

Ezekiel 40:45

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And he said unto me, This chamber, whose prospect is toward the south, is for the priests, the keepers of the charge of the house.

Analysis

And he said unto me, This chamber, whose prospect is toward the south, is for the priests, the keepers of the charge of the house. The angelic guide explains the purpose of one chamber: housing "**the priests, the keepers of the charge of the house.**" The Hebrew mishmereth (מִשְׁמֶרֶת, "charge" or "keeping") refers to the sacred responsibility of maintaining the temple's purity and conducting its services. These were not merely caretakers but guardians of holiness, entrusted with God's dwelling place on earth.

The phrase "**keepers of the charge of the house**" emphasizes priestly responsibility. They didn't own the temple; they stewarded it. This principle applies to all ministry: church leaders are under-shepherds (1 Peter 5:2-3), trustees of divine mysteries (1 Corinthians 4:1), servants not lords. The specific chamber allocation shows God's provision for those who serve Him—ministry requires both spiritual calling and practical support. New covenant believers are called "**a royal priesthood**" (1 Peter 2:9), making every Christian a keeper charged with guarding doctrinal purity and holy living.

Historical Context

In Solomon's temple, priests lived throughout Jerusalem, coming for their weekly service rotation (1 Chronicles 24). However, those on duty needed chambers within the temple complex for ritual purity and immediate availability. The

Zadokite priesthood (descended from Aaron through Zadok) held special privilege and responsibility. After the exile, returning priests faced the challenge of re-establishing proper temple service (Ezra 2:36-39, Nehemiah 12). Ezekiel's vision assured them that God would restore not only the building but the entire priestly order with its sacred duties.

Related Passages

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Study Questions

1. How should the concept of 'keepers of the charge' shape our view of Christian ministry and church leadership?
2. In what ways are all believers called to 'keep the charge' of guarding sound doctrine and holy living in God's new covenant temple (the church)?

Interlinear Text

וְיֹאמֶר יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים	אָשָׁר בַּלְשׁׁוֹן הַלְשׁׁוֹן	פָּנָה יְהִי	זֶה
And he said	unto me This	chamber	whose prospect
H413	H2090	H3957	is toward
H1696			H1870
וּמְשֻׁמְדָּר בְּבֹית הַבָּיִת	שְׁמַר לְפָנֶיךָ יְמֵינֶךָ	בְּמִשְׁמַרְתְּךָ	וְמִשְׁמַרְתְּךָ
the south	is for the priests	the keepers	of the charge
H1864	H3548	H8104	H4931
			H1004

Additional Cross-References

1 Chronicles 9:23 (Parallel theme): So they and their children had the oversight of the gates of the house of the LORD, namely, the house of the tabernacle, by wards.

Psalms 134:1 (Parallel theme): Behold, bless ye the LORD, all ye servants of the LORD, which by night stand in the house of the LORD.

Leviticus 8:35 (Parallel theme): Therefore shall ye abide at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation day and night seven days, and keep the charge of the LORD, that ye die not: for so I am commanded.

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