

# Numbers 35:3

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And the cities shall they have to dwell in; and the suburbs of them shall be for their cattle, and for their goods, and for all their beasts.

## Analysis

**And the cities shall they have to dwell in; and the suburbs of them shall be for their cattle, and for their goods, and for all their beasts**—God's provision was comprehensive: not just housing (cities) but also שָׁבֵךְ (miḡrāš, suburbs/pasture lands) for livestock and possessions. The Levites' spiritual calling didn't negate physical needs—God ordained material provision for those who serve Him.

The inclusion of 'cattle...goods...beasts' shows that ministry support isn't merely subsistence but adequate provision for family, possessions, and economic stability. Paul echoes this in 1 Timothy 5:17-18: elders who labor in preaching are 'worthy of double honor.' The Levitical system modeled that those who serve the altar should live from the altar, but with dignity and sufficiency, not poverty.

## Historical Context

Levitical cities were functioning towns with surrounding pasturelands, not isolated religious compounds. Levites lived among their fellow Israelites, raising families, tending flocks, and engaging in normal economic life while fulfilling their priestly and teaching duties. The suburban lands extended 1,000-2,000 cubits from the city walls (v. 4-5), providing adequate grazing and agricultural space.

## Related Passages

## **Romans 2:1 – Judging others**

## **Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment**

## Study Questions

1. How does God's comprehensive provision for Levites (housing, pastureland, goods) challenge any notion that spiritual leaders should live in poverty?
2. What practical needs of those in ministry (beyond salary) might your church community be overlooking?
3. How can you ensure that your support of ministry enables both service and stable family life?

## Interlinear Text

## וּמְגַרְשֵׁיהָ מִלְשָׁבַת הָעָרָם לְהַמִּלְחָמָה וְבַיִת

מִתְמָמָם לְבָהָמָמָם וְלֹכֶל וְלֹרְכֶשׁ מִתְמָמָם  
of them shall be for their cattle and for their goods and for all their beasts

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