

Numbers 3:35

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And the chief of the house of the father of the families of Merari was Zuriel the son of Abihail: these shall pitch on the side of the tabernacle northward.

Analysis

The Merarites' camp assignment on the north side of the tabernacle completed the four-sided Levitical enclosure around God's dwelling. Each clan's position had purpose and dignity, with no location considered inferior. This equal dignity across varying responsibilities illustrates that in God's kingdom, worth comes from faithful service in assigned roles, not from human hierarchies of importance.

Historical Context

The north side, while not carrying the prominence of east or traditional honor of south, was nonetheless essential for complete protection of the tabernacle. The Merarites' position ensured all four sides had Levitical guardians preventing unauthorized approach.

Related Passages

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Study Questions

1. How does the equal dignity of all four Levitical positions teach us that every role in Christ's body has inherent worth regardless of visibility?
2. What does the complete encirclement of the tabernacle teach us about comprehensive ministry covering all aspects of church life?

Interlinear Text

וְנָשׁ יֵא	בֵּית	אָב	לְמִשְׁפַּחַת	מֵרָרִי	לְצֻרִיָּא
And the chief	of the house	of the father	of the families	of Merari	was Zuriel
H5387	H1004	H1	H4940	H4847	H6700
בֶּן	אֲבִיחַיִל	עַל	יָרֵךְ	הַמִּשְׁכָּן	יִחַנּוּ
the son	of Abihail	H5921	on the side	of the tabernacle	these shall pitch
H1121	H32		H3409	H4908	H2583
צָפֹנָה:					
northward					
H6828					

Additional Cross-References

Numbers 2:25 (Parallel theme): The standard of the camp of Dan shall be on the north side by their armies: and the captain of the children of Dan shall be Ahiezer the son of Ammishaddai.

Numbers 1:53 (Temple): But the Levites shall pitch round about the tabernacle of testimony, that there be no wrath upon the congregation of the children of Israel: and the Levites shall keep the charge of the tabernacle of testimony.