

# 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

**According to the commandment of the LORD by the hand of Moses** (עַל־פִּי יְהוָה בְּיַד־מֹשֶׁה, 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 עָבַד (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

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 H428	פָּקְדוֹת H6485	מִשְׁפּוּחַת H4940	הַקֹּהֲתִים H6956	כָּל H3605
	These were they that were numbered	of the families	of the Kohathites	
הַעֹבְדִים H5647	בְּאֶת־הַתְּבָרָה H168	מוֹעֵד H4150	אֲשֶׁר H834	
all that might do service	in the tabernacle	of the congregation		
פָּקְדוֹת H6485	מֹשֶׁה: H4872	וְאַהֲרֹן H175	עַל H5921	
These were they that were numbered	of Moses	and Aaron		
פִּי H6310	יְהוָה H3068	בְּיַד H3027	מֹשֶׁה: H4872	
according to the commandment	of the LORD	by the hand	of Moses	

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