

# 1 Chronicles 9:28

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And certain of them had the charge of the ministering vessels, that they should bring them in and out by tale.

## Analysis

**And certain of them had the charge of the ministering vessels** (וְמִקְהֵם עַל־כֵּלֵי הַעֲבוֹדָה)—this describes a specialized Levitical role: inventory control of sacred utensils used in temple ritual. The Hebrew **charge** (עַל al, 'over' or 'upon') indicates assigned responsibility and accountability. These weren't merely storage clerks but liturgical stewards ensuring ritual purity and proper usage of consecrated objects—bowls, basins, knives, censers, etc., each with specific halakhic requirements.

**That they should bring them in and out by tale** (כִּי־בְמִסְפָּר יָבִיאוּם וּבְמִסְפָּר יוֹצִיאוּם)—the phrase **by tale** (בְּמִסְפָּר bemispar, 'by number') means they counted vessels in and out, like library checkout systems. This accountability prevented loss, theft, or unauthorized use of holy objects. The meticulous care reflects Uzzah's death for touching the ark improperly (2 Samuel 6:6-7) and Nadab/Abihu's destruction for unauthorized fire (Leviticus 10:1-2)—holy things require holy handling.

This mundane administrative detail—counting dishes—illustrates the sanctification of ordinary tasks when done for God's house. The New Testament parallel appears in Acts 6:1-6, where deacons served tables so apostles could focus on Word and prayer; both roles were vital, requiring Spirit-filled servants. The principle: there are no 'mere' tasks in God's service, only consecrated or profaned ones.

## Historical Context

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Solomon's temple contained extensive precious metalwork: golden lampstands, tables, bowls, censers, etc. (1 Kings 7:48-50). Babylonian looting (586 BC) took most treasures (2 Kings 25:13-17), but returnees brought back some (Ezra 1:7-11). The Second Temple initially lacked much of the First Temple's grandeur, making careful stewardship of existing vessels crucial. This verse's emphasis on accountability reflects post-exilic economic scarcity—they couldn't afford to lose even one sacred utensil through carelessness.

## Related Passages

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**James 2:17** — Faith and works

**Hebrews 11:1** — Definition of faith

## Study Questions

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1. How does the 'by tale' accountability system for temple vessels challenge modern casualness about sacred spaces, objects, and responsibilities?
2. What does the dignifying of 'counting dishes' as Spirit-empowered Levitical service teach about the sanctification of mundane church administrative work?

## Interlinear Text

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וְיָמָּהּ ׀	עַל	כֵּלֵי י	הַעֲבוֹדָה	כִּי
H1992	And certain of them had the charge of	vessels	the ministering	H3588
	H5921	H3627	H5656	
וּבְמִסְפָּר	יָבִיֵּא וּם	וּבְמִסְפָּר	וְיֵצֵאוּם:	
by tale	that they should bring them in	by tale	and out	
H4557	H935	H4557	H3318	

