

Ezekiel 48:19

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And they that serve the city shall serve it out of all the tribes of Israel.

Analysis

They that serve the city shall serve it out of all the tribes of Israel—the city's workforce represents pan-tribal participation, not isolated sectarianism. The verb **serve** (עָבַד, *avad*) denotes both labor and worship, suggesting secular service in the sacred city carries spiritual dignity.

This inclusive vision unifies the twelve tribes around common purpose, reversing the divisive tribalism that plagued Israel's history (the northern/southern split, Judges' intertribal warfare). Every tribe contributes laborers, ensuring no single faction dominates while all share responsibility for the sacred community. This prefigures the New Testament church drawn from all nations (Revelation 7:9), where tribal and ethnic barriers dissolve in common service to God.

Historical Context

Tribal divisions plagued Israel from the judges period through the monarchy's split (930 BC). The northern kingdom's destruction (722 BC) and Judah's exile (586 BC) scattered the tribes. Ezekiel's vision of reunified tribal service addresses the deepest national wound—tribal fragmentation—through shared participation in sacred community, anticipating messianic restoration.

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Study Questions

1. How does pan-tribal service challenge denominational divisions and ethnic barriers in God's church today?
2. What does the dignity of "serving the city" teach about the spiritual value of so-called "secular" work when done in God's community?

Interlinear Text

וְעֹבְדֵי וְהוּ	קֵעַ יִר	וְעֹבְדֵי וְהוּ	מִכָּל ל	שְׁבֵטֵי י
And they that serve	the city	And they that serve	H3605	it out of all the tribes
H5647	H5892	H5647		H7626
יִשְׂרָאֵל:				
of Israel				
H3478				