

# Ezekiel 45:4

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

The holy portion of the land shall be for the priests the ministers of the sanctuary, which shall come near to minister unto the LORD: and it shall be a place for their houses, and an holy place for the sanctuary.

## Analysis

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The holy portion designation—'This shall be the holy portion of the land; it shall be for the priests the ministers of the sanctuary, which shall come near to minister unto the LORD'—allocates land for priestly support. The Hebrew *qodesh* (qodesh, 'holy portion') indicates consecrated territory, not common use. Priests receive this 'for houses, and for an holy place for the sanctuary.' The double provision—houses (dwelling) and sanctuary service—demonstrates comprehensive care for ministers. Reformed theology sees the principle continuing: 'they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel' (1 Corinthians 9:14). Churches must support pastors adequately—not luxuriously but sufficiently (1 Timothy 5:17-18). The holy portion's designation prevents priests from worldly entanglements while serving God (2 Timothy 2:4).

## Historical Context

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Levitical law provided for priests through tithes, offerings, and land allocation (Numbers 18:20-24, 35:1-8). Priests received no tribal inheritance—'the LORD is their inheritance' (Deuteronomy 18:1-2)—but required material support. The Levitical cities (48 total) distributed throughout Israel provided priestly housing (Joshua 21). When priests were neglected, worship deteriorated (Nehemiah 13:10-11). Malachi condemned withholding tithes—'robbing God' (Malachi 3:8-10).

Paul defended his right to financial support while sometimes foregoing it to avoid accusations (1 Corinthians 9:3-18, 2 Corinthians 11:7-9). The principle remains: faithful ministers deserve adequate support enabling full-time focus on spiritual service without financial distraction or secular employment necessity.

## **Related Passages**

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**Ephesians 2:8** — Salvation by grace through faith

**John 3:16** — God's love and salvation

## **Study Questions**

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1. How generously do you support gospel ministers—viewing it as duty, privilege, or optional charity?
2. Does your church provide adequate pastoral support enabling focused ministry versus forcing bi-vocational scrambling?
3. How do you balance supporting ministers while avoiding enriching charlatans (testing fruit, accountability)?

## Interlinear Text

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מִן קֹדֶשׁ	מִן	חֵצֵי	הָ וְאֵל	לְכֹהֲנֵי יִם	לְשָׂרֵי ת
The holy	H4480	portion of the land	H1931	shall be for the priests	the ministers
H6944		H776		H3548	H8334
לְמִקְדָּשׁ:	יְהוָה הָ	הַקֶּרֶב יִם	לְשָׂרֵי ת	אֶת	
and an holy place	H1961	which shall come near	the ministers	H853	
H4720		H7131	H8334		
יְהוָה הָ	יְהוָה הָ	לֵה מִ	מָקוֹם	לְבֵת יִם	
unto the LORD	H1961	H0	and it shall be a place	for their houses	
H3068			H4725	H1004	
לְמִקְדָּשׁ:	לְמִקְדָּשׁ:				
and an holy place	and an holy place				
H4720	H4720				

## Additional Cross-References

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**Ezekiel 40:45** (Parallel theme): 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.

**Ezekiel 43:19** (References Lord): And thou shalt give to the priests the Levites that be of the seed of Zadok, which approach unto me, to minister unto me, saith the Lord GOD, a young bullock for a sin offering.

**Numbers 16:5** (Holy): And he spake unto Korah and unto all his company, saying, Even to morrow the LORD will shew who are his, and who is holy; and will cause him to come near unto him: even him whom he hath chosen will he cause to come near unto him.