

Numbers 26:25

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

These are the families of Issachar according to those that were numbered of them, threescore and four thousand and three hundred.

Analysis

Threescore and four thousand and three hundred (64,300)—Issachar's census shows an increase of 9,900 men from the first census (54,400 in Numbers 1:29), the largest percentage growth of any tribe except Manasseh. This dramatic expansion (18% growth) demonstrates divine blessing on a tribe characterized by wisdom and agricultural productivity. The Hebrew counting *arba'ah ve-shishim eleph* (sixty-four thousand) reflects substantial growth during the wilderness generation.

Issachar's population boom amid Israel's overall decline suggests that those who 'had understanding of the times' (1 Chronicles 12:32) avoided the rebellions that decimated other tribes. Their increase positions them as the fifth-largest tribe, strong enough to hold the strategic Jezreel Valley against Canaanite resistance.

Historical Context

Issachar's growth during the wilderness period (c. 1446-1406 BC) prepared them to conquer and settle the agriculturally rich but militarily contested Jezreel Valley. Their numerical strength enabled them to subdue Canaanite strongholds like Megiddo and Taanach, though some cities proved difficult to conquer (Judges 1:27). The tribe's increase fulfilled God's Exodus promise to multiply Israel.

Related Passages

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Study Questions

1. How does Issachar's exceptional population growth correlate with their reputation for wisdom and discernment, and what does this teach about the blessing of godly understanding?
2. What does the contrast between Issachar's 18% growth and tribes that declined teach about the consequences of covenant faithfulness versus rebellion?
3. In what ways does Issachar's fruitfulness in the wilderness picture the spiritual fruitfulness available to believers who walk in wisdom despite hostile environments?

Interlinear Text

לְפָקִידִים מִשְׁפָּחָת אֶלְהָי
These are the families of Issachar according to those that were numbered
H428 H4940 H3485 H6485

מֵאוֹת שְׁלֵשׁ אֶלְף אֶרְבֶּעָה
and four of them threescore thousand and three hundred
H702 H8346 H505 H7969 H3967

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