty were to effect as to the Levites, as Sustains To Become has laid charge to Moses of the Levites, even have effected the sons of Contends-with-he-mighty Surely, the Levites were to be made purified, and they were to washed their garments, and Aaron was to wave them as a wave offering, turned before Sustains To Become and Aaron was to cover over for them, even are they to be purified. After these, the Levites have gone in, to work the service, in the tent of the appointed place, turned before Aaron and turned before his sons, as Sustains To Become is to have given charge to Moses, of the Levites, are they to have effected.

Concordant Literal Version Moses, Aaron and the whole congregation of the sons of Israel dealt with the Levites according to all that Yahweh had instructed Moses as to the Levites. So the sons of Israel dealt with them. The Levites purified themselves from sin and rinsed their garments, and Aaron waved them as a wave offering before Yahweh; then Aaron made a propitiatory shelter over them to cleanse them. And afterward the Levites came to serve their service in the tent of appointment before Aaron and before his sons. Just as Yahweh had instructed Moses concerning the Levites, so they dealt with them.

exeGeses companion Bible And Mosheh and Aharon
and all the witness of the sons of Yisra El,
work to the Leviym
according to all Yah Veh misvahs Mosheh
concerning the Leviym,
thus worked the sons of Yisra El to them.
And the Leviym - for the sin,
launder their clothes;
and Aharon waves them
- a wave at the face of Yah Veh;
and Aharon kapars/atones for them to purify them.
And afterward
the Leviym go in to serve their service
in the tent of the congregation
at the face of Aharon and at the face of his sons:

Orthodox Jewish Bible	<p>as Yah Veh misvahed Mosheh concerning the Leviym, thus they work to them.</p> <p>And Moshe, and Aharon, and Kol Adat Bnei Yisroel, did with the Levi'im according unto all that Hashem commanded Moshe concerning the Levi'im, so did the Bnei Yisroel unto them.</p> <p>And the Levi'im purified themselves, and they immersed their clothes; and Aharon offered them as a tenufah before Hashem; and Aharon made kapporah for them to make them tahor.</p> <p>And after that went the Levi'im in to do their Avodah in the Ohel Mo'ed before Aharon, and before his Banim; just as Hashem had commanded Moshe concerning the Levi'im, so did they with them.</p>
Rotherham's <i>Emphasized B.</i>	<p>And Moses and Aaron and all the assembly of the sons of Israel did' thus unto the Levites,— <according to all that Yahweh commanded Moses as touching the Levites> so did the sons of Israel unto them. And the Levites accepted the cleansing from sin_ and washed their clothes, and Aaron offered them as a wave-offering before Yahweh,—and Aaron put a propitiatory-covering over them_ to make them pure. And <after that> went the Levites in_ to do their laborious work in the tent of meeting, before Aaron_ and before his sons,—<as Yahweh commanded Moses concerning the Levites> so did they unto them.</p>

Expanded/Embellished Bibles:

<i>The Amplified Bible</i>	.
The Expanded Bible	.
International Standard V	.
Kretzmann's Commentary	.
Lexham English Bible	<p>And Moses and Aaron and the entire community of the Israelites [Literally "sons/children of Israel"] did to the Levites; everything that Yahweh commanded Moses concerning the Levites, the Israelites [Literally "sons/children of Israel"] did to them. And the Levites purified themselves, and they washed their garments, and Aaron offered them [Literally "Aaron waved them"] as a wave offering before Yahweh; [Literally "in the presence of Yahweh"] and Aaron made atonement for them to purify them. After this the Levites came to do their work in the tent of assembly before Aaron and his sons. Just as Yahweh commanded Moses concerning the Levities, so they did to them.</p>
Syndein/Thieme	.
The Voice	.

Bible Translations with Many Footnotes:

The Complete Tanach	.
The Geneva Bible	.
Kaplan Translation	<p>Moses, Aaron, and the entire Israelite community did for the Levites all that God had instructed Moses regarding the Levites. The Israelites did it for them exactly. The Levites purified themselves through a sin offering and they immersed [their bodies and] their clothing. Aaron designated them as a wave offering before God and made atonement for them to purify them.</p> <p>After that, the Levites came to perform the Communion Tent's service under the direction of Aaron and his sons [It was all done] exactly as God had commanded Moses regarding the Levites.</p> <p><i>purified themselves through...</i></p> <p>See Numbers 8:7. Or, 'purified' (Targum; Saadia; Septuagint).</p>
NET Bible®	.
New American Bible (2011)	.

New Catholic Bible	.
Rotherham's <i>Emphasized B.</i>	.
Updated ASV	Thus did Moses, and Aaron, and all the congregation of the sons of Israel, to the Levites: according to all that Jehovah commanded Moses concerning the Levites, so the sons of Israel did to them. And the Levites purified themselves from sin, and they washed their clothes: and Aaron offered[38] them as a wave offering before Jehovah; and Aaron made atonement for them to cleanse them. And after that the Levites went in to do their service in the tent of meeting before Aaron, and before his sons: as Jehovah had commanded Moses concerning the Levites, so did they to them.
	[38] Lit <i>waved</i> ; that is, caused to move to and fro

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

A Faithful Version	.
C. Thomson Updated OT	.
Charles Thomson OT	.
Context Group Version	Thus did Moses, and Aaron, and all the congregation of the sons of Israel, to the Levites: according to all that YHWH commanded Moses concerning the Levites, so did the sons of Israel to them. And the Levites purified themselves from disgrace, and they washed their clothes: and Aaron offered them for a wave-offering before YHWH; and Aaron made atonement for them to cleanse them. And after that the Levites went in to do their service in the tent of meeting before Aaron, and before his sons: as YHWH had commanded Moses concerning the Levites, so they did to them.
English Standard Version	.
Green's Literal Translation	.
Legacy Standard Bible	.
Literal Standard Version	.
Modern English Version	.
Modern Literal Version 2020	And Moses and Aaron and all the congregation of the sons of Israel did to the Levites. According to all that Jehovah commanded Moses concerning the Levites, so the sons of Israel did to them. And the Levites purified themselves from sin and they washed their clothes. And Aaron offered them for a wave-offering before Jehovah and Aaron made atonement for them to cleanse them. And after that the Levites went in to do their service in the tent of meeting before Aaron and before his sons. As Jehovah had commanded Moses concerning the Levites, so they did to them.
New American Standard B.	.
New European Version	.
New King James Version	.
Niobi Study Bible	.
Owen's Translation	.
Revised Mechanical Trans.	...and Mosheh, and Aharon and all the company of the sons of Yisra'eyl, did to the ones of Lewi everything that YHWH directed Mosheh concerning the ones of Lewi, so the sons of Yisra'eyl did to them, and the ones of Lewi purified themselves, and they washed their garments, and Aharon made a waving of them, waving to the face of YHWH, and Aharon made a covering upon them to make them clean, and after this, the ones of Lewi came to serve their service in the appointed tent, to the face of Aharon and to the faces of his sons, just as YHWH directed Mosheh upon the ones of Lewi, so they did to them,...
Updated ASV	.
Updated Bible Version 2.17	.
A Voice in the Wilderness	.

Webster's Bible Translation .
 World English Bible .
 Young's Literal Translation .
 Young's Updated LT .

The gist of this passage:
 20-22

Numbers 8:20a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB & Strong #'s
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
ʿâsâh (עָשָׂה) [pronounced <i>gaw-SAWH</i>]	<i>to do, to make, to construct, to produce, to fashion, to form, to prepare, to manufacture; accomplish</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #6213 BDB #793
Mosheh (מֹשֶׁה) [pronounced <i>moh-SHEH</i>]	<i>to draw out [of the water] and is transliterated Moses</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #4872 BDB #602
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as; or</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
ʾAhârôn (אַהֲרֹן) [pronounced <i>ah-huh-ROHN</i>]	transliterated Aaron	masculine proper noun	Strong's #175 BDB #14
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as; or</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
kôl (כֹּל) [pronounced <i>kohl</i>]	<i>every, each, all of, all; any of, any; some have translated, all manner of</i>	masculine singular construct not followed by a definite article	Strong's #3605 BDB #481
ʿêdâh (עֵדָה) [pronounced <i>gā-DAWH</i>]	<i>company, congregation, assembly, meeting; a company of people assembled together by appointment, a group of people acting together</i>	feminine singular construct	Strong's #5712 BDB #417
bânîym (בָּנִים) [pronounced <i>baw-NEEM</i>]	<i>sons, descendants; children; people; sometimes rendered men; young men, youths</i>	masculine plural construct	Strong's #1121 BDB #119
Yis ^e râ'êl (יִסְרָאֵל) [pronounced <i>yis-raw-ALE</i>]	<i>God prevails; contender; soldier of God; transliterated Israel</i>	masculine proper noun; God-given name to Jacob; and national name for the Jewish people	Strong's #3478 & #3479 BDB #975
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>l</i>]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510

Numbers 8:20a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB & Strong #'s
L ^e vîyyim (לַיִּים) [pronounced l ^e -vee-YIM]	<i>joined to, attached; garland, crown;</i> and is transliterated <i>Levites</i>	plural gentilic adjective with the definite article	Strong's #3881 BDB #532

Translation: And so Moses and Aaron and all the congregation of the sons of Israel did to the Levites,...

Even though we have a plural subject (Moses and Aaron and the sons of Israel), there is a singular verb. This is how it is done in the Hebrew. We have the verb followed by Moses, and that is the subject and the verb; followed by others who are also a part of the subject.

The bulk of this chapter has been about the cleansing ceremonies done to the Levites. The Levites were chosen by God to assist in all of the spiritual matters of Israel. They were not charged with determining the theology that Israel would follow, but they saw to the day-to-day stuff that needed to be done around the Tabernacle.

Numbers 8:20b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB & Strong #'s
kaph or k ^e (כ) [pronounced k ^e]	<i>like, as, just as; according to, after;</i> <i>about, approximately</i>	comparative preposition; resemblance or approximation	No Strong's # BDB #453
kôl (כֹּל) [pronounced kohl]	<i>the whole, all, the entirety, every</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #3605 BDB #481
'ăsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced ash-ER]	<i>that, which, when, who, whom;</i> <i>where</i>	relative pronoun	Strong's #834 BDB #81
Together, k ^e kôl 'ăsher is translated (in Numbers 8:20): <i>according to all that; all that; all that; as; everything (that)</i> . The first translation was found in almost every instance.			
tsâvâh (צַוָּה) [pronounced tsaw-VAW]	<i>to command, to charge; to lay charge upon, to give charge to, to commission, to mandate, to order; to appoint; to ordain; to instruct [as in, giving an order]</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Piel perfect	Strong's #6680 BDB #845
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly yhoh-WAH]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah,</i> <i>Yahweh, Y^ehowah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217
'êth (אֶת) [pronounced ayth]	generally untranslated; possibly be translated <i>to, toward (s)</i>	mark of a direct object; indicates next word is the object of the verb	Strong's #853 BDB #84
Mosheh (מֹשֶׁה) [pronounced moh- SHEH]	<i>to draw out [of the water] and is transliterated Moses</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #4872 BDB #602
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l ^e]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510

Numbers 8:20b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB & Strong #'s
L ^e vîyyim (לְוִיִּים) [pronounced l ^e -vee-YIM]	<i>joined to, attached; garland, crown; and is transliterated Levites</i>	plural gentilic adjective	Strong's #3881 BDB #532

Translation: ...according to all that Y^ehowah commanded Moses regarding Levites.

Moses and Aaron and the sons of Israel did just as God had commanded Moses regarding the Levites. A variety of sacrifices were made in order to ceremonially cleanse them.

Numbers 8:20c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB & Strong #'s
kên (כֵּן) [pronounced kane]	<i>so, therefore, thus; then, afterwards; upright, honest; rightly, well; [it is] so, such, so constituted</i>	properly, an active participle; used primarily as an adverb	Strong's #3651 BDB #485
‘âsâh (עָשָׂה) [pronounced gaw-SAWH]	<i>to do, to make, to construct, to produce, to fashion, to form, to prepare, to manufacture; accomplish</i>	3 rd person masculine plural, Qal perfect	Strong's #6213 BDB #793
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l ^e]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition; with the 3 rd person masculine plural suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510
bânîym (בְּנֵי) [pronounced baw-NEEM]	<i>sons, descendants; children; people; sometimes rendered men; young men, youths</i>	masculine plural construct	Strong's #1121 BDB #119
Yis ^e râ'êl (יִשְׂרָאֵל) [pronounced yis-raw-ALE]	<i>God prevails; contender; soldier of God; transliterated Israel</i>	masculine proper noun; God-given name to Jacob; and national name for the Jewish people	Strong's #3478 & #3479 BDB #975

Translation: So the sons of Israel did to them.

The rest of Israel participated as well (however, mostly they observed what was taking place).

Numbers 8:20 *And so Moses and Aaron and all the congregation of the sons of Israel did to the Levites, according to all that Y^ehowah commanded Moses regarding Levites. So the sons of Israel did to them.* (Kukis mostly literal translation)

For a long time, a lot of things ran smoothly for the Israelites—God gave a set of directives and Moses saw to it that these directives were followed to the letter. For those who know what is coming, you keep waiting for the ax to fall. It will fall in Numbers 11. Thus far, since many of the degenerate idolaters were eliminated back in the incident of the golden calf, Moses and the people have been very obedient to all of Yahweh's commands. However, coming up in Numbers 11, they will murmur against His great provisions for them here on earth and that will be the beginning of the end. Our relationship to God requires more than legalistic obedience.

Numbers 8:21a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB & Strong #'s
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
châtâ' (חָטָא) [pronounced khaw-TAW]	<i>to cleanse oneself, to purify oneself of uncleanness [sin or transgression]; to miss oneself, to lose oneself; to wander from the way</i>	3 rd person masculine plural, Hithpael imperfect	Strong's #2398 BDB #306
It would seem that this would should mean, <i>to sins against oneself</i> ; but that is clearly not its meaning in this context.			
L ^e vîyyim (לְוִיִּים) [pronounced l ^e -vee-YIM]	<i>joined to, attached; garland, crown; and is transliterated Levites</i>	plural gentilic adjective with the definite article	Strong's #3881 BDB #532

Translation: [And so the Levites cleansed themselves...](#)

The Hithpael generally expresses a reflexive, intensive, or reciprocal action and is derived from the meaning of the Piel stem.

The Hithpael of Châtâ' (חָטָא)

This phrase is tricky, so let me first give you a few translations of it:

[And the Levites purified themselves from sin...](#) (BSB, CLV, MLV, ESV, WEB)

[And the Levites cleansed themselves...](#) (Green's literal translation, LSV)

[And the Levites were purified...](#) (BSV, Eth Cipher, VW)

Now, context-wise, this all makes sense, given what has taken place in this chapter and given the phrase which follows. However, the verb found here is châtâ' (חָטָא) [pronounced khaw-TAW], and its Qal meanings are, *to sin, to miss, to miss the mark, to violate the law, to err; to do wrong, to commit a transgression*. The Qal meanings are the basic meanings, and all of the other meanings of the different stems are built upon these. For instance, the Hiphil (causative stem) are: *to sin, to miss the mark, to induce [cause, lead into] to sin [violate the law], to bring into guilt [condemnation, punishment]; to cause to sin*. Strong's #2398 BDB #306.

Strong's Lexicon is weak, inasmuch as, it does not clearly differentiate between the stems. It reads as follows: **Definition:** *To sin, to miss, to go wrong, to incur guilt.* **Meaning:** *to miss, to sin, to forfeit, lack, expiate, repent, lead astray, condemn.*²⁴

The most helpful lexicons are Gesenius and BDB. The latter is found quite easily online.

Hithpa`el Imperfect חָטָא Numbers 19:12 4t., וְחָטָא Numbers 8:21; וְחָטָא Job 41:17; וְחָטָא Numbers 31:19; וְחָטָא Numbers 31:20; —

1 miss oneself, lose oneself, figurative for be bewildered, beside oneself, מִרְבָּשָׁם Job 41:17 by reason of consternation they are beside themselves ("" רוגי are afraid).

2 purity oneself from uncleanness, only in P:

²⁴ From [Bible Hub](#).

The Hithpael of Châṭâ' (נִטָּא)

a. Levites Numbers 8:21.

b. those in contact with the dead Numbers 19:12,13,20; Numbers 31:19,20; with בַּיְמֵי יִמְבֹּשׁ Numbers 31:23; by a mixture of ashes of the red heifer with fresh water Numbers 19:12.

The problem with this reference²⁵ is it seems quite distant from the Qal meanings.

You may recall that the noun cognate can mean, *sin* and *sin-offering*. Essentially the sin itself is so merged with the sin-offering so that they both are represented by the same word. You may also recall the New Testament verse where Jesus is said to be made sin for us. That is, He was our offering for sin, but the sin is closely identified with Jesus. **He became sin for us.** Jesus never sinned, but His humanity came into direct contact with all of our sins by means of a judicial imputation (a judicial imputation means that there is no target or natural home for the thing imputed), so the volition of the recipient must be engaged—that is, Jesus, Who received our sins, must willingly accept them. They cannot be forced upon Him.

Are the Levites being made sin or being closely identified with sin for the purpose of being cleansed from their sins?

It is at this point that I have run out of gas. Do we simply accept an almost antithetical meaning for the Hithpael? Is there something more to word that even the BDB does not uncover for us?

[Chapter Outline](#)

[Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines](#)

Despite this word being a struggle, the entire context is all about the cleansing ceremony which takes place.

Numbers 8:21a *So the sons of Israel did to them. And so the Levites cleansed themselves and so they washed their garments. And so Aaron presented them [as] a presentation offering before Y^ehowah. And so Aaron atoned for them and cleansed them.* (Kukis mostly literal translation)

The beginning of v. 21 is interesting:

<i>The Amplified Bible</i>	And the Levites cleansed and purified themselves...
<i>The Emphasized Bible</i>	And the Levites accepted the cleansing from sin,...
KJV	And the Levites were purified...
NASB	The Levites, too, purified themselves from sin...
NIV	The Levites purified themselves...
NRSV	The Levites purified themselves from sin...
Owen's Translation	And purified themselves from sin the Levites...
<i>Young's Lit. Translation</i>	And the Levites cleanse themselves...

The beginning verb is not what you would expect to find here. We would expect the third person masculine plural, Hithpael imperfect of ṭâhêr (טָהַר) [pronounced *taw-HAIR*] which simply means *to be cleansed*. Strong's #2891 BDB #372. We have a different verb here.

The Hithpael is the intensive reflexive; they act upon themselves and the verb is intensified.²⁶ Our morphology would be correct but the verb would be wrong. The verb here, surprisingly enough, is châtâ' (נִטָּא) [pronounced *khaw-TAW*], the verb for *sin, deviate, subvert [the Law]*. Strong's #2398 BDB #306. However, when this verb is found in the Piel, it appears to mean *unsin, purify* (Piel perfect: Exodus 29:36 Leviticus 14:52 Numbers 19:19 Ezekiel 43:20, 22 45:18; Piel Infinitive: Leviticus 14:49 Ezekiel 43:23; Piel imperfect: Genesis 31:39 Leviticus

²⁵ From [Bible Hub](#).

²⁶ We actually don't have a universally recognized reflexive form of the Qal stem; the passive of the Qal—the Niphal stem—can be reflexive.

8:15 9:15 2Chronicles 29:24 Psalm 51:9; Piel participle: Leviticus 6:26; and the Hithpael future: Numbers 8:21 19:12, 13, 20 31:19, 20, 23 Job 41:25).²⁷ I wonder if there might be just a complete identification with sin here? This will take some more study; however, for right now, I will take the easy way out and go with the scholarship to date. The Brown Drive Briggs goes into detail with this verb in the Qal stems and their variations, but only devotes a paragraph to the Piel and related stems. Alfred Edersheim suggests the translation *unsinned*²⁸.

The actual activities involved in this cleansing process are seen here as a process and not as a completed action. From God's standpoint, from the standpoint of His directives, these things were mandated and the action was seen as completed; however, from the viewpoint of the Israelites, this was a process which took time in order to fulfill the demands of Yahweh.

Numbers 8:21b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB & Strong #'s
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
kâbaç (כַּבַּח) [pronounced <i>kaw-BAHÇ</i>]	<i>to wash [garments, a person]; to make wash</i>	3 rd person masculine plural, Piel imperfect	Strong's #3526 BDB #460
b ^e gâdîym (בְּגָדִים) [pronounced <i>b^e-gaw-DEEM</i>]	<i>garments, clothes, clothing, apparel; possibly blankets</i>	masculine plural noun with the 3 rd person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #899 BDB #93

Translation: ...and so they washed their garments.

As a part of this ceremony, the Levites washed their garments.

Part of this ceremony included them shaving all of the hair from themselves. Certainly this would be the beard; perhaps it would include the body and perhaps it would include the entire head. Although a reference to the shaving is not found here, it was a part of the ritual covered earlier in this chapter.

Numbers 8:21c			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB & Strong #'s
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
nûwph (נִוֵּף) [pronounced <i>noof</i>]	<i>to wave, to shake [e.g., the hand to beckon someone]; to present (to, before); to scatter, to shake forth [rain]</i>	2 nd person masculine singular, Hiphil imperfect	Strong's #5130 BDB #631
ʾAhărôn (אַהֲרֹן) [pronounced <i>ah-huh-ROHN</i>]	transliterated <i>Aaron</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #175 BDB #14

²⁷ This is a definitive listing of verses.

²⁸ *Bible History Old Testament*, by Alfred Edersheim, ©1995, p. 236.

Numbers 8:21c			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB & Strong #'s
ʾêth (אֵת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i>]	<i>them</i> ; untranslated mark of a direct object; occasionally <i>to them, toward them</i>	sign of the direct object affixed to a 3 rd person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #853 BDB #84
t ^ə nûwphâh (תְּנוּפְחָהּ) [pronounced <i>t'noo-PHAWH</i>]	<i>presentation offering, wave-offering, offering [gold or brass]; swinging, waving, brandishing [of God's hand, weapons]</i>	feminine singular noun	Strong's #8573 BDB #632
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>l'</i>]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
pânîym (פְּנִיָּם) [pronounced <i>paw-NEEM</i>]	<i>face, faces, countenance; presence</i>	masculine plural construct (plural acts like English singular)	Strong's #6440 BDB #815
Together, they mean <i>upon the face of, before, before the face of, in the presence of, in the sight of, in front of, which faces</i> . When used with God, it can take on the more figurative meaning <i>in the judgment of</i> . This can also mean <i>forwards; the front part [or, the edge of a sword]</i> . L ^ə pânîym (לְפָנָיו) can take on a temporal sense as well: <i>before, of old, formerly, in the past, in past times</i> . Literally, this means <i>to faces of</i> .			
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly <i>yhoh-WAH</i>]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y^əhowah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217

Translation: [And so Aaron presented them \[as\] a presentation offering before Y^əhowah.](#)

Although the verb here is generally used for Aaron lifting up a slab of meat and waving it before God, he could not be lifting up the different Levites and waving them before God. However, this can also refer to an offering being presented to God.

Because the verb and its cognate are both found here, I translated this with *presented* and *presentation offering*.

Numbers 8:21d			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB & Strong #'s
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
kâphar (כָּפַר) [pronounced <i>kaw-FAHR</i>]	<i>to cover, to cover over [with], to be covered [with]; to spread over; to appease, to placate, to pacify; to pardon, to expiate; to atone, to make an atonement [for]; to obtain forgiveness; to free an offender of a charge</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Piel imperfect	Strong's #3722 BDB #497

Numbers 8:21d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB & Strong #'s
ʿal (עַל) [pronounced <i>gah]</i>	<i>upon, beyond, on, against, over above, by, beside; because of, on account of</i>	preposition of relative proximity; with the 3 rd person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #5921 BDB #752
<p>BDB gives the following meanings for this preposition: 1) <i>upon, on the ground of, according to, on account of, on behalf of, concerning, beside, in addition to, together with, beyond, above, over, by, on to, towards, to, against (preposition); 1a) upon, on the ground of, on the basis of, on account of, because of, therefore, on behalf of, for the sake of, for, with, in spite of, notwithstanding, concerning, in the matter of, as regards; 1b) above, beyond, over (of excess); 1c) above, over (of elevation or pre-eminence); 1d) upon, to, over to, unto, in addition to, together with, with (of addition); 1e) over (of suspension or extension); 1f) by, adjoining, next, at, over, around (of contiguity or proximity); 1g) down upon, upon, on, from, up upon, up to, towards, over towards, to, against (with verbs of motion); 1h) to (as a dative); 2) because that, because, notwithstanding, although (conjunction).</i></p>			
ʾAhārôn (אַהֲרֹן) [pronounced <i>ah-huh-ROHM]</i>	transliterated <i>Aaron</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #175 BDB #14
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>l</i> ʰ]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
ṭâhēr (טָהַר) [pronounced <i>taw-HAIR]</i>	<i>to cleanse [clean] [physically, ceremonially, morally]; to purify; to pronounce [declare] clean; to perform a ritual ceremony of cleansing</i>	Piel infinitive construct with the 3 rd person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #2891 BDB #372

Translation: [And so Aaron atoned for them and cleansed them.](#)

The verb translated *atone* is the Piel imperfect of *kâphar* (כָּפַר) [pronounced *kaw-FAHR]* and it means, *to cover, to cover over [with], to be covered [with]; to spread over; to appease, to placate, to pacify; to pardon, to expiate; to atone, to make an atonement [for]*. Strong's #3722 BDB #497. Generally speaking, this is for sins which are covered over. The sins of those in the Old Testament were covered over until Jesus came to die for our sins. Their ultimate forgiveness required Jesus to go to the cross and to pay for all of our sins.

Numbers 8:21 [So the sons of Israel did to them. And so the Levites cleansed themselves and so they washed their garments. And so Aaron presented them \[as\] a presentation offering before Y^ehowah. And so Aaron atoned for them and cleansed them.](#) (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Numbers 8:22a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB & Strong #'s
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or וּ) [pronounced <i>weh]</i>	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as; of</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
ʾachārêy (אַחֲרָי) [pronounced <i>ah-kuh-RAY]</i>	<i>behind, after; following; after that, afterwards; hinder parts</i>	preposition; plural form	Strong's #310 BDB #29

Numbers 8:22a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB & Strong #'s
kên (כֵּן) [pronounced kane]	<i>so, therefore, thus; then, afterwards; upright, honest; rightly, well; [it is] so, such, so constituted</i>	properly, an active participle; used primarily as an adverb	Strong's #3651 BDB #485
These two words together literally mean <i>after so</i> ; however, they appear to mean <i>afterward, afterwards, after these things, after this, [and] after that</i> . See Genesis 15:14 23:19 25:26 Leviticus 14:36 Deuteronomy 21:13 1Samuel10:5.			
bôw' (בָּו) [pronounced boh]	<i>to come in, to come, to go in, to go, to enter, to advance; to attain</i>	3 rd person masculine plural, Qal perfect	Strong's #935 BDB #97
L ^e vîyyim (לְוִיִּים) [pronounced l ^e -vee-YIM]	<i>joined to, attached; garland, crown; and is transliterated Levites</i>	plural gentilic adjective with the definite article	Strong's #3881 BDB #532
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l ^e]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
'âbad (עָבַד) [pronounced gaw ^b -VAHD]	<i>to work, to serve, to labor; to be a slave to</i>	Qal infinitive construct	Strong's #5647 BDB #712
'êth (אֶת) [pronounced ayth]	generally untranslated; possibly be translated <i>to, toward (s)</i>	mark of a direct object; indicates next word is the object of the verb	Strong's #853 BDB #84
'âbôdâh (עֲבֹדָה) [pronounced gû ^b -vo-DAWH]	<i>labour, work, service, function; possibly: bondage; enslavement; service of [to] God</i>	feminine singular noun with the 3 rd person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #5656 & #5647 BDB #715
b ^e (ב) [pronounced b ^{eh}]	<i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
'ohel (אֹהֶל) [pronounced OH-hel]	<i>tent, tabernacle, house, temporary dwelling</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #168 BDB #13
môw'êd (מוֹעֵד) [pronounced moh-GADE]	<i>a specific (set, pre-determined, appointed) time; a point in time; a sacred season, a set feast; an appointed meeting; an appointed place [where people meet]; a specific sign or signal; an assembly, a convocation</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #4150 BDB #417
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l ^e]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
pânîym (פָּנִים) [pronounced paw-NEEM]	<i>face, faces, countenance; presence</i>	masculine plural construct (plural acts like English singular)	Strong's #6440 BDB #815

Together, they mean *upon the face of, before, before the face of, in the presence of, in the sight of, in front of, which faces*. When used with God, it can take on the more figurative meaning *in the judgment of*. This can also mean *forwards; the front part [or, the edge of a sword]*. L^epânîym (לְפָנַיִם) can take on a temporal sense as well: *before, of old, formerly, in the past, in past times*. Literally, this means *to faces of*.

Numbers 8:22a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB & Strong #'s
ʾAhărôn (אֲהֲרֹן) [pronounced <i>ah-huh-ROHN</i>]	transliterated <i>Aaron</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #175 BDB #14
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as; of</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>l^e</i>]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
pânîym (פָּנִים) [pronounced <i>paw-NEEM</i>]	<i>face, faces, countenance; presence</i>	masculine plural construct (plural acts like English singular)	Strong's #6440 BDB #815
Together, they mean <i>upon the face of, before, before the face of, in the presence of, in the sight of, in front of, which faces</i> . When used with God, it can take on the more figurative meaning <i>in the judgment of</i> . This can also mean <i>forwards; the front part</i> [or, the edge of a sword]. L ^e pânîym (לפָּנֵי) can take on a temporal sense as well: <i>before, of old, formerly, in the past, in past times</i> . Literally, this means <i>to faces of</i> .			
bânîym (בָּנִים) [pronounced <i>baw-NEEM</i>]	<i>sons, descendants; children; people; sometimes rendered men; young men, youths</i>	masculine plural noun with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #1121 BDB #119

Translation: [And after this, the Levites went in to serve their service in the Tent of Meeting before Aaron and before his sons.](#)

After all of this ceremony, the Levites began their service to the Tent of Meeting. My assumption would be that Moses and Aaron and the other priests had determined the things that must be taken care of when many sacrifices are offered.

You may recall the previous chapter where a representative from each tribe came before the Tabernacle and offered up a selection of animals. There would have been a lot of blood and quite a mess. Put the religious aspect aside and imagine a bbq given for 100,000 people over a period of 12 days. Do you think some clean up was necessary? In other words, once the Levites were ceremonially cleansed, there was a lot for them to do around the Tent of Meeting.

Numbers 8:22b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB & Strong #'s
kaph or k ^e (כ) [pronounced <i>k^e</i>]	<i>like, as, according to; about, approximately</i>	preposition of comparison, resemblance or approximation	No Strong's # BDB #453
ʾăsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced <i>ash-ER</i>]	<i>that, which, when, who, whom; where</i>	relative pronoun; sometimes the verb <i>to be</i> is implied	Strong's #834 BDB #81

Numbers 8:22b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB & Strong #'s
tsâvâh (צָוָה) [pronounced tsaw-VAW]	<i>to command, to charge; to lay charge upon, to give charge to, to commission, to mandate, to order; to appoint; to ordain; to instruct [as in, giving an order]</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Piel perfect	Strong's #6680 BDB #845
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly yoh-WAH]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y^ehowah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217
'êth (אֵת) [pronounced ayth]	generally untranslated; possibly be translated <i>to, toward (s)</i>	mark of a direct object; indicates next word is the object of the verb	Strong's #853 BDB #84
Mosheh (מֹשֶׁה) [pronounced moh-SHEH]	<i>to draw out [of the water] and is transliterated Moses</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #4872 BDB #602
'al (עַל) [pronounced gah]	<i>upon, beyond, on, against, above, over; on the ground of, because of, according to, on account of, on behalf of, with, by, besides, in addition to, to, toward, together with, in the matter of, concerning, as regards to</i>	preposition of relative proximity	Strong's #5921 BDB #752
L ^e vîyyim (לְוִיִּם) [pronounced ^l -vee-YIM]	<i>joined to, attached; garland, crown; and is transliterated Levites</i>	plural gentilic adjective with the definite article	Strong's #3881 BDB #532
kên (כֵּן) [pronounced kane]	<i>so, therefore, thus; then, afterwards; upright, honest; rightly, well; [it is] so, such, so constituted</i>	properly, an active participle; used primarily as an adverb	Strong's #3651 BDB #485
'âsâh (עָשָׂה) [pronounced gaw-SAWH]	<i>to do, to make, to construct, to produce, to fashion, to form, to prepare, to manufacture; accomplish</i>	3 rd person masculine plural, Qal perfect	Strong's #6213 BDB #793
lâmed (ל) [pronounced ^l]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition; with the 3 rd person masculine plural suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510
ç, çâmekh (ס, סָמַךְ) [pronounced cahm-ehk]	This appears to be used as a mark of punctuation which seems to indicate the end of a paragraph. It is never translated.	the 15 th letter; also used as the numeral 60	No Strong's # BDB #684

I don't know what happened here, but I made quite a number of errors in the morphology (5 or 6 I think); but they have all been fixed.

Translation: Just as Y^ehowah commanded Moses concerning the Levites, so they did to them. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

God commanded Moses specifically to do a number of things to cleanse the Levites. Moses oversaw this process, but he probably did not take part in any of it. This would have fallen under the duties of the priests (Aaron and his sons).

Numbers 8:22 And after this, the Levites went in to serve their service in the Tent of Meeting before Aaron and before his sons. Just as Y^ehowah commanded Moses concerning the Levites, so they did to them. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Once the Levites had been ceremonially cleansed, they were fit to serve Yahweh at His holy tent of meeting. I do not believe that they actually went inside as a general rule; that seems to be reserved for the sons of Aaron, just as only the high priest could go into the Holy of Holies.

This is analogous to Paul, who offered to God the Gentiles. **But I have written very boldly to you on some points, so as to remind you again, because of the grace that was given me from God; to be a minister of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles, ministering as a priest the gospel of God, that [my] offering of the Gentiles might become acceptable, sanctified by the Holy Spirit** (Romans 16:15–16). If you have never studied the Old Testament, you have no appreciation for the analogy which Paul was drawing. He brings the Gentiles to God as a wave offering, bringing them to God and then God gives them back to the population for serviced to Him. Paul is just like Aaron or his sons, the priests, offering the Levites to God after having cleansed them.

There are some similarities and several significant differences between the ordination of the priests and the cleansing of the Levites:²⁹

The Priests		The Levites	
The priests were made holy.	Leviticus 8:30	The Levites were made clean.	Numbers 8:6–7, 15
The priests were anointed and washed.	Leviticus 8:6, 10, 12	The Levites were sprinkled.	Numbers 8:7
The priests received new garments.	Leviticus 8:7–9	The Levites washed their clothing.	Numbers 8:7, 21
A bull and two rams were sacrificed; blood was applied to the priests.	Leviticus 8:15, 24	Two bulls were sacrificed, but nothing was said of their blood.	Numbers 8:8
The priests were essentially given to the Israelites; God had them perform all of the sacrifices.	Leviticus 6:9, 20	The Levites were a gift to the priests; they were a wave offering	Numbers 8:11, 19, 21

[Chapter Outline](#)

[Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines](#)

Numbers 8:20–22 And so Moses and Aaron and all the congregation of the sons of Israel did to the Levites, according to all that Y^ehowah commanded Moses regarding Levites. So the sons of Israel did to them. And so the Levites cleansed themselves and so they washed their garments. And so Aaron presented them [as] a presentation offering before Y^ehowah. And so Aaron atoned for them and cleansed them. And after this, the Levites went in to serve their service in the Tent of Meeting before Aaron and before his sons. Just as Y^ehowah commanded Moses concerning the Levites, so they did to them. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

²⁹ This is taken from a footnote in the NIV Study Bible, p. 200.

Numbers 8:20–22 God gave a number of directives to Moses regarding the Levites, and he oversaw the cleansing process which took place, which involved Aaron and his sons, and the rest of Israel watched. What God required, Israel did. The Levites did all that was necessary in order for them to cleanse themselves, including washing their clothing. Aaron presented the Levites as though a presentation offering to Jehovah. Ceremonially, Aaron saw to it that their sins were covered over and that they were cleansed. After all this, the Levites went right to work serving the Tabernacle (there was a lot to do!). Aaron and his sons oversaw their duties. So, just as Jehovah commanded Moses concerning the Levites, so the proper ceremonies and responsibilities took place. (Kukis paraphrase)

And so speaks Y^ehowah unto Moses, to say, “This [is] that for the Levites: from a son of five and twenty and higher he will come in to assemble a host in labor [for] a Tent of Appointment; and from a son of fifty a year he will return from a host of labor and he will not work still. And he has served with his brothers in a Tent of Appointment, to guard a guarding. And so work he will not work. Thus you do to the Levites in their duties.”

Numbers
8:23–26

And so Y^ehowah speaks unto Moses, saying, “This [is] what [is] for the Levites: from the age of twenty-five and higher, he will go in to serve the service in the work of the Tent of Meeting; and at the age of fifty years, he will turn aside from the host of service and he will not work anymore. But he will serve with his brothers in the Tent of Meeting to guard [as] a watchman. Yet, he will not serve the service. So you will do to the Levites concerning their duties.”

Here is how others have translated this passage:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text (Hebrew)

And so speaks Y^ehowah unto Moses, to say, “This [is] that for the Levites: from a son of five and twenty and higher he will come in to assemble a host in labor [for] a Tent of Appointment; and from a son of fifty a year he will return from a host of labor and he will not work still. And he has served with his brothers in a Tent of Appointment, to guard a guarding. And so work he will not work. Thus you do to the Levites in their duties.”

Dead Sea Scrolls

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Jerusalem targum

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Targum (Onkelos)

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Targum (Pseudo-Jonathan)

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Aramaic Targum

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The Psalms Targum

.

Updated Douay-Rheims

.

Douay-Rheims 1899 (Amer.)

And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying:

This is the law of the Levites: From twenty-five years old and upwards, they shall go in to minister in the tabernacle of the covenant.

And when they shall have accomplished the fiftieth year of their age, they shall cease to serve:

And they shall be the ministers of their brethren in the tabernacle of the covenant, to keep the things that are committed to their care, but not to do the works. Thus shalt thou order the Levites touching their charge.

Aramaic ESV of Peshitta

Mar-Yah spoke to Mosha, saying,

"This is that which belongs to the Levites: from twenty-five years old and upward they shall go in to wait on the service in the work of the Tabernacle;

and from the age of fifty years they shall cease waiting on the work, and shall serve no more,
but shall minister with their brothers in the Tabernacle, to perform the duty, and shall do no service. You shall do thus to the Levites concerning their duties."

Original Aramaic Psalms
V. Alexander's Aramaic T.
Plain English Aramaic Bible
Lamsa's Peshitta (Syriac)
Samaritan Pentateuch

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. .
. .
. .
And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying
This [is it] that [belongeth] unto the Levites: from twenty and five years old and upward they shall go in to wait upon the service of the tabernacle of the congregation:
And from the age of fifty years they shall cease waiting upon the service [thereof], and shall serve no more:
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.

Updated Brenton (Greek)

And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying,
This is the ordinance for the Levites: From twenty-five years old and upward, they shall go in to minister in the tabernacle of witness.
And from fifty years old the Levites shall cease from the ministry, and shall not work any longer.
And his brother shall serve in the tabernacle of witness to keep the charges, but he shall not do the works: so shall you do to the Levites in their charges.

Significant differences:

Limited Vocabulary Translations:

Bible in Basic English

And the Lord said to Moses,
This is the rule for the Levites: those of twenty-five years old and over are to go in and do the work of the Tent of meeting;
But after they are fifty years old, they are to give up their work and do no more;
But be with their brothers in the Tent of meeting, taking care of it but doing no work.
This is what you are to do in connection with the Levites and their work.

Easy English

Easy-to-Read Version–2008

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Then the LORD said to Moses, "This is a special command for the Levites: Every Levite man who is 25 years old or older must come and share in the work at the Meeting Tent. But when a man is 50 years old, he will retire from this hard work. Men who are at least 50 years old will be on duty to help their brothers, but they will not do the work themselves. That is what you must do for the Levites so that they can do their duty."

God's Word™

The LORD said to Moses, "These are the instructions for the Levites: Men 25 years old or older are eligible to serve at the tent of meeting. But when they're 50 years old, they must retire from active service and not work anymore. They may assist the other Levites in their duties at the tent of meeting, but they may not do any regular work. This is how you will handle the Levites' duties."

Good News Bible (TEV)

The LORD said to Moses, "From the age of twenty-five each Levite shall perform his duties in the Tent of my presence, and at the age of fifty he shall retire. After that, he may help his fellow Levites in performing their duties in the Tent, but he must not perform any service by himself. This is how you are to regulate the duties of the Levites."

The Message

Names of God Bible

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NIRV .
New Simplified Bible .

Thought-for-thought translations; dynamic translations; paraphrases:

Casual English Bible .
Contemporary English V. The LORD also told Moses, "Levites who are between the ages of twenty-five and fifty can work at my sacred tent. But once they turn fifty, they must retire. They may help the other Levites in their duties, but they must no longer be responsible for any work themselves. Remember this when you assign their duties."

The Living Bible .
New Berkeley Version .
New Life Version .
New Living Translation .
The Passion Translation .
Unfolding Bible Simplified Yahweh also said this to Moses: "The descendants of Levi who are between twenty-five years and fifty years old will work at the sacred tent. But after they become fifty years old, they must retire. They may help their fellow descendants of Levi do their work at the sacred tent, but they must not do the work themselves. That is what you must tell them about the work they will do."

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible .
Beck's American Translation .
Common English Bible .
New Advent (Knox) Bible .
Translation for Translators .

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Berean Study Bible .
Christian Standard Bible .
Conservapedia Translation .
Revised Ferrar-Fenton Bible .
God's Truth (Tyndale) .
The Heritage Bible . guard duty
International Standard V **Age Restrictions for the Descendants of Levi**
Later, the Lord told Moses, "Now regarding a descendant of Levi who is 25 years and above, he is to enter work in the service at the appointed place of meeting, but starting at 50 years of age, he is to retire from service and is no longer to work. He may minister to his brothers at the Tent of Meeting by keeping watch, but he is not to engage in service. This is how you are to act with respect to the obligations of the descendants of Levi."

H. C. Leupold .
Lexham English Bible .
NIV, ©2011 .
Unfolding Bible Literal Text Yahweh spoke again to Moses. He said, "All of this is for the Levites who are twenty-five years old and more. They must join the company to serve in the tent of meeting. They must stop serving in this way at the age of fifty years. At that age they must not serve any longer. They may help their brothers who continue to work at the tent of meeting, but they must serve no more. You must direct the Levites in all these matters."

Urim-Thummim Version YHWH spoke to Moses saying, This applies to the Levites, from 25 years old and higher when they will begin to do duty in the service of the Tabernacle at the Appointed Place. And from the age of 50 years they will cease performing the service, and will serve no more. But will aid their brothers in the Tabernacle at the Appointed Place to keep the charge but will do no service themselves. Thus you will institute this for the Levites concerning their obligations.

Wikipedia Bible Project .

Catholic Bibles (those having the imprimatur):

Christian Community (1988) Yahweh spoke to Moses and said: "This concerns the Levites. The Levite shall exercise his ministry and do his duties in the Tent of Meeting from the age of twenty-four onward. After the age of fifty, he is no longer bound to the ministry; he shall have no further duties; but he can still help his brothers to perform the services in the Tent of Meeting, though he himself will no longer have any ministry. See that this is the rule for the ministry of the Levites."

New American Bible (2011) .
 The Catholic Bible .
 New Jerusalem Bible .
 NRSV (Anglicized Cath. Ed.) .
 Revised English Bible–1989 .

Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible .
 Eth Cephher Bible .

And **Yahuah** spoke unto Mosheh, saying, This *is it* that *belongs* unto the Leviyim: from twenty and five years old and upward they shall go in to wait upon the service of the Tabernacle of the assembly: And from the age of fifty years they shall cease waiting upon the service *thereof*, and shall serve no more: But shall minister with their brethren in the Tabernacle of the assembly, to guard the watch, and shall do no service. Thus shall you do unto the Leviyim touching their charge.

exeGesés companion Bible .
 Hebraic Roots Bible .
 Kaplan Translation .
 The Scriptures–2009 .

And הויה spoke to Mosheh, saying, "This applies to the Lēvites: From twenty-five years old and above let him come into active service in the service of the Tent of Appointment, and at the age of fifty years they retire from active service of the service, and serve no more, but they shall attend with their brothers in the Tent of Appointment, to guard the duty, but shall do no service. Thus you shall do to the Lēvites regarding their duties."

Tree of Life Version

Adonai again spoke to Moses saying, This is for the Levites. Men 25 years old and upward are to present themselves for service to work in the Tent of Meeting. But at the age of 50 he is to retire from his service and work no longer. He may assist his brothers in the Tent of Meeting to do their duties, but he himself will no longer do the work. Thus, you are to assign to the Levites their responsibilities."

Weird English, 𐤀𐤋𐤅 English, Anachronistic English Translations:

Alpha & Omega Bible

AND JESUS SPOKE TO MOSES, SAYING,
 THIS IS THE ORDINANCE FOR THE LEVITES; FROM FIVE AND TWENTY YEARS OLD AND UPWARD, THEY SHALL GO IN TO MINISTER IN THE TABERNACLE OF WITNESS.
 AND FROM FIFTY YEARS OLD THE LEVITES SHALL CEASE FROM THE MINISTRY, AND SHALL NOT WORK ANY LONGER.

BUT HE SHALL SERVE HIS BROTHER IN THE TABERNACLE OF WITNESS PERFORMING GUARD DUTIES, BUT HE SHALL NOT DO WORKS: SO SHALL YOU DO TO THE LEVITES IN THEIR DUTIES.

Awful Scroll Bible

Sustains To Become persists to be the speaker to Moses, to the intent: Of the Levites, the twenty and five years old sons and upward, were to go in, to serve the service of their employment, in the tent of the appointed place. The sons of fifty years were to turn back, from to serve the service that they were to be employed.

They are to have ministered with their brothers, in the tent of the appointed place, to keep the functions - was he to serve the service? - Even is you to effect to the Levites of their obligation.

Concordant Literal Version

Yahweh spoke to Moses, saying.

This is what applies to the Levites. From twenty-five years old and upward may one come to enlist with the Levitical host in the service of the tent of appointment. And from fifty years old shall one retire from the active service in the Levitical host and shall serve no longer; yet he may minister to his brothers in the tent of appointment, so as to keep guard, though in active service he shall not serve. Thus shall you deal with the Levites in regard to their charges.

exeGeses companion Bible

And Yah Veh words to Mosheh, saying,

This is for the Leviym
from a son of twenty-five years and upward:
they go in to host the hosting
of the tent of the congregation:
and a son of fifty years
they turn away from hosting the service
to serve no more:
but minister with their brothers
in the tent of the congregation to guard the guard,
but serve no service.

Work thus to the Leviym regarding their guard.

Orthodox Jewish Bible

And Hashem spoke unto Moshe, saying,

This is it that belongeth unto the Levi'im: from twenty and five years old and upward they shall enter to perform service in the Avodat Ohel Mo'ed; And from the age of fifty years they shall retire from the service of the Avodah and shall serve no more; But shall assist with their brethren in the Ohel Mo'ed, in performing their duties, and shall do no Avodah. Thus shalt thou do with the Levi'im regarding their duties.

Rotherham's *Emphasized B.* .

Expanded/Embellished Bibles:

The Amplified Bible .

The Expanded Bible .

International Standard V .

Kretzmann's Commentary

Lexham English Bible

Yahweh spoke to Moses, saying, "This is what is for the Levites: those twenty-five years old [Literally "from a son of twenty-five years"] and above will [Hebrew "and he will"] come to help with the service in the work of the tent of assembly; and those fifty years old [Literally "from a son of fifty years"] will [Hebrew "he will"] return from the service of the work and will serve no longer. They [Hebrew "he"] can attend [Or "assist"] their brothers in the tent of assembly to keep their responsibilities, but they [Hebrew "he"] will not do work. This is what you will do concerning the Levities and their responsibilities."

Syndein/Thieme .

The Voice .

Bible Translations with Many Footnotes:

The Complete Tanach	.
The Geneva Bible	.
Kaplan Translation	<i>Levitical Terms of Service</i> God spoke to Moses, saying: This is [the rule] regarding the Levites: Beginning at the age of 25, they shall participate in the work force engaged in the Communion Tent's service. Then, when they are 50 years old, they shall retire from the work force and not serve any more. [During their duty period] they shall perform their appointed tasks, serving their brethren [the priests] in the Communion Tent. They shall not, however, participate in the divine service. This is what shall be done for the Levites as far as their appointed tasks are concerned. During their duty period Or, 'They shall then perform their appointed tasks with their brethren in the Communion Tent, but they shall not do any [physical] labor' (Rashi; Rashbam).
NET Bible®	.
New American Bible (2011)	.
New Catholic Bible	.
Rotherham's <i>Emphasized B.</i>	And Yahweh spake unto Moses, saying; This is what concerneth the Levites,—<from twenty-five years old and upwards> shall they enter to take rank in the host, for doing the laborious work of the tent of meeting; but <from the age of fifty years> shall they retire from taking rank in the labour, and shall do laborious work no more; yet shall they wait upon their brethren in the tent of meeting, by keeping charge, but <laborious work> shall they not perform, ^a — thus shalt thou do unto the Levites, as touching their charges. ^a There is something touchingly gracious in this partial release from service of the elder Levites.
Updated ASV	Age Restrictions for Levitical Service And Jehovah spoke to Moses, saying, "This is what applies to the Levites:[39] from twenty-five years old and upward, a man[40] shall enter to perform the service in the work of the tent of meeting. And from the age of fifty years he[41] shall withdraw from the work of the service and shall serve no more. He[42] shall minister to their brothers in the tent of meeting, to keep their responsibilities, but he[43] shall do no work. Thus, you shall do to the Levites concerning their responsibilities." [39] SYR VG "This is the law for the Levites" [40] MT "a man" LXX SP "they" [41] MT "he" LXX SP "they" [42] MT LXX SP "he" [43] MT LXX SP "he"
Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:	
A Faithful Version	And the LORD spoke to Moses saying, "This <i>is that</i> which <i>pertains</i> to the Levites. From twenty-five years old and upward they shall go in to wait upon the service of the tabernacle of the congregation. And from the age of fifty years they shall stop waiting upon the service and shall serve no more. But they shall minister with their brethren in the tabernacle of the congregation to keep the charge; only he shall do no service. Thus shall you do in regard to the Levites as to their duties."
C. Thomson Updated OT	.
Charles Thomson OT	. withdrawn
Context Group Version	.

English Standard Version	.	
Green’s Literal Translation	.	
Legacy Standard Bible	.	
Literal Standard Version	.	
Modern English Version	.	
Modern Literal Version 2020	.	And Jehovah spoke to Moses, saying, This is what belongs to the Levites: From twenty-five years old and upward they will go in to wait upon the service in the work of the tent of meeting. And from the age of fifty years they will cease waiting upon the work and will serve no more, but will minister with their brothers in the tent of meeting, to keep the charge and will do no service. You will do to the Levites this way concerning their charges.
New American Standard B.	.	
New European Version	.	
New King James Version	.	
Niobi Study Bible	.	
Owen’s Translation	.	
Revised Mechanical Trans. and YHWH spoke to Mosheh saying, this is what belongs to the ones of Lewi, from a son of five and twenty years and upward, he will come to muster the army in the service of the appointed tent, and from a son of fifty years, he will turn back from the army of the service and he will not serve again, and he will minister to his brothers in the appointed tent to safeguard the charge, and he will not serve a service, like this way you will do to the ones of Lewi concerning their custodies,...
Updated ASV	.	
Updated Bible Version 2.17	.	
A Voice in the Wilderness	.	And Jehovah spoke to Moses, saying, This is what applies to the Levites: From twenty-five years old and above one shall enter to go forth to serve in the service of the tent of meeting; and at the age of fifty years they shall return from going forth to this service, and shall serve no more. They shall minister with their brethren in the tent of meeting, to keep the charge, but they shall not serve in any service. Thus you shall do to the Levites concerning their charge.
Webster’s Bible Translation	.	
World English Bible	.	
Young’s Literal Translation	.	
Young’s Updated LT	.	

The gist of this passage:
23-26

Numbers 8:23			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB & Strong #'s
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong’s # BDB #253
dâbar (דָּבַר) [pronounced daw ^b -VAHR]	<i>to speak, to talk [and back with action], to give an opinion, to expound, to make a formal speech, to speak out, to promise, to propose, to speak kindly of, to declare, to proclaim, to announce</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Piel imperfect	Strong’s #1696 BDB #180
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly yhoh-WAH]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y^ehowah</i>	proper noun	Strong’s #3068 BDB #217

Numbers 8:23			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB & Strong #'s
'el (אל) [pronounced eh]l]	<i>unto; into, among, in; toward, to; against; concerning, regarding; besides, together with; as to</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39
Mosheh (מֹשֶׁה) [pronounced moh-SHEH]	<i>to draw out [of the water] and is transliterated Moses</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #4872 BDB #602
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l ^e]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
'amar (אמר) [pronounced aw-MAHR]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think</i>	Qal infinitive construct	Strong's #559 BDB #55

Translation: And so Y^ehowah speaks unto Moses, saying,...

Now that the Levites are cleansed and set aside for God's purpose, we turn to another topic:

As mentioned before, Moses probably entered into the Tabernacle all of the time—perhaps every day. And during some of those days, God would speak to him from above the atonement cover for the Ark of the Covenant.

I do not believe that Moses went into the back chamber (the Holy of Holies), but he knew the set up and when he heard God's voice, he knew what it was coming from.

Numbers 8:24a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB & Strong #'s
zô'th (זֹת) [pronounced zoth]	<i>here, this, this one; thus; possibly another</i>	feminine of singular zeh; demonstrative pronoun, adverb; with the definite article	Strong's #2063 (& 2088, 2090) BDB #260
'ăsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced uh-SHER]	<i>that, so that, in that; for that, since; which; when, at what time; who, whom; where, wherever; the fact that = how; because that, because; as, like as; yea, even, yea even; until that; then, so [in an apodosis]; what</i>	relative pronoun; sometimes the verb to be is implied	Strong's #834 BDB #81
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l ^e]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
L ^e vîyyim (לְוִיִּים) [pronounced l ^e -vee-YIM]	<i>joined to, attached; garland, crown; and is transliterated Levites</i>	plural gentilic adjective with the definite article	Strong's #3881 BDB #532

Translation: ...“This [is] what [is] for the Levites:...

There is one more thing which will be determined to the Levites—the length of their service.

Numbers 8:24b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB & Strong #'s
min (מִן) [pronounced <i>mihn</i>]	<i>from, off, out from, out of, away from, on account of, since, than, more than; some of</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
bên (בֶּן) [pronounced <i>bane</i>]	<i>son, descendant</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #1121 BDB #119
châmêsh (חַמֵּשׁ) [pronounced <i>khaw-MAYSH</i>]	<i>five</i>	masculine singular numeral	Strong's #2568 BDB #331
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as; of</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
‘es ^e rîym (עֶשְׂרִים) [pronounced <i>ges^e-REEM</i>]	<i>twenty</i>	plural numeral adjective	Strong's #6242 BDB #797
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as; of</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
ma‘elâh (מַעְלָה) [pronounced <i>mawg^e-LAW</i>]	<i>higher, upward (s), taller, higher [than]; older; farther; more, onward</i>	adverb with hê local	Strong's #4605 BDB #751
Although the Bible Hub is much quicker for me to work from, it does have some problems. He, it identified the hê local as a feminine singular suffix.			
bôw' (בָּוּ) [pronounced <i>boh</i>]	<i>to come in, to come, to go in, to go, to enter, to advance; to attain</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #935 BDB #97
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>leh</i>]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
tsâbâ' (צָבָא) [pronounced <i>tzaw-VAW</i>]	<i>to cause to assemble [by troops or in groups], to cause to go forth [in war], to wage war, to cause [or make] to serve</i>	Qal infinitive construct	Strong's #6633 BDB #838
tsâbâ' (צָבָא) [pronounced <i>tsaw^b-VAW</i>]	<i>army, division, host; war, or warfare; service</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #6635 BDB #838
b ^e (ב) [pronounced <i>b^{eh}</i>]	<i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
‘ăbôdâh (עֲבֹדָה) [pronounced <i>gu^b-vo-DAWH</i>]	<i>labour, work, service, function; possibly: bondage; enslavement; service of [to] God</i>	feminine singular construct	Strong's #5656 & #5647 BDB #715
‘ohel (אֹהֶל) [pronounced <i>OH-heh</i>]	<i>tent, tabernacle, house, temporary dwelling</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #168 BDB #13

Numbers 8:24b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB & Strong #'s
môw'êd (מוֹעֵד) [pronounced moh- GADE]	<i>a specific (set, pre-determined, appointed) time; a point in time; a sacred season, a set feast; an appointed meeting; an appointed place [where people meet]; a specific sign or signal; an assembly, a convocation</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #4150 BDB #417

Translation: ...from the age of twenty-five and higher, he will go in to serve the service in the work of the Tent of Meeting;...

The Levite will begin to serve in the Tabernacle at age 25.

Numbers 8:23–24 And so Y^ehowah speaks unto Moses, saying, “This [is] what [is] for the Levites: from the age of twenty-five and higher, he will go in to serve the service in the work of the Tent of Meeting;... (Kukis mostly literal translation)

This appears to contradict the information given us in Numbers 4:3 where it appears as though the time of service would fall between the ages of thirty and fifty. However, that was a census taken for a particular responsibility. It is likely that between the ages of twenty-five and thirty, a Levite would go through a period of training and observation, an apprenticeship. We have a similar census taken by David in 1Chronicles 23:3. In 1Chronicles 23:24, where David apparently lowered the age of service of the Levites to twenty.

Numbers 8:25a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB & Strong #'s
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, וְ) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as; of</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
min (מִן) [pronounced mihn]	<i>from, off, out from, out of, away from, on account of, since, than, more than; some of</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
bên (בֵּן) [pronounced bane]	<i>son, descendant</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #1121 BDB #119
chämishîym (חֲמִשִּׁיִּם) [pronounced khuh-mih- SHEEM]	<i>fifty, fifties</i>	plural numeral	Strong's #2572 BDB #332
shânâh (שָׁנָה) [pronounced shaw-NAW]	<i>year</i>	feminine singular noun	Strong's #8141 BDB #1040
shûwb (שׁוּב) [pronounced shoo ^b v]	<i>to return, to turn, to turn back, to turn away (aside); to reminisce, to restore something, to bring back something, to revive, to recover something, to make restitution</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #7725 BDB #996

Numbers 8:25a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB & Strong #'s
min (מִן) [pronounced <i>mihn</i>]	<i>from, off, out from, out of, away from, on account of, since, than, more than; some of</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
tsâbâ' (צָבָא) [pronounced <i>tsaw^b-VAW</i>]	<i>army, division, host; war, or warfare; service</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #6635 BDB #838
ʿăbôdâh (עֲבֹדָה) [pronounced <i>g^u^b-vo-DAWH</i>]	<i>labour, work, service, function; possibly: bondage; enslavement; service of [to] God</i>	feminine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #5656 & #5647 BDB #715

Translation: ...and at the age of fifty years, he will turn aside from the host of service...

The Levites continue their service until age fifty. The *host* simply refers to all of the men who serve at the Tabernacle, and they turn away from that.

Numbers 8:25b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB & Strong #'s
w ^e (or v ^e) (וְ, or וּ) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as; of</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
lô' (לֹא or לוֹא) [pronounced <i>low</i>]	<i>not, no</i>	negates the word or action that follows; the absolute negation	Strong's #3808 BDB #518
ʿâbad (עָבַד) [pronounced <i>g^{aw}^b-VAHD</i>]	<i>to work, to serve, to labor; to be a slave to</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #5647 BDB #712
ʿôwd (וַיְוֹד) [pronounced <i>g^{ohd}</i>]	<i>still, yet, again, again and again, repeatedly, in addition to; continue, continually; more, farther, besides; as yet, even yet</i>	adverb	Strong's #5750 BDB #728

With the negative, this means *never again, no more, not...anymore, not again, no longer*.

Translation: ...and he will not work anymore.

From age fifty on, the Levites will no longer work in the Tabernacle. Given the age of Abraham and Moses, this seems to be rather early in life for them to stop serving. On the other hand, how many men are really needed for additional service around the Tabernacle?

Numbers 8:25 ...and at the age of fifty years, he will turn aside from the host of service and he will not work anymore. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

God does set up a specific retirement age, that being age fifty for those serving as Levites. This does not mean that all servants of God should retire from Christian service at age fifty. There are some who should retire, perhaps, or pursue other areas of service and fifty strikes me as being quite young. However, the responsibilities of the Levites primarily was that of moving the things of the tabernacle and the walls and around age forty is when

I lost the romanticism of moving. It is important to be matched with a proper position and this definitely implies that age fifty is a good cut off for strenuous physical labor.

Numbers 8:26a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB & Strong #'s
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and; even; as well as; in particular, namely; when, while; since, seeing, though; so, then, therefore; or; but, but yet; who, which; or; that, in that, so that; with; also, in addition to, at the same time</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
shârath (שָׂרַת) [pronounced <i>shaw-RAHTH</i>]	<i>to serve, to minister; to attend</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Piel perfect	Strong's #8334 BDB #1058
'êth (אֶת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i>]	<i>with, at, near, by, among, directly from</i>	preposition (which is identical to the sign of the direct object)	Strong's #854 BDB #85
'achîym (אַחִים) [pronounced <i>awhk-EEM</i>]	<i>brothers, kinsmen, close relatives; tribesmen; fellow-countrymen</i>	masculine plural noun with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #251 BDB #26
b ^e (ב) [pronounced <i>b^{eh}</i>]	<i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
'ohel (אֹהֶל) [pronounced <i>OH-heh</i>]	<i>tent, tabernacle, house, temporary dwelling</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #168 BDB #13
môw'êd (מוֹעֵד) [pronounced <i>moh-ÇADE</i>]	<i>a specific (set, pre-determined, appointed) time; a point in time; a sacred season, a set feast; an appointed meeting; an appointed place [where people meet]; a specific sign or signal; an assembly, a convocation</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #4150 BDB #417

Translation: But he will serve with his brothers in the Tent of Meeting...

I believe that what is offered here is an option for the Levites after age fifty. He can continue to serve with his brothers at the Tabernacle.

Numbers 8:26b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB & Strong #'s
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>l^e</i>]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
shâmar (שָׁמַר) [pronounced <i>shaw-MAR</i>]	<i>to keep, to guard, to protect, to watch, to preserve</i>	Qal infinitive construct	Strong's #8104 BDB #1036

Numbers 8:26b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB & Strong #'s
mish ^e mereth (מִשְׁמֶרֶת) [pronounced mish ^e - MEH-reth]	<i>custody, guard, the act of guarding, watch, being a watchman; a charge, a responsibility; an obligation; a service; a keeping; an observance; that which is observed [a rite, a law]</i>	feminine singular noun	Strong's #4931 BDB #1038

Translation: ...to guard [as] a watchman.

The Levite can choose to continue to serve at the Tabernacle, but as a watchman.

This is often the case for ex-police, where they take on a variety of jobs after retiring from the force, sometimes as watchmen.

Numbers 8:26c			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB & Strong #'s
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
‘ăbôdâh (עֲבֹדָה) [pronounced gû ^b -vo- DAWH]	<i>labour, work, service, function; possibly: bondage; enslavement; service of [to] God</i>	feminine singular noun	Strong's #5656 & #5647 BDB #715
lô' (לֹא or לוֹ) [pronounced low]	<i>not, no</i>	negates the word or action that follows; the absolute negation	Strong's #3808 BDB #518
‘âbad (עָבַד) [pronounced gaw ^b -VAHD]	<i>to work, to serve, to labor; to be a slave to</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #5647 BDB #712

Translation: Yet, he will not serve the service.

However, the Levite past age fifty would not serve in the Tabernacle as he did previously. His limitation would be as a guard (which is not unreasonable, given the amount of gold and silver associated with the Tabernacle).

Numbers 8:26d			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB & Strong #'s
kâkâh (כַּכֵּן) [pronounced KAW-kaw]	<i>like this; thus, so; according [as, to]</i>	adverb	Strong's #3602 BDB #462
‘âsâh (עָשָׂה) [pronounced gaw-SAWH]	<i>to do, to make, to construct, to produce, to fashion, to form, to prepare, to manufacture; accomplish</i>	2 nd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #6213 BDB #793
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l ^e]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510

Numbers 8:26d			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB & Strong #'s
L ^e vîyyim (לוֹיִם) [pronounced l ^e -vee-YIM]	<i>joined to, attached; garland, crown; and is transliterated Levites</i>	plural gentilic adjective with the definite article	Strong's #3881 BDB #532
b ^e (ב) [pronounced b ^{eh}]	<i>in, into, through; among, in the midst of; at, by, near, on, before, in the presence of, upon; with; to, unto, up to; in respect to, on account of; by means of, about, concerning; during</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
mish ^e mârôwth (תּוֹרַמְשָׁת) [pronounced mish ^e -MAHR-oath]	<i>duties, responsibilities, custodies, guarding, watches; charges, observances; those things which are observed [rites, laws]</i>	feminine plural noun with the 3 rd person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #4931 BDB #1038
pê (פ, פ, or ף) [pronounced pay]	This appears to be used as a mark of punctuation which seems to indicate the beginning of a paragraph. It is never translated.	the 17 th letter. Also used as a numeral	No Strong's # BDB #802

Translation: *So you will do to the Levites concerning their duties.*" (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Recall that mish^emârôwth (תּוֹרַמְשָׁת) [pronounced mish^e-MAHR-oath] (plural form) refers to a charge, a responsibility or commission. Strong's #4931 BDB #1038. The Levites did a lot of grunt work; that is, a lot of physical labor. When they moved from camp to camp, the Levites took down the tabernacle and its perimeter and carried it from place to place. However, by age fifty, they were relieved of this work, although they were allowed to assist or advise the younger Levites in their service.

Numbers 8:26 *But he will serve with his brothers in the Tent of Meeting to guard [as] a watchman. Yet, he will not serve the service. So you will do to the Levites concerning their duties.*" (Kukis mostly literal translation)

I believe that this is a summation statement, at least for this final section.

Numbers 8:23–26 *And so Y^ehowah speaks unto Moses, saying, "This [is] what [is] for the Levites: from the age of twenty-five and higher, he will go in to serve the service in the work of the Tent of Meeting; and at the age of fifty years, he will turn aside from the host of service and he will not work anymore. But he will serve with his brothers in the Tent of Meeting to guard [as] a watchman. Yet, he will not serve the service. So you will do to the Levites concerning their duties."* (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Beginning of Document	Chapter Outline	Charts, Graphics, Short Doctrines
Introduction and Text	First Verse	Addendum
www.kukis.org	Numbers folder	Exegetical Studies in Numbers

A Set of Summary Doctrines and Commentary

The idea here is, there are things which we find in this chapter which are extremely important.

Why Numbers 8 is in the Word of God

1. T
- 2.

[Chapter Outline](#)

[Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines](#)

These are things which we learn while studying this particular chapter.

What We Learn from Numbers 8

1. T
- 2.

[Chapter Outline](#)

[Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines](#)

Many chapters of the Bible look forward to Jesus Christ in some way or another. A person or situation might foreshadow the Lord or His work on the cross (or His reign over Israel in the Millennium). The chapter may contain a prophecy about the Lord or it may, in some way, lead us toward the Lord (for instance, by means of genealogy).

Jesus Christ in Numbers 8

[Chapter Outline](#)

[Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines](#)

Alfred Edersheim wrote a book called *The Bible History, Old Testament*, which is very similar to Josephus, where he simply rewrites much of what is in the Bible, and adds in notes and comments as he deems to be relevant.

This comes from Chapter 14, entitled *Analysis Of The Book Of Numbers*.

Edersheim Summarizes Numbers 8

To sum up its general contents - it tells us in its first Part (1-16.) how Israel was to approach God, together with what, symbolically speaking, was inconsistent with such approaches; and in its second Part (17-27.) how, having been brought near to God, the people were to maintain, to enjoy, and to exhibit the state of grace of which they had become partakers. Of course, all is here symbolical, and we must regard the directions and ordinances as conveying in an outward form so many spiritual truths. Perhaps we might go so far as to say, that Part 1 of Numbers exhibits, in a symbolical form, the doctrine of justification, and Part * that of sanctification; or, more accurately, the manner of access to God, and the holiness which is the result of that access.

* So literally.

Part 1 (1-16.), which tells Israel how to approach God so as to have communion with Him, appropriately opens with a description of the various kinds of sacrifices. (Numbers 1-7) It next treats of the priesthood.

(Numbers 8-10) The thoroughly symbolical character of all, and hence the necessity of closest adherence to the directions given, are next illustrated by the judgment which befell those who offered incense upon "strange

Edersheim Summarizes Numbers 8

fire." (Numbers 10:1-6) From the priesthood the sacred text passes to the worshippers. (Numbers 11-15) These must be clean - personally (11:1-47), in their family-life, (Numbers 12) and as a congregation. (Numbers 13-15) Above and beyond all is the great cleansing of the Day of Atonement, (Numbers 16) with which the first part of the book, concerning access to God, closes.

From www.biblestudytools.com/history/edersheim-old-testament/volume-2/chapter-14.html accessed July 11, 2020.

[Chapter Outline](#)

[Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines](#)

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Addendum

This footnote is referenced in [Numbers](#).

Footnote for Numbers (Christian Community Bible)

From http://kukis.org/Translations/Christian_Community_Bible/04-Numbers-Large.pdf accessed September 22, 2024.

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The ancient historian Josephus seems to take the Old Testament texts at face value and uses them to record the history of this era.

Josephus' History of this Time Period

Antiquities of the Jews - Book III

CONTAINING THE INTERVAL OF TWO YEARS.

FROM THE Numbers OUT OF EGYPT, TO THE REJECTION OF THAT GENERATION.

CHAPTER 9.

THE MANNER OF OUR OFFERING SACRIFICES.

1. I WILL now, however, make mention of a few of our laws which belong to purifications, and the like sacred offices, since I am accidentally come to this matter of sacrifices. These sacrifices were of two sorts; of those sorts one was offered for private persons, and the other for the people in general; and they are done in two different ways. In the one case, what is slain is burnt, as a whole burnt-offering, whence that name is given to it; but the other is a thank-offering, and is designed for feasting those that sacrifice. I will speak of the former. Suppose a private man offer a burnt-offering, he must slay either a bull, a lamb, or a kid of the goats, and the two latter of the first year, though of bulls he is permitted to sacrifice those of a greater age; but all burnt-offerings are to be of males. When they are slain, the priests sprinkle the blood round about the altar; they then cleanse the bodies, and divide them into parts, and salt them with salt, and lay them upon the altar, while the pieces of wood are piled one upon another, and the fire is burning; they next cleanse the feet of the sacrifices, and the inwards, in an accurate manner and so lay them to the rest to be purged by the fire, while

ICE teaching would also be a part of the package, ICE being an acronym standing for Isagogics (a teaching of the history of that time in order to understand a passage), Categories (a study of categories of Bible doctrine), and Exegesis (a close study of each passage).

R. B. Thieme, III has not taught this chapter on any available lesson.

Word Cloud from a Reasonably Literal Paraphrase of Numbers 8

Word Cloud from Exegesis of Numbers 8³⁰

These two graphics should be very similar; this means that the exegesis of Numbers 8 has stayed on topic and has covered the information found in this chapter of the Word of God.

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³⁰ Some words have been left out of this graphic; including *Strong*, *BDB*, and *pronounced*.