

Numbers 3:8

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And they shall keep all the instruments of the tabernacle of the congregation, and the charge of the children of Israel, to do the service of the tabernacle.

Analysis

The command that Levites 'keep all the instruments of the tabernacle' emphasizes faithful stewardship of sacred things. God's people are trustees, not owners, of what He entrusts to them. The tabernacle's instruments were tools for worship, and the Levites' careful maintenance ensured they remained fit for sacred use. This principle extends to the church's stewardship of Word, sacraments, and ministry—we preserve what God has entrusted, not innovating or discarding according to human preference.

Historical Context

The tabernacle's instruments included the altar, lampstand, table of showbread, incense altar, ark, and various utensils for sacrifice and service. Each item had specific construction requirements (Exodus 25-31) and required careful handling to prevent profanation.

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Study Questions

1. How does the Levites' careful maintenance of tabernacle instruments illustrate the church's responsibility to preserve and protect what God has entrusted?
2. What does this teach us about the balance between preserving what God has given and allowing unauthorized innovation?

Interlinear Text

וְשִׁמְרֵ	אֶת	כָּל	כָּלִ	אֵל
And they shall keep	H853	H3605	all the instruments	of the tabernacle
	H8104		H3627	H168
מִיעָד	וְאֶת	מִשְׁמָךְ	בְּנֵי	לַעֲבָדָה
of the congregation	H853	and the charge	of the children	of Israel
H4150		H4931	H1121	H3478
עַבְדֵּת	אֶת	הַמִּשְׁכָּן		to do
the service	of the tabernacle			H5647
H5656		H4908		

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