

Deuteronomy 1:38

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

But Joshua the son of Nun, which standeth before thee, he shall go in thither: encourage him: for he shall cause Israel to inherit it.

Analysis

Joshua's appointment as Moses' successor demonstrates God's sovereign preparation of leadership. The command 'encourage him' (Hebrew 'chazaq'—strengthen, make firm) reveals that even chosen leaders require support from the covenant community. Joshua would 'cause Israel to inherit' the land—not by his own strength but as God's ordained instrument. This illustrates the Reformed understanding that God works through appointed means to accomplish His sovereign purposes. Human agency and divine sovereignty cooperate without contradiction.

Historical Context

Joshua, Moses' assistant from youth (Exodus 33:11), was approximately 50 years old when appointed Moses' successor. He had served faithfully as military commander (Exodus 17:9-13) and, with Caleb, brought the faithful minority report at Kadesh-barnea (Numbers 14:6-9). Joshua would lead Israel for approximately 25 years, conquering Canaan and distributing tribal inheritances (Joshua 1-24).

Related Passages

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Study Questions

1. How does Joshua's appointment demonstrate God's sovereign preparation of leadership transitions?
2. What does the command to 'encourage' Joshua teach about the congregation's responsibility toward appointed leaders?

Interlinear Text

יְהוֹשֻׁעַ	בֶּן	נֹון	הָעַמִּי	לִפְנֵי	הוא	יָבֹא
But Joshua	the son	of Nun	which standeth	before	H1931	thee he shall go in
H3091	H1121	H5126	H5975	H6440		H935
אֶת־וְשָׁמָּה		חֵי קֵי	כִּי	הוא	יִנְחֹל נָה	אֶת
H8033	H853	thither encourage	H3588	H1931	to inherit	H853
		H2388			H5157	
יִשְׂרָאֵל:						
him for he shall cause Israel						
H3478						

Additional Cross-References

Deuteronomy 3:28 (Parallel theme): But charge Joshua, and encourage him, and strengthen him: for he shall go over before this people, and he shall cause them to inherit the land which thou shalt see.

Numbers 14:30 (Parallel theme): Doubtless ye shall not come into the land, concerning which I swear to make you dwell therein, save Caleb the son of Jephunneh, and Joshua the son of Nun.