

# Numbers 3:40

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And the LORD said unto Moses, Number all the firstborn of the males of the children of Israel from a month old and upward, and take the number of their names.

## Analysis

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God commands Moses: 'Number all the firstborn of the males of the children of Israel from a month old and upward.' Every firstborn belonged to God due to Passover deliverance when God spared Israel's firstborn while judging Egypt's (Ex 13:2). The one-month minimum age reflects ancient Near Eastern practice where infant mortality was high. God's claim on the firstborn demonstrates that redemption creates ownership - those saved belong to their Savior, Christ, as God's firstborn (Col 1:15, 18), redeems us to be God's possession, a 'peculiar people' (Titus 2:14, 1 Pet 2:9). We're 'not our own' but 'bought with a price' (1 Cor 6:19-20).

## Historical Context

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This census counted 22,273 firstborn males (v.43), fewer than expected given Israel's total population. Various explanations include: only firstborn since the Exodus counted, firstborn who inherited their fathers, or natural demographic variations. The Levites (22,000) substituted for most firstborn, with the extra 273 requiring five-shekel redemption payment each (v.46-51). This redemption money supported the sanctuary. The principle continued as every Jewish firstborn required redemption (pidyon haben), practiced even today in observant Jewish families.

## Related Passages

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**Psalm 19:1** — Heavens declare God's glory

**Genesis 1:1** — Creation of heavens and earth

## Study Questions

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1. Do you live as one who's been redeemed - recognizing you belong to God, not yourself?
2. How does understanding you were 'bought with a price' affect your daily choices and priorities?

## Interlinear Text

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בְּכָר	אֶת	יְהִי	הָאָלֹהִים	מִשְׁנָה	כָּל	פָּקָד	רְבָעִים	בְּכָר	אֶת	יְהִי	הָאָלֹהִים	מִשְׁנָה	כָּל	פָּקָד	רְבָעִים	
<b>said</b>	<b>And the LORD</b>		H413	<b>unto Moses</b>		<b>Number</b>	H3605	<b>all the firstborn</b>								
H559			H3068			H6485										H1060
זְכַר	מִבְנָה	לִשְׁבָא	מִתְּבֵן	חַדְשָׁה	עַלְהָה	מִתְּבֵן	לִשְׁבָא	מִבְנָה	זְכַר	מִבְנָה	לִשְׁבָא	מִתְּבֵן	חַדְשָׁה	עַלְהָה	מִתְּבֵן	
<b>of the males</b>	<b>of the children</b>	<b>of Israel</b>	<b>of the children</b>	<b>from a month</b>	<b>and upward</b>	<b>of the children</b>	<b>from a month</b>	<b>and upward</b>								
H2145	H1121	H3478	H1121	H2320	H4605											
וְשַׁם תִּמְסֹף	רְבָעִים	אֶת	זְכַר	מִתְּבֵן	לִשְׁבָא	מִתְּבֵן	לִשְׁבָא	מִבְנָה	זְכַר	מִתְּבֵן	לִשְׁבָא	מִתְּבֵן	רְבָעִים	אֶת	זְכַר	
<b>and take</b>	<b>H853</b>	<b>the number</b>	<b>H4557</b>	<b>H8034</b>		<b>of their names</b>										
H5375																

## Additional Cross-References

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**Numbers 3:15** (Parallel theme): 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.