

# Numbers 4:37

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

These were they that were numbered of the families of the Kohathites, all that might do service in the tabernacle of the congregation, which Moses and Aaron did number according to the commandment of the LORD by the hand of Moses.

## Analysis

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**According to the commandment of the LORD by the hand of Moses** (על-פי) (al-pi YHWH beyad-Mosheh)—Literally 'by the mouth of the LORD through the hand of Moses.' This phrase anchors the census in divine authority, not human initiative. The Hebrew פֶּה (peh, mouth) emphasizes God's spoken word as organizational foundation.

**All that might do service in the tabernacle**—The verb עֲבָד (avad, to serve/work) appears 289 times in the OT, carrying meanings from slavery to priestly ministry to worship. Here it denotes sacred vocational service, the same term used for Israel's enslaved labor in Egypt (Exodus 1:14) now redeemed into joyful service to YHWH. Redemption transforms forced servitude into voluntary worship.

## Historical Context

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Moses's unique mediatorial role ('by the hand of Moses') established the pattern for prophetic authority under the old covenant. The phrase appears 24 times in Numbers alone, underscoring Moses's unparalleled access to God's direct revelation (12:6-8) that wouldn't be matched until Christ (Hebrews 3:1-6).

## Related Passages

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**John 15:13** — Greatest form of love

**1 Corinthians 13:4** — Characteristics of love

## Study Questions

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1. How does the transformation of avad (service) from Egyptian slavery to tabernacle ministry illustrate redemption's purpose in your life?
2. What does it mean today to organize church life 'according to the commandment of the LORD' rather than cultural preferences or pragmatism?

## Interlinear Text

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אֵלֶּה	פָּקָד	מִשְׁפָּחָה	תְּ	כָּל	פְּקָדָת	וְ	מִשְׁפָּחָה	תְּ	כָּל
H428	These were they that were numbered	H6485		H4940	of the families	H3605	of the Kohathites	H6956	
כָּל	מִזְבֵּחַ	בְּאֹתָל	מִזְבֵּחַ	רָאשָׁה					
all that might do service	in the tabernacle	of the congregation	H834						
H5647	H168	H4150							
מִשְׁפָּחָה	פָּקָד	וְאַבְרָהָם	מִשְׁפָּחָה	עַל					
These were they that were numbered	H6485	H4872	of Moses	H175					
			and Aaron	H5921					
מִשְׁפָּחָה	פָּקָד	וְיַהְיֵה	בְּיַד	מִשְׁפָּחָה					
according to the commandment	H6310	H3068	by the hand	H3027	of Moses	H4872			

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