

Numbers 10:24

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And over the host of the tribe of the children of Benjamin was Abidan the son of Gideoni.

Analysis

Over the host of the tribe of the children of Benjamin was Abidan the son of Gideoni. Benjamin completed Ephraim's western division under Abidan (אַבִּידָן, "my father is judge"). Benjamin, Rachel's youngest son and Jacob's beloved, received a fierce blessing: "Benjamin shall ravin as a wolf: in the morning he shall devour the prey, and at night he shall divide the spoil" (Genesis 49:27). This prophecy of military prowess was fulfilled in warriors like Ehud (Judges 3:15) and King Saul, and in Benjamin's reputation for skilled left-handed slingers (Judges 20:16).

Benjamin marched with their brother-tribe Ephraim—both sons of Rachel, both receiving special paternal affection. Yet Benjamin's march position (completing the division) reflected their smaller size (35,400 warriors, Numbers 1:37). The name Benjamin means "son of my right hand," reflecting Jacob's renaming of Rachel's dying words "Ben-oni" ("son of my sorrow," Genesis 35:18). From sorrow to strength, from death to dignity—Benjamin's very name testified to redemptive transformation.

Historical Context

Abidan served as Benjamin's census representative (Numbers 1:11) and brought offerings at the dedication (Numbers 7:60-65). Benjamin's territory, though small, held strategic importance—Jerusalem sat on the Benjamin-Judah border (Joshua 18:28), making Benjamin the tribe hosting Israel's future capital. Benjamin's later

civil war (Judges 19-21) nearly destroyed the tribe, reducing them to 600 survivors. Yet they recovered and remained loyal to Judah when the kingdom divided (1 Kings 12:21). The Apostle Paul identified as a Benjamite (Philippians 3:5), connecting Christ's gospel to the tribe whose name meant transformation from sorrow to strength.

Related Passages

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Study Questions

1. How does Benjamin's name transformation (from "son of sorrow" to "son of my right hand") illustrate the gospel's power to redeem our painful experiences?
2. What does Benjamin's fierce blessing combined with Rachel-tribe loyalty teach about how God's people should combine strength with love?
3. In what ways might your smaller "size" or influence (like Benjamin's) actually position you strategically for kingdom impact?

Interlinear Text

וְעַל	אֶחָד	מִטֵּה	בְּנֵי	בִנְיָמִן	אָבִיד
H5921	And over the host	of the tribe	of the children	of Benjamin	was Abidan
	H6635	H4294	H1121	H1144	H27
בְּנֵי	גִדְעוֹנִי:				
of the children	of Gideon				
H1121	H1441				

Additional Cross-References

Numbers 1:11 (Parallel theme): Of Benjamin; Abidan the son of Gideoni.

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