

Nehemiah 5:4

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

There were also that said, We have borrowed money for the king's tribute, and that upon our lands and vineyards.

Analysis

There were also that said, We have borrowed money for the king's tribute, and that upon our lands and vineyards.

This verse within Nehemiah 5 addresses themes of justice, integrity, selfless leadership, economic reform. Internal crisis threatens to destroy what external opposition could not—economic exploitation requiring bold reforming leadership. This passage demonstrates biblical principles applicable across both testaments—God's sovereignty combined with human responsibility, faith expressed through obedient action, and the necessity of both individual and corporate commitment to covenant faithfulness. Nehemiah models leadership that combines vision, prayer, courage, integrity, and perseverance amid sustained opposition.

Historical Context

Nehemiah's account occurs during Persian imperial dominance (539-331 BC), specifically 445-433 BC under Artaxerxes I. The 52-day wall completion represents remarkable achievement given opposition and limited resources. Excavations have confirmed portions of Nehemiah's wall and various gates mentioned in the text. The Persian period was crucial transitional time when Jewish identity shifted from monarchical nationalism to Torah-centered covenantal community. Without political independence, the people's cohesion depended on shared scripture, temple worship, and covenant obedience. This established patterns persisting through the Second Temple period into New Testament times. Understanding this

context illuminates Jesus's ministry among a people shaped by these reforms and challenges.

Related Passages

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Study Questions

1. How does Nehemiah 5:4 deepen your understanding of God's character and His work in human history?
2. What specific action or attitude change does this verse call you to make in your walk with God?
3. How can the principles demonstrated in this passage inform your response to current challenges in your life or church?

Interlinear Text

וַיֵּשׁ	אֲשֶׁר	אָמַר יָם	לָנוּ יָנוּ	כֶּסֶף	לְמַדָּת
There were	H834	also that said	We have borrowed	money	tribute
H3426		H559	H3867	H3701	H4060
הָמָּלֶךְ	שְׂדֵת יָנוּ	וּכְרָמֵינוּ:			
for the king's	and that upon our lands	and vineyards			
H4428	H7704	H3754			

Additional Cross-References

Ezra 4:13 (Kingdom): 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 4:20 (Kingdom): There have been mighty kings also over Jerusalem, which have ruled over all countries beyond the river; and toll, tribute, and custom, was paid unto them.

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