

Ezra 10:24

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Of the singers also; Eliashib: and of the porters; Shallum, and Telem, and Uri.

Analysis

Of the singers also; Eliashib—only one singer (meshorer) appears in the list. Singers were Levites with specialized temple responsibilities (1 Chronicles 25), leading worship and psalms. That only one singer violated the covenant suggests this group maintained higher faithfulness levels. Their constant engagement with Scripture through song may have strengthened covenant loyalty.

And of the porters; Shallum, and Telem, and Uri—three gatekeepers (sho'arim) are named. Porters guarded temple entrances (1 Chronicles 26), controlling who entered sacred space. The irony is profound: men responsible for preventing unauthorized access to God's house had themselves violated boundaries through forbidden marriages. They guarded physical doors while leaving spiritual boundaries unprotected.

The proportions are instructive: 17 priests/Levites violated versus only 4 temple servants (1 singer + 3 porters), suggesting those in teaching/leading roles faced greater temptation or had more opportunity for intermarriage. The lower violation rate among singers and porters may reflect their more constant temple presence and immersion in worship, which cultivated covenant faithfulness.

Historical Context

Temple singers and gatekeepers comprised distinct Levitical guilds with hereditary roles. Their positions provided stable identity and community, possibly making

them less prone to seeking identity/security through marriage alliances with prominent local families. The small number of violators from these groups (4 total) versus priests (17) suggests vocational roles affected vulnerability to compromise. Those closest to sacred teaching bore greater responsibility and faced stricter judgment.

Related Passages

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Psalm 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Study Questions

1. What does the low violation rate among singers suggest about the protective power of constant engagement with God's Word and worship?
2. How does the gatekeepers' violation—guarding physical boundaries while crossing spiritual ones—warn against compartmentalizing faith?
3. What lessons emerge about the relationship between vocational calling, spiritual formation, and resistance to compromise?

Interlinear Text

וְמִן	בֶּן	פָּנָצָרְרָה	יְמִין	וְשָׁלָם	לִם	
H4480	Of the singers	also Eliashib	H4480	and of the porters	Shallum	and Telem
H7891		H475		H7778	H7967	H2928

אוּרִי

and Uri

H221