

Numbers 3:15

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Number the children of Levi after the house of their fathers, by their families: every male from a month old and upward shalt thou number them.

Analysis

The command to number Levitical males 'from a month old and upward' contrasts with the military census (20+ years), showing that consecration to God begins in infancy while active service awaits maturity. This supports the Reformed understanding of covenant children's inclusion in the covenant community from birth, though their active service awaits maturity. The principle: covenant identity precedes active covenant service.

Historical Context

Males were numbered from one month because infant mortality was high, and a month's survival indicated likely continued life. The Levitical census's broader age range than the military census reflected their different purposes—consecration versus military service.

Related Passages

Psalm 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Study Questions

1. How does numbering Levites from one month old support the principle of including covenant children in the covenant community?
2. What does this teach us about the relationship between covenant identity (established early) and covenant service (developing with maturity)?

Interlinear Text

לְמִשְׁפְּחָהִים	אַתָּה	מִבָּן	לְיִלְלָה	לְבֵית	אֲבָתֶךָ	לְמִשְׁפְּחָהִים
Number	H853	old	of Levi	after the house	of their fathers	by their families
H6485	H1121	H3878		H1004	H1	H4940

כָּל	רַכְבָּה	מִבָּן	חַדְשָׁה	עַלְהָה	וּמְלָא	תִּפְאֵדָה
H3605	every male	old	from a month	and upward	Number	
H2145	H1121	H2320		H4605	H6485	

Additional Cross-References

Numbers 26:62 (Parallel theme): And those that were numbered of them were twenty and three thousand, all males from a month old and upward: for they were not numbered among the children of Israel, because there was no inheritance given them among the children of Israel.

2 Timothy 3:15 (Parallel theme): And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.