

Joshua 18:4

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Give out from among you three men for each tribe: and I will send them, and they shall rise, and go through the land, and describe it according to the inheritance of them; and they shall come again to me.

Analysis

Give out from among you three men for each tribe—Joshua initiates a systematic land survey, requiring each tribe to send representatives (Hebrew anashim, אֲנָשִׁים, 'men of standing'). The command **describe it according to the inheritance** uses katav (קָתַב, 'to write/inscribe'), indicating a formal written survey. This anticipates property rights and covenant boundaries.

This reflects godly order: inheritance isn't random but deliberate, documented, and fair. The survey establishes legal ownership—a principle underlying biblical land theology. Every tribe participates, ensuring transparency and accountability. God's gifts require responsible stewardship and proper administration.

Historical Context

This survey occurred at Shiloh circa 1400 BC, after initial conquest but before full settlement. Ancient Near Eastern land grants required surveys and written records. The seven remaining tribes (besides Judah and Joseph) needed territory allocated by lot before the LORD.

Related Passages

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Study Questions

1. How does God's careful ordering of inheritance challenge chaotic or lazy approaches to spiritual blessings?
2. What areas of your life need better documentation and accountability before God?

Interlinear Text

Give out	לֹכֶד מִן הַבָּבֶן	from among you three	שְׁלֹשׁ יִם	אֶנְשׁוֹן בְּטַל	לְשָׁבֵת מִן אֲשֶׁלֶת מִן	and I will send
H3051	H0	H7969	H376	H7626	H7971	
them and they shall rise	וְיַעֲשֶׂנּוּ מִן	and go	וְיַתְהַלֵּךְ בְּ	through the land	וְיַכְתִּב בְּ	and describe
H6965	H1980	H776	H3789	H853		
it according	לְפָנֵי	to the inheritance	מִן הַבָּבֶן	וְיַבְאֶנּוּ	אֶלְיוֹן	
H6310	H5159	H935	H413			

From KJV Study • kjvstudy.org