

Ezra 2:54

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

The children of Neziah, the children of Hatipha.

Analysis

The children of Neziah, the children of Hatipha—The census continues with two more Nethinim families. Neziah (נְצִיחַ) derives from natsach (to oversee, be preeminent), suggesting leadership among temple servants. Hatipha (חֲטִיפָה) means "seized" or "captive," possibly indicating captive origins.

The juxtaposition is striking: a "preeminent" family listed alongside those "seized" as captives. In God's economy, both the exalted and the lowly serve together before His altar. This foreshadows Jesus's teaching that "the last shall be first" (Matthew 20:16)—service, not status, determines spiritual rank in God's household.

Historical Context

The Nethinim ("given ones") occupied the lowest rung of temple service, performing menial tasks: carrying water, chopping wood, cleaning. Yet Ezra meticulously records their names alongside priests and Levites, affirming their essential role in temple worship during the Second Temple period.

Related Passages

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Study Questions

1. How does the inclusion of both "preeminent" and "captive" families challenge worldly notions of spiritual hierarchy?
2. What menial service in God's kingdom might you be overlooking as "less important" than more visible roles?
3. How does God's careful recording of humble servants encourage faithfulness in tasks the world considers insignificant?

Interlinear Text

בְּנֵי י'	נְצַיִם	בְּנֵי י'	חֲטִיפָא:
The children	of Nezhiah	The children	of Hatipha
H1121	H5335	H1121	H2412

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