

Ezra 7:24

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Also we certify you, that touching any of the priests and Levites, singers, porters, Nethinims, or ministers of this house of God, it shall not be lawful to impose toll, tribute, or custom, upon them.

Analysis

The tax exemption—'Also we certify you, that touching any of the priests and Levites, singers, porters, Nethinims, or ministers of this house of God, it shall not be lawful to impose toll, tribute, or custom, upon them'—exempts temple personnel from imperial taxation. This financial relief enabled full-time ministry without secular employment necessity. The comprehensive list shows no temple servant was excluded from this benefit. God providentially arranged circumstances freeing His servants for spiritual service.

Historical Context

Ancient empires funded state religions partially through tax exemptions for priests and temple personnel. Persian policy extended this to subject peoples' temples, viewing it as promoting stability and securing divine favor. The tax exemption (toll, tribute, custom) covered all imperial revenue types: road tolls, head tax, and customs duties. This significant fiscal concession demonstrated serious commitment to supporting temple worship. Archaeological evidence shows various Persian provinces exempted temple personnel from taxes.

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Study Questions

1. How does tax exemption demonstrate God's provision enabling full-time ministry without worldly entanglements?
2. What does comprehensive inclusion (singers, porters, Nethinim) teach about valuing all ministry roles, not just prominent positions?

Interlinear Text

וְלֹא	מְהוֹדָעִין	דִּי	כָּל	כְּהֲנֵי	לְוִיָּא	
H0	Also we certify	H1768	you that touching any	of the priests	and Levites	
	H3046		H3606	H3549	H3879	
זִמְרָנִי	תַּרְעִיָּא	נְתִינִי	וּפְלִי	בֵּית	אֱלֹהֵי	דָּנָה
singers	porters	Nethinims	or ministers	house	of God	of this
H2171	H8652	H5412	H6399	H1005	H426	H1836
מִנְדָּה	בְּלוֹ	וְהָלַךְ	לֹא	שֶׁלֹּא	לְמַרְמֵי	עֲלֵיהֶם
toll	tribute	or custom	it shall not	be lawful	to impose	upon
H4061	H1093	H1983	H3809	H7990	H7412	H5922

Additional Cross-References

Ezra 4:13 (Parallel theme): Be it known now unto the king, that, if this city be builded, and the walls set up again, then will they not pay toll, tribute, and custom, and so thou shalt endamage the revenue of the kings.

Ezra 7:7 (Sin): And there went up some of the children of Israel, and of the priests, and the Levites, and the singers, and the porters, and the Nethinims, unto Jerusalem, in the seventh year of Artaxerxes the king.

