

Numbers 2:10

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

On the south side shall be the standard of the camp of Reuben according to their armies: and the captain of the children of Reuben shall be Elizur the son of Shedeur.

Analysis

Reuben's camp positioning on the south side, while not the place of highest honor (east), still maintained dignity and importance. Despite losing the birthright through sin, Reuben retained significant status, demonstrating that God's grace preserves His people even when they forfeit special blessings through disobedience. This pattern warns against presumption while encouraging faith in God's covenant faithfulness.

Historical Context

The south side assignment placed Reuben's division (Reuben, Simeon, Gad) on the right flank when Israel marched. This strategic position maintained military importance while reflecting Reuben's loss of preeminence.

Related Passages

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Study Questions

1. How does Reuben's maintained dignity despite lost preeminence illustrate God's grace toward His people even when they experience consequences for sin?
2. What does this teach us about the balance between God's discipline for sin and His covenant faithfulness?

Interlinear Text

יְהִי גֵל	מַחֲנֵה ה	רְאוּבֵן	תֵּימָנָה	
shall be the standard	of the camp	of Reuben	On the south side	
H1714	H4264	H7205	H8486	
לְצִבְאוֹתָם	וְנָשִׂיא	בֶּן	רְאוּבֵן	אֵלִיֹּצֹר
according to their armies	and the captain	of the children	of Reuben	shall be Elizur
H6635	H5387	H1121	H7205	H468
בֶּן	שִׁדְיָאוֹר:			
of the children	of Shedeur			
H1121	H7707			

Additional Cross-References

Numbers 1:5 (Parallel theme): And these are the names of the men that shall stand with you: of the tribe of Reuben; Elizur the son of Shedeur.