

Deuteronomy 1:13

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Take you wise men, and understanding, and known among your tribes, and I will make them rulers over you.

Analysis

Moses' instruction to choose leaders 'wise and understanding, and known among your tribes' establishes three essential leadership qualifications: wisdom (practical discernment), understanding (intellectual capability), and reputation (proven character). The participatory element—'Take you'—shows that leadership selection involved communal discernment, not autocratic appointment. God values both competence and character, with public recognition validating private virtue.

Historical Context

This democratic element in ancient Israel was relatively unique among Near Eastern nations ruled by absolute monarchs. The tribal system allowed for local knowledge and accountability, ensuring leaders truly understood their people's needs and contexts.

Related Passages

Psalms 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Study Questions

1. What balance of wisdom, understanding, and character do you see in current leadership?
2. How can you develop all three qualities in your own life and leadership?

Interlinear Text

וְיָדַע יִם וְנִבְנָה יִם חֲכָמִים יִם אֲנָשִׁים לְכֹהֲנִים הָבֵה וְ
Take H0 men H582 you wise H2450 and understanding H995 and known H3045

בְּרֹאשֵׁיהֶם: וְאֶשְׂמֵם לְשִׁבְטֵיכֶם
among your tribes H7626 and I will make H7760 them rulers H7218

Additional Cross-References

Exodus 18:21 (Parallel theme): Moreover thou shalt provide out of all the people able men, such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness; and place such over them, to be rulers of thousands, and rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens: